Scaling up
EU impact on education post-2015

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April 2014
This study has been commissioned by Alliance2015 via its Danish partner organisation IBIS, with the aim of updating existing knowledge on EU aid to education and thereby informing the advocacy work of Alliance2015.

Alliance2015 is a strategic network of eight European non-government organisations engaged in humanitarian and development activities, and committed to the Millennium Development Goals. Its members are ACTED from France, CESVI from Italy, CONCERN from Ireland, Hivos from the Netherlands, IBIS from Denmark, People in Need from the Czech Republic and Welthungerhilfe from Germany. The eighth member, HELVETAS Swiss Interco-operation, joined Alliance2015 in December 2013.

This is an independent study, researched and written by Birgitte Lind Petersen, Danish Institute for International Studies, in February 2014. The study has benefitted from assistance from PhD fellow Adam Moe Fejerskov for data collection and background research, and from a critical reading by senior researcher Lars Engberg-Pedersen, both from DIIS.

This publication has been produced with the assistance of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the author and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union.
From Challenges and Opportunities to Action - delivering on the ambitious policies?

At a critical time in the countdown to the Millennium Development Goals, and as the international community shapes the post-2015 development agenda, it stands clear that there are significant challenges to be addressed around the unfinished work of the MDGs. The goal on education of ensuring that every child will be able to complete basic education, regardless of their circumstances, and have basic literacy and numeracy skills will not be achieved by 2015. Moreover, a more ambitious agenda and goal setting is needed in order to ensure provision of quality and relevant education in the years to come.

The EU is a large player in education and has a special responsibility in demanding that education should be prioritised in international cooperation as an enabling right and fundamental to development. On May 23, 2013 Development Commissioner Andris Piebalgs announced that at least 20% of the 2014-2020 aid budget is to be foreseen for human development and social inclusion, education being a main component, and confirmed that education is a priority for EU development post-2015. The EU’s commitment to promoting education is further confirmed by the decision to host the Global Partnership for Education’s Second Replenishment Conference in June 2014 in Brussels, Belgium.

Despite all these efforts according to the Global Monitoring Report, 21 bilateral and multilateral donors reduced their aid disbursements to basic education between 2010 and 2011, including the European Union. Only five of 15 members of the European Union that agreed to increase their aid to 0.7% of Gross National Income by 2015 are expected to meet their commitment. Currently, there is a financing gap of $26 billion globally each year between what is needed to ensure that all children can go to primary school and what is actually invested to this end. If lower-secondary school is included the gap increases to $38 billion each year. This is why the post-2015 education goals must include a target for financing by partner governments and donors.

In January 2013, with the support of the EC, Alliance2015 launched a new advocacy initiative to strengthen dialogue on Europe’s role and responsibilities in relation to fighting hunger and under nutrition and enhancing its impact on education up to and beyond 2015.

The current report provides an important source of information and basis for further dialogue between platforms of organisations active in education and development outside the EU and strengthening these platforms/networks and their interactions with EU institutions. The report comes up with a number of recommendations on areas in which the EU could enhance its impact on education. The EU has the opportunity to stand out as a role model in the financing of education: through a planned progression towards achievement of the 20% commitment and in delivering a commitment commensurate with its leadership role in the upcoming GPE replenishment.

I will end by echoing Ms Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO, who on the occasion of the Alliance 2015 Dialogue Round-table on Education 31 March 2014 called for urgent action to address the under-funding of education as follows: “We must see this in the wider context of financing for education. First, governments must prioritize education in their domestic spending and expand their tax base. Second, donors must recognize the tremendous cost of not investing in education today.”

Vagn Berthelsen, Alliance2015
Secretary General IBIS
Table of contents

List of abbreviations ...................................................................................................................... 0

Executive summary .......................................................................................................................... i
  The study ........................................................................................................................................ i
  The EU and education .................................................................................................................... i
  Trends in EC support to education ............................................................................................... i
  Trends among member states ....................................................................................................... i
  Strengths of the EU in education – a strong basis for enhanced impact ....................................... ii
  Weaknesses of the EU in education: hampering impact ............................................................... iii
  How the EU can help to build better education systems and ensure equitable, quality learning ...... iv
  How the EU can ensure financing for education ............................................................................ v

Introduction ...................................................................................................................................... 1

The EU and global education challenges ........................................................................................ 2
  The new approach of the European Commission ......................................................................... 3
  EC’s commitment to financing education ....................................................................................... 4
  The global situation and current aid priorities .............................................................................. 5
  Priorities of main global actors in education ................................................................................... 8

Trends in EC aid to education: size and focus .................................................................................. 11
  EC financing of education has increased, but more is needed ....................................................... 11
  EC direct support to basic education has declined, and secondary education is being neglected .... 11
  Allocation of EC aid favours own neighbourhood and middle-income countries ......................... 12
  Strategic use of EC instruments may enhance the impact on education ......................................... 12
  EU budget support and project support: both have pros and cons for education ......................... 13

EC priorities in practice ................................................................................................................... 14
  Equity in access and participation: room for improvement ............................................................ 15
  Quality in education: a need for fundamental change .................................................................... 15
  Citizen inclusion and governance: comparative advantages ......................................................... 16
  Education in contexts of fragility and conflict, including for young people ................................... 17
  EU capacity and expertise on education: a necessity to make priorities come true ....................... 17

The role of the EC in alignment and coordination ......................................................................... 18
  National priorities versus conditionality ....................................................................................... 18
  Coordination between the EC and member states ........................................................................ 19
  The EU and the global agenda ...................................................................................................... 20
  The EC and the Global Partnership for Education ......................................................................... 21

Six member states’ aid to education ................................................................................................. 21
  Denmark prioritises multilateral education aid and is strong in advocacy .................................... 21
  France is a large donor with too much inflated aid but strong policy support ............................... 23
Germany will mainstream education in all aid, but has high imputed student costs.................. 24
The Netherlands deprioritises education ................................................................. 26
The Republic of Ireland has decreased aid but strongly supports basic education in the poorest countries 27
The United Kingdom has outstanding strength in aid to education ........................................ 28
Conclusion and Recommendations ........................................................................... 30
Strengths of the EU in education: a strong basis for enhanced impact .................. 30
The weaknesses of the EU in education: hampering impact .................................... 31
How the EU can help to build better education systems and ensure equitable, quality learning .... 32
How the EU can ensure financing for education...................................................... 33
Annexes ................................................................................................................. 34
Annex 1. Study approach, methodology and notes on data ........................................ 35
  The Study .......................................................................................................... 35
  Methodology ..................................................................................................... 35
Annex 2. Priorities of main global actors in education..................................................... 38
Annex 3. EU and member state aid to education 2006-2012 ....................................... 40
  Annex 3.1. EU Development Aid to Education 2006-2012 .................................... 40
  Annex 3.2. EU Development Aid to Education 2006-2012, Geographical Allocation ....... 41
  Annex 3.3. EU Development Aid to Education 2007-2012, Instruments .................... 42
  Annex 3.3.2. European Development Fund .......................................................... 44
  Annex 3.3.4. Development Cooperation Instrument - Thematic ............................. 46
  Annex 3.3.5. Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance ........................................... 47
  Annex 3.3.6. Other Instruments ........................................................................... 48
  Annex 3.4. EU Member States Development Aid to Education 2006-2012 ............... 49
  Annex 3.5. Selected EU member states Development Aid to Education 2007-2012 ...... 50
    Annex 3.5.1. Denmark ....................................................................................... 50
    Annex 3.5.2. France ............................................................................................ 51
    Annex 3.5.3. Germany ......................................................................................... 52
    Annex 3.5.4. Netherlands ................................................................................... 53
    Annex 3.5.5. The Republic of Ireland ................................................................. 54
    Annex 3.5.6. United Kingdom ........................................................................... 55
  Annex 3.6. Education aid as share of total aid ......................................................... 56
  Annex 4. Recent changes to EU development cooperation ........................................ 57
  Annex 5. Education priorities in recent EU policies ................................................. 65
  Annex 6. Overview of main priorities of the six member states ................................... 68
  References ........................................................................................................... 73
# List of abbreviations

- **AASM**: Associated African States and Madagascar
- **ACP**: African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States
- **AfC**: Agenda for Change
- **AFD**: Agence Française de Développement
- **ALP**: Accelerated Learning Program
- **BRIC**: Brazil, Russia, India, and China
- **CSEF**: Civil Society Education Fund
- **DCI**: Development Cooperation Instrument
- **DEVCO**: Development and Cooperation – EuropeAid
- **DFID**: Department for International Development
- **DG**: Directorates General
- **EC**: European Commission
- **EDF**: European Development Fund
- **EEAS**: European External Action Service
- **EEC**: European Economic Community
- **EFA**: Education for All
- **EMIS**: Education Management Information System
- **ENPI**: European Neighbourhood and Partnership Initiative
- **EU**: European Union
- **FTI**: Fast Track Initiative
- **FTT**: Financial Transaction Tax
- **GBS**: General budget support
- **GCE**: Global Campaign on Education
- **GEC**: Girls’ Education Challenge
- **GMR**: Global Monitoring Report
- **GNI**: Gross National Income
- **GPE**: Global Partnership for Education
- **HDI**: Human Development Index
- **HR/VP**: High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission
- **IDA**: International Development Association
- **INEE**: Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies
- **INGOs**: International Nongovernmental Organisations
- **IPA**: Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance
- **LDCs**: Least Developed Countries
- **LEGs**: Local Education Groups
- **MDGs**: Millennium Development Goals
- **MEDA**: Mediterranean Non-member states
- **MFF**: Multi-Annual Financial Framework
- **MIP**: Multi-Annual Indicative Programme
- **NGOs**: Non-Governmental Organisations
- **NIS**: Newly Independent States
- **NSAs**: Non-state actors
- **ODA**: Official Development Assistance
- **OECD-DAC**: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development-Development Assistance Committee
- **SBS**: Sector budget support
- **SSA**: Sarva Shikshya Abhyan
- **TEU**: Treaty on European Union
- **UIS**: UNESCO Institute for Statistics
- **UNESCO**: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
- **UNGEI**: United Nations Girls’ Education Initiative
- **UNICEF**: United Nations Children’s Fund
- **WoG**: Whole-of-Government
Executive summary

The world is facing a massive educational challenge. Too many children and young people are not in school, and many of those who are still do not learn. The situation is worst in the poorest and most fragile states, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa. Inequalities are vast, and some are even growing. Several global initiatives have been launched to ensure that the second Millennium Development Goal is achieved. However, the fundamental problems of a widening gap in finance, falling commitments from donors, an increasing number of targets and a lack of clarity about how to ensure the most important issues of equality and quality in education, remain to be handled. The EU is a large player in education, home to some of the most progressive donors, who can play important roles in meeting the challenges and scaling up the impact on education.

The study

This study analyses recent trends and changes in European Union (European Commission and selected member state) aid to education. In light of the global challenges, it identifies potentials for increased EU impact on education after 2015, considering especially how the EU can contribute to building better education systems, ensure quality learning and enhance financing for education. The analysis concentrates on the EC and six member states: Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland, which together provide around eighty per cent of total aid to education from EU member states, making them important actors in education.

The EU and education

The EC is a strong proponent of support to education, but action has so far lagged behind the policies. A new internal structure, seven-year programming periods, a strategic choice to limit support to three sectors per country and the new development policy, ‘Agenda for Change’, provide the basis on which the EC aims to meet future challenges. The EU has agreed a joint policy commitment and an internal division of labour to meet global education challenges.

Trends in EC support to education

Since 2006 the EC has, overall, increased aid to education, despite a decline since peaking in 2010. However, it has decreased support to low-income countries and Sub-Saharan Africa, while prioritising student exchange programmes and aid to middle-income countries, especially in its own neighbourhood. While the EC has remained firm on achieving MDG2 and launched an extra funding initiative to meet this end, the impact has been too small, especially in ensuring quality. The EC is increasingly making use of budget support, where the actual impact is difficult to trace, but is commended for its strong alignment with national priorities. Under the new strategy more fragile states will receive support, but human rights, good governance and democracy conditionalities apply. The EC is increasingly focussed on youth education and its links with employment, peace and active citizen involvement.

Trends among member states

The UK is leading the way, with strong policies, a strong focus on poverty and substantial and increasing funding. Germany and France are both large donors to education, but France gives alarmingly little to the countries that are most in need. Both are strong advocates of education, but much of their aid goes on exchange students. Germany has recently committed itself to promoting mainstream education in its
development work. The Netherlands has been a lead donor, but will phase out all bilateral assistance in the course of the next few years due to a change in its strategic priorities. Denmark plays an important role in advocacy and support to fragile states and will provide primarily multilateral aid. Ireland’s aid to education is small but important, as it is entirely directed towards the poorest countries.

Strengths of the EU in education – a strong basis for enhanced impact

Strong donor with a wide reach. The EU (EC and member states) is a big donor to education, committed to the MDGs and the EFA, and engaged in the post-2015 agenda mainly in relation to poverty eradication. The EC’s programmes reach more widely than those of any member state to a number of poor and fragile countries where individual member states cannot reach. Therefore, the EU is uniquely placed for policy dialogue on various aspects of equality, quality and citizen involvement in these countries, voicing collective EU priorities.

Ambitious policies of the EC and several member states. The Agenda for Change, amplified by commitments from the Commissioner for Development, reveals an ambitious focus on education as the basis for ensuring other development objectives. The UK also has very ambitious policies, as well as experience in ensuring inclusion and quality. Germany aims to mainstream education into all development work, by far the most ambitious priority, which still needs to be materialised. Several member state agencies declare their development policies to be comprehensive, with education being an integral element.

EC programming is long-term and predictable. The EC programming period is seven years. This allows for predictable, long-term funding, which is a prerequisite for building education systems.

The EU is home to strong advocates, specialists and role models in education. The EU is home to some of strongest advocates within education. It has unique expertise, especially in the UK, but also in the other countries. Several member states are increasing aid to education (Denmark, Germany and UK), and support basic education and countries most in need (Denmark, Ireland and UK). Although Denmark is a small country, it has played an outstanding role in advocating education at global events. Ireland, another small country, has a strong focus on poverty and education and is actively engaged in the Global Partnership for Education (GPE). France is also active in supporting GPE and leads the local education groups in several countries. Germany is a strong advocate for education and has found ways to get around its thirty percent constraint on allocations to multilateral organisations by funding the BACK-UP initiative as alternative GPE support. The UK is by far the most influential member state donor financially, both in developing new areas within education and in terms of expertise.

Alignment with national priorities and global actors. The EC and member states such as Ireland, Denmark and the UK align with national priorities. They have been among the frontrunners in prioritising budgetary support.

Unique platform for coordination. The EU, with the EC as a central actor, and several lead donors in education among its member states is a unique platform for coordination. Formal channels already exist, although it seems that systematic coordination beyond specific partner countries could be enhanced. Coordination, alignment and division of labour are strengths in implementation and policy dialogue.

Strong support to the GPE. The EC and member states all emphasise their commitment to GPE and its importance, and they play unique roles in supporting and influencing the impact of GPE. France is leading many local educational groups in partner countries, Germany has launched the BACK-UP initiative to support the impact of partner country constituencies in the board of the GPE, Denmark is a strong advocate for support to the GPE, and both Ireland and the Netherlands actively support GPE in policy.
**Strong civic involvement.** The EU has a comparative advantage in ensuring citizen involvement in education. The EC prioritises civil-society involvement through a new policy, structured dialogues and strategic use of the thematic instruments ‘Investing in People’ and ‘Non-state actors and Local Authorities in Development’. The aim is to support the scaling up of existing practices and this has enjoyed good results through support of new approaches. Moreover, it is intended to involve local people in improvements of equity and quality by including them in piloting new modes of teacher training, curriculum content, school building and maintenance.

**Weaknesses of the EU in education: hampering impact**

*There is generally a lack of clear equity and quality targets,* except for the UK. The EC does not have an education strategy to set out how education will be prioritised in the new development policy. A lesson learned from the past period of global commitments is that, without clearly defined measures and targets, the EC and member states cannot be held accountable, nor can be regarded as upholding great ambitions to ensure equity and quality in learning.

*Financing is inadequate and not primarily directed at those countries, groups and education levels that are most in need.* The EC still allocates a large part of its aid to middle-income countries and its own neighbourhood, although the new programming period includes more fragile states. The Netherlands is de-prioritising aid to education, which is not only bad for financing in general but leaves a funding and expertise gap in the countries affected. Secondary education in general receives too little support from the EU. All member states are strong supporters of the GPE but, apart from the UK, most of them need to increase funding.

*Priorities often lack clear targets,* especially with regard to equality and quality. Apart from the UK, clear targets are needed for donors within the EU, not least also to ensure, through a division of labour, that ambitious change can be secured.

*Inflated aid.* The EC, and especially France and Germany, record imputed student costs as an aid to education. This does not build up education systems and is a major concern, which, when taken into consideration, contributes to making generous donors appear much less so.

*There is a shortage of education expertise in the EC,* which is a great hindrance to increasing impact. The EC needs proper capacity to influence global processes, carry out education-sector support, engage in a qualified policy dialogue involving marginalised groups and ensure quality learning.

*The EC is rather slow, bureaucratic and inflexible.* The EC is a large and bureaucratic system, which is a major reason why ambitious policies are not always sufficiently implemented. Moreover, the seven-year programming period, while ensuring predictability, hampers flexibility.

*Lack of coordination when member states reduce their support.* Decisions to decrease aid, withdraw from countries or redirect to other geographical areas and levels of education are not always coordinated with other EU donors, nor is consideration given to ensuring the long-term sustainability of education support to countries and people most in need. The Netherlands and Denmark have withdrawn their bilateral assistance, which leaves a funding gap in the affected countries and represents a serious blow to long-term sustainability in education support if other forms of support are not provided.
**How the EU can help to build better education systems and ensure equitable, quality learning**

**Implement the ambitious policies**
Education is prioritised alongside health and social protection in the Agenda for Change, this being fundamental to human development. Recently, the Commissioner for Development has emphasised the importance of education and commitments to ensure equity and quality learning for all children by 2030. Most member states (except the Netherlands) have ambitious policies. These ambitions must be backed up by practice, as they can greatly increase the impact on education if implemented.

**Compile the strengths of the EC and member states and promote role models**
The EC and most member states have strengths and reveal positive trends that should be drawn together to enhance impact. A division of labour building on strengths can enhance impact, and the positive examples can also be used as role models inspiring or strengthening others. For example, the UK has expertise which the EC is lacking, and the UK can help capacity develop the EU in new areas of education such as fragile states and alternative models of financing. The EU as a whole has comparative advantages in ensuring equality for marginalised groups in access and participation, in involving various civil actors in the provision and management of education, and in ensuring new and innovative forms of education.

**Continue and systematise coordination: not least when donors withdraw**
Considerable coordination takes place, but it is often not very systematic. Member states coordinate with each other and with EU delegations in concrete geographical settings and for specific tasks, but there is room for improvement in relation to coordination prior to withdrawing from partner countries and coordination to ensure that, when new countries are selected, the focus on their own strategic priorities pays attention to the number of EU donors already present, their capacities and focus areas. Member states coordinate when they are donors in the same countries, but they could increase impact by drawing on each other’s capacities within specific areas and in influencing the EC’s positions. A division of labour has already been agreed, but more systematic use of the comparative advantages of each country would enhance the overall impact.

**Ensure a balance between bilateral and multilateral support.** Bilateral aid to education on the part of the EC and member states is highly valued for its alignment with national priorities and as a counterweight to development banks, with their greater number of conditionalities. Support through the GPE is also aligned with national priorities and focuses on poor countries and basic education, and is therefore important in combination with the bilateral support.

**Specific equity and quality priorities with clear definitions and targets, preferably through an education strategy.** Equality and quality are common priorities, but whereas equality is primarily about gender and needs to be broadened, there is very little specification of what quality entails for most EU donors. There is a need for an education strategy specifying the EC’s priorities, as well as to focus specifically on the specific advantages of the EU in work on inclusion.

**Continue to enhance civil society involvement for good governance.** The structured involvement of civil society bridges the EC, member states and partner countries, and is a key to enhancing impact through innovative new ways of working, scaling up and developing a bottom-up approach to ensuring proper governance. Also, a more strategic use of the thematic instruments is useful to ensure that non-state actors and civil society or NGOs play a part in ensuring educational priorities by obtaining support to scale up initiatives with a good impact and developing new innovative practices to ensure equity, quality learning and good governance. However, procedures for NGOs to acquire thematic funding need to be simplified.
Stop the decline in budget support and limit conditionalities. The EC prioritises budget support, but it is in decline, which is also the case for several member states. The EC follows national priorities and is acknowledged as a sensitive and well-coordinated partner by other donors and partner countries. With the new EC programming, and with the resulting focus of several member states, more conditionalities apply. Conditionalities should be limited. The EU should continue to convince member states to use budget support.

Strengthen education expertise in the EC. This is vital for proper involvement in the GPE and global education settings. It is central to ensuring coordination with member states, not least to ensure qualified support to the work on equality and quality.

Promote and explore new practices. Innovative practices like the BACK-UP initiative and DFID’s Girls’ Education Challenge are new ways potentially to scale up impact in areas that have hitherto been left unexploited.

How the EU can ensure financing for education

Be accountable to commitments. For the EC, there is a need for more specific and concrete commitments to the promise of allocating twenty percent of total aid to health and education. For the member states there is a need to set clear, ambitious, long-term targets for financing education.

The EU should stand out as a role model in financing when hosting GPE replenishment. Hosting the replenishment conference obliges the EC, but also member states, to show their commitment to ensuring financing for education. For countries like Denmark and the Netherlands that are phasing out bilateral aid, there is a need to enhance their pledge to show commitment to education. This will benefit low-income and fragile countries, and demonstrate their commitment to focus on the countries that are most in need.

Collective commitments are needed to ensure alternative sources of financing. The EC and member states need to show sincere effort, and set targets, for developing and encouraging new sources of financing for education. The EU is uniquely placed to find new forms of financing for education. There are already several initiatives underway. The EU should be encouraged to use its position more actively in policy dialogue to explore, with governments, the prospects for domestic financing, use its relations with the private sector to leverage funds and encourage philanthropic funds and diaspora groupings within the EU to support education. It is important to ensure that alternative, especially private-sector financing of education does not compromise policy priorities.

Decline in bilateral funding should be followed by increased multilateral, especially GPE, funding. The adverse funding trends of the Netherlands and Ireland should be followed by an increase in multilateral funding, especially to the GPE. GPE should provide data to the OECD–DAC to allow monitoring and permit EU donors to be held to account, not least donors like Denmark, which are redirecting almost all their aid from bilateral to multilateral support.

Broad-based knowledge of, and support for, education is needed within the EU
The EU public is generally in support of development aid. But support is falling, and one reason may be that there is a fundamental lack of knowledge about the crucial importance of education for other aspects of development. Communication about these aspects by the EC and member states respectively is highly important for increasing public support and pressure and, as an effect of this, financial support from private-sector actors.
Introduction

‘No country shall be thwarted from meeting the [Education for All] goals due to lack of resources’. This was the commitment made in Dakar in 2000 by 184 governments. Yet today education is seriously underfinanced, aid levels are falling, and the world is facing an immense learning crisis. While the number of out-of-school children of primary and lower secondary school age has fallen by 75 million since 2000, 57 million children, mostly from disadvantaged backgrounds, were still out of school in 2011, and an estimated 250 million are deprived of learning. Some donors, especially within the European Union (EU), are frontrunners in providing aid to education, but the EU is also home to donors with adverse priorities to achieving the MDG2 and unpromising records in living up to future global priorities. This is significant, as the EU, including the European Commission (EC) and member states, provides over half of global aid. The European Parliament has called for an allocation of twenty percent of the total aid of the EC to be allocated to education and health. Currently, only around six percent goes to education. With a likely new global goal post-2015 to ‘Provide quality education and life-long learning for all’, there is a need for the EU to increase its impact on education.

This study uncovers recent overall trends and priorities in EU aid to education, focussing on the EC and selected member states separately, and also considers the prospects of increasing its impact in the post-2015 world. It is a concise desk study that concentrates on general qualitative aspects and on Alliance2015 priorities in respect of equitable access and participation, quality education for effective learning and issues of the governance and inclusion of citizens.

The first section introduces the EU’s role and outlines the global challenges and major actors in education. This provides the basis for the analysis of, first, trends and changes in the size and focus of EU aid to education, secondly, the work of the European Commission in aid to education, and finally, the EC’s role in alignment and coordination. Finally, the last section concludes by highlighting the main areas in which the EU’s impact on education can potentially be scaled up and recommends actions to achieve this.

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1 UNESCO Institute for Statistics – online tables http://stats.uis.unesco.org
2 This report uses the term ‘EU’ to cover the European Commission and EU member states collectively. The trends and priorities of policies and strategies formulated by the European Commission (EC) are referred to as such, although they often denote EU priorities when speaking generally.
3 Global Campaign for Education 2013, ‘Education Aid Watch 2013’.
5 For more on the study approach and methodology, see Annex 1.
6 Equitable access and participation includes ensuring enrolment, attendance and completion for children, youth and adults, regardless of gender, class, caste, race, religion, ethnicity, disability and language, and the inclusion of marginalised groups. Quality aspects of education include language, teacher training, pedagogy, content of curriculum and teaching materials, and the extent to which these include a focus on equity. Inclusion of citizens and issues of governance includes parents and communities’ access to information and involvement in decision-making and in the design and monitoring of education policies and practice. This may be through school management committees, teacher–parent associations or similar arrangements.
The EU and global education challenges

The European Union is important for ensuring global education. The European Commission (EC) has been a strong supporter of education since 2000, firmly committed to the second Millennium Development Goal and the Education for All framework, as have the member state donors analysed here: Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands and the UK. Since 2005 there has been a European Consensus on Development, making development a shared responsibility of the EC and member states. In 2007, the EC and member states agreed on increased coordination and complementarity in their development cooperation. From, 2009 the Lisbon Treaty legally adopted poverty eradication as a commonly agreed primary objective of all EU development cooperation.

From 2006 to 2012, EC aid to education almost doubled from $590 to $1090 million in terms of commitments, though actual disbursements reveal a more modest increase. Still, only around 6% of the EC’s total Official Development Assistance (ODA) is spent on education. This is less than for those member states that are spearheading education aid within the EU (UK 7.3%, Denmark 7.7%, France 11.9% and Germany 15.4%). The EU is home to some of the largest bilateral donors to education (France, Germany and the UK) and to donors spearheading a growing tendency to allocate a large bulk of aid to education to imputed student costs (France and Germany), as well as to donors phasing out bilateral education support (Denmark and the Netherlands) and ceasing to prioritise education altogether (the Netherlands). Education is the fourth-largest sector receiving aid from EU member states, but the sector is not within the top ten sectors receiving aid from the EC. However, by prioritising aid to education as part of the general budget, and thanks to the mandatory contributions, the EC leverages contributions from member states that otherwise would not have supported education. The EC provides far more direct aid than bilateral donors, which increases its administrative costs on the negative side, but which enables the EU to be present in countries where bilateral agencies cannot act. The EC thus plays a role in fulfilling the objectives of EU member states where the latter are not present.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Million US$ Commitment</th>
<th>Aid to Education</th>
<th>Total aid</th>
<th>Aid to Education as share of total aid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EU Institutions</td>
<td>590</td>
<td>1090</td>
<td>10245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>63.9</td>
<td>43.3</td>
<td>1021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>1790.25</td>
<td>1429</td>
<td>10600</td>
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<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>1367.14</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>10434</td>
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<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>15.79</td>
<td>206.34</td>
<td>2236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>1295.96</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>5451</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>411.98</td>
<td>1016</td>
<td>12459</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: OECD–DAC 2013

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8 This point also made in ‘Review of the Balance of Competences between the United Kingdom and the European Union Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid’.
9 As an example, DfID spent around 62% of its aid budget through multilaterals in contrast with only 2% spent by the EU institutions, International Development Committee or the House of Commons (2013) EU Development Aid.
The recent Eurobarometer on EU public opinion regarding development aid and knowledge of poverty shows that, although decreasing, a large majority (83%) consider it important to provide aid to developing countries. However, there is alarmingly little knowledge about development issues and the MDGs, and only around thirty percent think that education should be a focus area after 2015. In member states prioritising aid to education, the figure is around forty percent. Raising public awareness has not been a sufficient priority in the EU.10

The new approach of the European Commission

The EC acknowledges the central role education plays in poverty eradication. The EU’s priorities for education, formulated in the most recent education strategy in 2002, were sharpened with the staff document, ‘More and Better Education in Developing Countries’ (2010), and reformulated in the new 2011 EU policy for development, ‘An Agenda for Change’, which is presently the most important document on education. The EU recognises that education is not just a matter of access, that those in school have to learn and that education must play a role in ensuring equality, peace, stability and development and in preparing pupils for jobs. The recent EU communication, ‘A Decent Life for All’, underlines the need to deliver on the MDGs and specifically to address issues of equality and quality to ensure that education plays its envisioned role in eradicating poverty. The main priorities in Agenda for Change related to education are: basic education (commitment to MDG2 beyond 2015) and vocational skills for employability. It is noteworthy that a new education strategy has not been formulated since 2002.11

An Agenda for Change

EU assistance should focus on two priority areas: human rights, democracy and other key elements of good governance; and inclusive and sustainable growth for human development. The EU aims to help create growth in developing countries so they have the means to lift themselves out of poverty. Aid will therefore target particular areas:

- social protection, health, education and jobs
- the business environment, regional integration and world markets, and
- sustainable agriculture and energy

The EU will improve coordination and joint action and ensure value for money, concentrate efforts on a maximum of three sectors in each country, and direct more funding to countries most in need, including fragile states.

Of main importance to education, the Agenda for Change commits the EC to allocate a minimum of twenty percent of the 2014–2020 budget to human development and social inclusion (especially health and education), and in May 2013 the EC announced that around €2.5 billion was expected for education in developing countries.12

In ‘An Agenda for Change’, education is perceived as a right and is prioritised alongside social protection and health under the focus area of human development. This comprehensive approach to human development entails seeing health and education as linked necessities for a productive work force and a population that fits the labour market, and that enjoys social protection and equal opportunities. This is also evident, as the strategy links education to citizenship and work: the EC must support quality education as fundamental to providing children and young people with the knowledge and skills to be active members

10 A recent analysis argues that European NGOs have focussed on feelings rather than providing knowledge and raising awareness of development issues in their home countries. The analysis focuses on Sweden and Norway, but the challenges are similar to those indicated by the Eurobarometer. See http://www.gapminder.org/news/swedish-and-norwegian-ignorance-results/

11 The last EC communication in education, ‘Education and training in the context of fight against poverty in developing countries’, was issued in 2002, in a global landscape focussing intensely on primary education after formulation of the MDGs and where higher education scholarships made up a large part of EU support to education.

of their societies. What such quality entails, though, is not specified, making it hard to operationalise and measure. The EU is committed to supporting governance and sector reform as ways to achieve inclusive quality education and favours the use of budget support. The EC prioritises sector concentration (a maximum of three are supported in each country), differentiated partnerships and joint EU work in its new programming. The Multi Annual Financial Framework (MFF) of the EC is the basis for programming periods of seven years’ duration, which is unique compared to other donors.

Recently, the EU Commissioner for Development reiterated that education will be a high priority post-2015, and that every child should complete at least basic education by 2030. This makes possible an interpretation of ‘Agenda for Change’ in favour of enhanced education support, as well as clear indications as to how this will be achieved.

**EC’s commitment to financing education**

The EC is committed to increase aid to education by ensuring that twenty percent of all aid is allocated to education and health. It also aims to achieve the target for member state ODA of 0.7% of Gross National Income (GNI) by 2015. UNESCO estimates that this would contribute an additional $9 billion for education.\(^{15}\) Still, there is a need for alternative sources of financing.

**The EC aims to explore alternative sources of financing, and has a strong potential to do so.** The EC increasingly focuses on blending the use of grants and loans, as well as drawing on the private sector to fund education, which is highlighted as a strength in DfID’s review of the EC.\(^{16}\) The EC is spearheading attempts to build on successful experiences and improve the efficiency of blending mechanisms through the ‘EU Platform for Blending in External Cooperation’.\(^{17}\) The EC is also commended by OECD–DAC for taking the lead in establishing new and alternative ways of financing development.\(^{18}\) One example is the Financial Transaction Tax (FTT), an instrument for generating revenue that can be allocated to fighting poverty and thus, potentially, to supporting education around the world.\(^{19}\)

The EC is also concerned to support an increase in domestic financing. In April 2010 the EC adopted a communication to strengthen the links between tax, development policies and enhancing good governance in the tax area.\(^{20}\) According to the GCE there are several areas that could be explored for raising taxes.\(^{21}\) In practice, however, this is difficult to realise in the poorest countries, and more feasible in lower middle-income countries.

Finally, the EU now specifically prioritises strengthening the involvement of the private sector in the provision of education. The private sector obviously benefits from having a skilled and educated work force, but drawing on the private sector for financing requires that a private sector exists. Having the private sector pay for education priorities and its own programmes is increasingly on the agenda of, for example, DfID and also of INGOs. Involving the private sector can help build some of the links between education and...

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17 Currently, eleven countries have been given permission by the European Commission to implement FTT in the Eurozone, with France taking a lead. While encouraging, there is no guarantee that funds generated in this way are directed at development in countries that are most in need, let alone to education.
19 The GCE argues for four avenues to increase financing: through a fair tax system that closes different possibilities for exemptions for multinational companies, by maximising revenue collection from extractive industries in resource-rich countries, and by ensuring that revenues are directed towards education while strengthening civil society to monitor budget spending. GCE 2013, A taxing business: financing Education for All through domestic resources.
training and the world of work and further education; the sector is a main beneficiary of skilled and educated youth.

The EU is also concerned with exploring private investors in education, and it could use its global scope and global influence to advocate that private donors and investors support education.

The global situation and current aid priorities

The global situation in education indicates a need for EU action. Education transforms lives and societies, is acknowledged as a human right and is the highest priority for children and families around the globe. In 2000 the world committed itself to achieving universal primary education as the second of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), as well as to the more extensive Education For All (EFA) framework adopted in Dakar. The world promised that all countries would be guaranteed sufficient funds to meet the goals. Fourteen years down the road, the EFA–Global Monitoring Report 2013/14 clearly shows that, despite some progress, the road ahead is long and for the present full of discouraging trends.

Education transforms lives – recent documentation from UNESCO:

The most recent evidence of the transformative potential of education shows that:
- Education reduces poverty and enhances jobs and growth: equitable education that ensures that the poorest complete more years of proper quality schooling creates the kind of growth that eliminates poverty.
- Education improves people’s chances of a healthier life: improves hygiene, prevents and contains disease, and reduces malnutrition. 2.1 million children’s lives have been saved due to improved education of mothers.
- Education promotes healthy sustainable societies: it promotes tolerance, democracy and trust, helps prevent environmental damage, prevents violence, conflict and discrimination, aids reconciliation, peace and stability in conflict-affected countries and ensures the education of the next generation.

Increased access yet immense learning crisis

By 2011, 57 million children were still out of school. Although the figure had fallen by almost half from 1999, it is still immensely high. Of 122 countries, a little more than half are expected to reach universal primary enrolment by 2015 (MDG2). The Sub-Saharan region is the furthest behind, with 22% of the primary age school population still not in school by 2011. The geography of schooling has changed: a decade ago 84% of the world’s out-of-school children lived in low-income countries and 12% in lower middle-income countries. By 2011 the figures were 37% and 49%. This indicates a need to continue supporting the poorest sections of the populations of middle-income countries, and to support policies and systems that ensure equity and quality in education.

The lack of quality in education has led to a learning crisis: 250 million children, mostly from disadvantaged backgrounds, are not learning basic literacy and numeracy, despite being in primary school. This is devastating, as quality learning for all is a foundation for development in all other areas. UNESCO argues that teachers are the single most important factor in ensuring quality learning. Yet an estimated 5.2 million teachers are needed to ensure a basic education for all. A primary concern for the post-2015 world

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21 The global survey ‘My World 2015’ shows that ‘a good education’ is the highest priority for most people around the world. Until now this has been far from the reality for vast parts of the global population. Report of the Global Thematic Consultation on Education in the Post-2015 Development Agenda ‘Making Education a Priority in the Post-2015 Development Agenda’.
22 UNESCO, 2014, pp. 143–185, expands on the points under these three main headings. For a short version of the conclusions, see http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002231/223115E.pdf
23 To ensure quality education and learning, relevant and good-quality curricula, books and materials are of course important, but the argument is clear: teachers are the main key to quality learning.
is to prioritise teachers who are well trained, committed, geographically spread, and have proper materials and incentives to motivate their work. This requires good governance and strong civic participation. As teachers are the most expensive part of an education budget, substantial funds are required.

Unequal access and inequality in learning. Inequality and exclusion keeps the world’s disadvantaged children and youth out of education. Despite great progress in girls’ enrolment, gender inequality remains a massive problem, as are inequalities between urban and rural areas. The gap between the richest urban boys and the poorest rural girls is formidable, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, where the situation has worsened since 2000 (23% down from 25% of girls complete primary school, 11% down from 13% complete lower secondary school), and in south and west Asia, where the situation has remained unchanged (89% of the richest urban boys complete primary school, but only 13% of the poorest rural girls).

Many inequalities are unaccounted for, and in numerous countries large groups of children and young people are excluded and discriminated against due to disability, rural living, poverty and the social stigmas of caste and ethnicity. This is serious for a country’s growth and development, as well as for its stability, especially in countries where such inequalities risk fuelling conflict.

Governance at the root of ensuring equity and quality. Malfunctioning education systems, a lack of capacity and accountability and thus a lack of good governance in education are the main barriers to ensuring equity and quality in education. There is a strong need for proper governance to ensure that institutional systems and policies are in place. Of equal importance is local-level governance and the engagement of civil-society actors such as parents, communities, non-state actors and organisations who are involved in supporting and monitoring practices of inclusion and quality education.

Discouraging learning trends in fragile states. Half of the world’s out-of-school population lives in conflict-affected countries (a rise from 42% in 2008), and all the challenges of unequal access and quality learning are exacerbated in these countries. Education in emergencies and conflict-affected states needs to be a high priority. Schools, teachers and students are among the hardest hit in conflicts, while conversely it is well documented that education helps restore a sense of normality during crisis and that it is fundamental to creating new values and social relations after conflicts. Until 2006 education was not officially acknowledged as a humanitarian priority, but now education clusters are being set up alongside other clusters. Still, despite a very modest target of 4% of humanitarian aid to be disbursed to education, the share was only 1.4% in 2012 (decreasing from 2.2% in 2009). A major challenge to ensuring the long-term effort to build up education in fragile situations is the gap that currently exists between humanitarian and development work.

Young people need relevant education and training. Half of the world’s population is under the age of 30, and over 1.5 billion young people aged 14 to 25 years live in developing countries. In 2011, 71 million adolescents worldwide were not in school, and three out of four of them were living in south and west Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. Moreover, one in five young people aged 15–24 years living in 123 low and

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24 70% of all countries are expected to reach gender parity in 2015, but only 20% of all low-income countries achieve it in primary education, 10% in lower secondary and 8% in upper secondary education.
25 The UNESCO EFA-GMR 2013/14 estimates that, if recent trends continue, girls from the poorest families in Sub-Saharan Africa will only reach lower secondary completion in 2111.
middle-income countries have not completed primary school.\textsuperscript{30} The MDG focus on primary education neglects secondary schooling and youth. In low-income countries only 14% of the poorest complete lower secondary school, which means they never acquire the necessary foundation for further learning. In many countries there is a lack of opportunities for secondary education or quality vocational skills training, and the skills provided often do not match labour market needs.\textsuperscript{31} Unemployment is widespread, and in some low-income countries as many as two thirds of young people are either unemployed, irregularly employed or not in any form of employment, training or education at all.\textsuperscript{32} Young people are a massive human resource, and if provided with relevant education and training, they hold out great prospects for contributing to peace and development.\textsuperscript{33}

\textit{A global call for data to improve learning.} While alarming, the numbers cited are far from being a full reflection of reality.\textsuperscript{34} National and district-level planning often relies on highly inconsistent and often also irrelevant reporting from schools, which have neither the resources and capacity nor the information necessary to report well. This is obviously a problem when it comes to monitoring progress and formulating relevant policies.

The results monitoring for MDGs 2 and 3 has been quantitative, focussing on enrolment data. The quality, content and methods of education, as part of the EFA, are not measured. Therefore, improved access signified MDG2 achievements while masking the reality of devastating quality and learning outcomes.

The Learning Metrics Task Force suggests a global framework for measuring learning, which attempts to be more encompassing.\textsuperscript{35} The task force argues that equity must be an explicit focus in measuring the different qualitative parts.\textsuperscript{36} The GPE aims to endorse it and recommends that all others do so too. There is a risk that a global framework of this sort will reinforce the emphasis on testing,\textsuperscript{37} thus encouraging ‘teaching-to-the-test’, which has been documented as undermining learning. The challenge of creating appropriate and relevant data with the main aim of ensuring equitable, quality learning has to be faced by all countries and donors.

\textit{Financing of education: a need for more, more predictable and more diversified financing.} Serious underfinancing of education is a major obstacle in reaching MDG 2 and the most critical issue in ensuring global quality education and learning post-2015. yet global aid levels are falling. The estimate of the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2013/14 is that $26 billion is needed to fill the financing gap to ensure universal primary education by 2015. If lower secondary education is also included, as suggested in a new global goal, the gap rises to an annual $38 billion. Current trends are:


\textsuperscript{31} ILO 2013, Global Employment Trends for Youth 2013: a generation at risk, Geneva, ILO.

\textsuperscript{32} In developing countries, one in eight people between 15 and 24 years of age are unemployed. ILO 2013, Global Employment Trends for Youth 2013: a generation at risk, Geneva, ILO.


\textsuperscript{34} In fact, some of the countries that are likely to have the most children and young people out of school lack reliable data.

\textsuperscript{35} It includes physical well-being, social and emotional education, culture and the arts, literacy and communication, learning approaches and cognition, numeracy and mathematics, and science and technology.

\textsuperscript{36} UNESCO/Brookings 2013, Toward Universal Learning: recommendations from the learning Metrics Task force.

\textsuperscript{37} David Archer from Oxfam, who has taken part in the Learning Metrics Task Force work, has recently written a critical commentary, ‘Critical reflections on the Learning Metrics Task Force’, 3 February 2014.
While overall support to education has more than doubled from 2002 to 2011, the share of aid allocated to basic education as a percentage of overall education aid has declined. In 2011, aid commitments fell by 6.3%, and to education by 15.8%. Aid to the secondary level is alarmingly low, almost half that provided to basic and post-secondary education respectively, despite evidence that secondary education provides the skills necessary for work and life improvement. Aid to education is increasingly geopolitical (i.e. tied to own interests of security, conditionalities and a high financial return, despite calls for untying aid). Though developing countries are increasing their own financing of education, donors are not committing anywhere near what is needed. High donor vulnerability: the education sector is largely dependent on a few big donors, therefore any changes or withdrawals have major repercussions.

There is a need to find new ways of financing education. Domestic financing is slightly increasing and remains the most important source. UNESCO suggests four other ways: blended financing, financing instruments linked to results, solidarity funding (global charity foundations, diaspora communities etc.) and private-sector support. New donors are emerging (such as Brazil, Russia, India and China) who do not yet commit much to education. Convincing them, as well as the private sector and the public in countries whose taxes finance development aid, that long-term support to building education systems is one of the best investments in development they can pursue remains a continuous challenge.

**Priorities of main global actors in education**

Overall global priorities in facing educational challenges will be included among the post-2015 goals. A new broad global goal on education is likely to be ‘provide quality education and lifelong learning for all’. However, to face the challenges involved, most actors in education agree that there is a need for a new EFA framework, a detailed, targeted set of goals with national commitments. According to DfID’s Multilateral Aid Review 2011, four multilateral donors are making the most difference in education: the EU, the Global Partnership for Education, the World Bank and UNICEF. Moreover, the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies and the Global Campaign on Education are the two most important networks advocating equity and quality in poor and fragile states. These actors are concerned by the same growing challenges and are therefore key partners for the EU within the area of education. A matrix is annexed.

**The UN Secretary-General**

In 2012 the UN Secretary-General launched the Education First initiative, stating that ‘Education is a major driving force for human development. It opens doors to the job market, combats inequality, improves

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38 It should be noted, however, that in total numbers aid to basic education has increased from less than $2500 million in 2005 to $3700 million in 2011 according to Rose and Steer (2013), Financing for Global Education: Opportunities for Multilateral Action and OECD–DAC data.

39 Also at the 2011 Global Partnership for Education Replenishment Conference, only five donors pledged to increase their aid to basic education in low-income countries between 2011 and 2014.

40 In 2009–2010, 38 donors reported education disbursements to OECD–DAC, and the five largest donors to education (EU, France, Germany, Japan and the World Bank) provided more than half of total aid to education, UNESCO 2012.


42 The World Bank’s Programming-for-results is highlighted as relevant to education.

maternal health, reduces child mortality, fosters solidarity, and promotes environmental stewardship. The three priorities of the initiative are to put every child in school (focus on primary education), improve the quality of learning and foster global citizenship, indicating that learning must go beyond numeracy and literacy to provide skills, knowledge and values that enable people to engage in their world. The initiative was meant as a push, including to donors, to fulfil global commitments, and it has secured commitments from several philanthropic funds and the private sector. However, more coordinated funding is called for.

The Global Partnership for Education (GPE)
The GPE is unique to the education sector and a strong contributor towards achieving MDGs 2 and 3, focusing on the poorest to ensure that more donors align behind country plans. The High Panel of Eminent Persons recommends it as a model for other sectors, and a DfID multilateral review concludes that it provides good value for money. Nonetheless, the GPE is still highly underfinanced. It has been directed to focusing on the poorest countries, especially fragile states. In 2011, the GPE disbursed $385 million to basic education, making it the fourth-largest donor to low- and middle-income countries. Still, GPE funds are not recorded as ODA, which is necessary to trace commitments. The restructuring from the Fast Track Initiative into GPE has led to several major changes that make GPE a lead model in education today:

- A balanced board where partner countries are directly involved with equal voice
- A commitment to follow national priorities and help the formulation of national education plans
- A strengthened focus on fragile states
- Support directed to the poorest, to basic education and to equality, especially for girls

The GPE specifically supports the involvement of civil-society organisations and teachers, alongside donors and government representatives, in Local Education Groups (LEG), which form the basis for developing the national education sector plans supported by the GPE grant. Currently, sixty countries are in receipt of support.

The GPE is highly concerned with the insufficient financing in education and accordingly launched a replenishment conference in 2011 to increase donor and country commitments. Donors pledged a little more than $1 billion to the GPE fund, and five donors also committed themselves to increasing their bilateral aid to education. Partner countries pledged to increase their domestic financing in 2011–2014 by more than two billion USD. The EU in Brussels will host the next replenishment conference, on 26 June 2014.

UNESCO
The primary role of UNESCO is to provide a forum for global agreements, policy exchange and capacity building. UNESCO has an important role in educational policy and reporting. It coordinates Education for All and publishes annual progress monitoring reports that are key milestones for work in education. The past years’ global monitoring reports outline the major challenges discussed above and provide the most important tool for advocacy regarding issues of equality and quality specifically. It has been commended for its accountability and for systematically involving partner countries and NGOs. However, DfID’s review in 2011 found that UNESCO provided poor value for money.

UN Secretary General’s initiative is described at http://www.globaleducationfirst.org


According to GPE the LEG must provide contact details for CSO and teacher representatives so their actual involvement can be monitored. Interview Karen Schroh.
**UNICEF**

UNICEF specialises in financial and technical aid to children and mothers in around 190 countries. It has a strong poverty focus, can demonstrate results in fragile situations and is crucial in ensuring that MDGs 2 and 3 are fulfilled in close cooperation with partners. DfID’s multilateral review concluded that it delivers very good value for money. It prioritises early learning improvement, enhancing children’s ability to learn when they enter school, and is a very common partner in the implementation of bilateral aid for the EC and EU member states. UNICEF is a member of the GPE and the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) steering group.

UNICEF is also a major contributor to ensuring education in conflict-affected and fragile states. It leads the education cluster to coordinate education provision in emergencies, and is actively working in both emergency response (education in refugee camps, for example) and in system rebuilding work. The Education-for-Peace programme is being implemented in many countries and is actively demonstrating the importance of guiding the content of education towards peace and stability. UNICEF leads the UN Girls’ Education Initiative, a global partnership aimed at narrowing the gender gap in education.

**The World Bank**

The International Development Association (IDA) of the World Bank is a large donor in education, contributing 16% of total aid to basic education. For 2011–2015 it aims to spend an additional $750 million on education, a 40% increase over the previous five years. The IDA is increasingly focussing its education aid on basic education in low middle-income countries in south and west Asia (especially India and Pakistan). The education strategy highlights the need to support post-primary education to produce skilled populations to become involved in the ‘knowledge economy’.

The World Bank is the supervising entity for the GPE and a member of the EFA steering committee, the INEE steering group and the GPE’s board, indicating a strong involvement in defining global priorities in education. According to DfID’s multilateral aid review, the IDA provides very good value for money and is highly poverty oriented. The IDA is also commended for the high quality of its staff, which is a challenge for many actors in the education sector. The World Bank has been increasingly focussed on partner countries’ own reform initiatives, especially since the establishment of the GPE.

**Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies**

The Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) is not a donor, but a unique network within the education field. It is home to several working groups with both multilateral and bilateral donors, NGOs and researchers to ensure that lessons learned are fed into better practices in emergencies. INEE has done an impressive job of developing minimum standards to be followed and bringing a wealth of organisations and donors in through its advocacy of the vital importance of education for restoring a sense of normalcy in crisis, and to restore peace, rebuild trust and reclaim a future after conflict. The INEE’s standards are detailed to ensure equality, quality and civil involvement in education in emergencies and fragile states. INEE is one of the key global actors helping to ensure education in fragile states, especially for young people, and it also provides very concrete ways to help bridge humanitarian and development support within education.

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51 Rose and Steer 2013, Financing for Global Education: Opportunities for Multilateral Action.
Global Campaign on Education
The Global Campaign on Education (GCE) is the main civil-society global network and watchdog, working to ensure education in low-income countries. The GCE coordinates the Civil Society Education Fund of the GPE. From 2009 to 2011, the GPE provided $17.6 million to the CSEF at the global level. For the period 2013-2014, the GPE Board has approved an allocation of $14.5 million to the CSEF. The GCE provides a strong platform for ensuring the involvement of a broad range of organisations in facing the global education challenges.

Trends in EC aid to education: size and focus

The EC is a strong development actor and has been prominent in supporting education through a firm commitment to the MDG2 and to the EFA framework. The size and focus of its aid to education therefore matters for ensuring impact for children and young people deprived of education. Since 2000, the EC has perceived education as important for ensuring poverty eradication. Officially, it has committed itself fully to achieving the MDG2 as well as the Education for All goals. In practice, trends show that its actions have not fully lived up to these commitments.

EC financing of education has increased, but more is needed

While OECD–DAC commitments indicate a doubling of aid to education in 2006-2012, EU external assistance annual reports (See Appendix 1) show that EC aid to education grew modestly from €559 million in 2006 to €678 million in 2012, with the lowest provision (€517 million) being granted in 2008 and the highest (€737 million) in the global ‘peak year’ of 2010. In 2010, the EC committed an extra €1 billion to achieving the MDGs, and EU institutions were the third largest contributor of aid to education. While aid in general rose from 2006, education’s share of total aid only increased slightly from 5.8% to 6.2%.

EC direct support to basic education has declined, and secondary education is being neglected

EU direct support to basic education (and the focus of the present MDG2) has declined and was more than halved, from €237 to €110 million, from 2006 to 2013. In 2012, total support to basic education (including estimated provision through GPE and others) was slightly below the 2006 level, despite a commitment to increase aid to meet MDG2. Decline also characterizes secondary education support, which was already at an alarmingly low level (€116 million in 2006 to €81 million in 2012). At the same time, direct support to post-secondary education went up from €137 million in 2006 to €275 million in 2012. According to EuropeAid, EU education assistance amounted to €4.2 billion in 2007-2013, of which €2.9 billion went to primary, secondary and vocational education in 42 countries, and €1.3 billion to higher education. This reveals not only inadequate support to what are currently being advocated as the most important levels of education needing support post-2015, namely basic and secondary, it also shows a general tendency to

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55 Many donors’ contributions to education peaked in 2010 and have decreased markedly since. ‘Education Aid Watch’, Global Campaign for Education 2012. In the OECD–DAC database, EU institutions have reported 590 million USD of education aid in 2006 growing to 1090 million USD in 2012.
56 The EC affirmed its commitment to pursuing the MDGs and to achieving the target for member states’ ODA of 0.7% of Gross National Income (GNI) by 2015, EC Annual Report 2011.
57 UNESCO GMR has calculated that an average of fifty percent of ‘education, level unspecified’ is allocated to basic education, which means that around €270 million was provided in 2006 and €226 million in 2012 (see Annex 1).
record the costs of student-exchange programmes (in the case of EC exchange programmes for students from European and neighbourhood countries) as ODA.\(^5^9\) The EC is supporting Technical and Vocational Training programmes for young people in several countries, but there is a lack of exact data on how much is going on this. The low contributions for secondary-level education will have to be reversed to meet the large education and training needs of young people.

**Allocation of EC aid favours own neighbourhood and middle-income countries**

The EC provides most aid to education in middle-income countries and its own neighbourhood. Data from the EU External Assistance Annual Reports 2006–2012 show that Asia receives by far the largest share of EC aid to education, followed by European neighbouring countries and Africa and the Pacific (see Annex 2.5). In fact, EC aid to Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific declined from 2006 to 2012, while aid to Asia more than doubled. This is especially because of large support provided to Pakistan, Afghanistan, China and India.\(^6^0\) These middle-income countries are home to a large part of the world’s poor despite recent economic development, and thus the EC argues that education is a high priority here.\(^6^1\) The European Court of Auditors has shown that only 2.8% out of total programming allocated to Sub-Saharan Africa in the 2007–2013 period was provided to education. This is a decline from the 2003–2007 period, when 4.5% went to education. A similar picture is revealed when looking at income levels. In 2009–2010 only 14% of direct aid to education went to low-income countries, 39% to middle-income and 27% to upper middle-income countries, especially Turkey.\(^6^2\) These numbers are alarming, and criticised by several member states.\(^6^3\) However, the OECD–DAC peer review states that the EC’s main aim of poverty reduction and commitment to help those most in need has now been followed up with a move towards more blending of grants and loans with involvement of private investment in middle-income countries in order to be able to direct more funding to countries most in need.\(^6^4\) The EC needs to redirect aid towards those most in need: fragile states, poorest countries, and poorest sections of middle-income countries to follow the aim of poverty eradication.\(^6^5\)

**Strategic use of EC instruments may enhance the impact on education**

The European Development Fund (EDF) and the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) are the main EC instruments for ensuring education in the poorest countries. The EDF finances cooperation with African, Caribbean and Pacific countries (ACP) and overseas territories of EU member states, and EDF has a strong poverty focus, with about 85% of its aid delivered to low-income countries.\(^6^6\) Since 2007 the amount channelled through EDF has risen from €87 million to €149 million. Funds provided through the EDF increasingly support Sub-Saharan Africa through general budget support. In 2012, no direct support from EDF to basic education was recorded, but €132 million went to unspecified areas, of which around half is

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60 EC 2011, a study of donor policies, practices and investment priorities to inform the preparations for an EU sector strategy for education in developing countries. Independent report by HTSPE Limited and Euro Trends.
62 In comparison, 45% of total EC bilateral aid went to least developed countries (OECD 2012). As a report from the International Development Committee of the House of Commons asserts, the numbers also reflect the problematic definition of the ODA that allows for very wide definitions of what qualifies as aid.
64 OECD–DAC (2012) Peer Review of the European Union. This would also be a substantial step towards closing the financing gap as called for by UNESCO 2014.
65 EFA GMR Policy Paper 06, February 2013, ‘Education for All is affordable – by 2015 and beyond’.
66 See also DFID’s appreciation of this in the report by the International Development Committee, the House of Commons (2013) EU development aid.
likely to have reached basic education. 67 While EDF receives much praise, an evaluation of Dutch support to EDF concludes that very little is still known about its concrete results. 68

Instruments used for financing education

The EU has several instruments through which aid to education is provided: the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Initiative (ENPI), the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI–Geographic and Thematic) 69 and the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA), which are all part of the general budget under the heading Global Europe (around 70%); and the European Development Fund (EDF), which is funded through member states' individual contributions but also managed by the European Commission (around thirty percent of EU aid). 70

The DCI thematic instrument ‘Investing in People’ is directly aimed at education (alongside health, youth and children, and culture). A 2010 mid-term review concluded that ‘Investing in People’ can increase the overall impact of EU assistance if it is more specifically directed at promoting policy dialogue, knowledge generation and innovation in education. The thematic funding, it is stated, should underpin the EU’s role in shaping global initiatives and leveraging additional funding for bilateral programmes. At country level, the funding should aim at involving civil society in policy-making, policy implementation and monitoring, as well as supporting the creation of learning networks at the regional and global levels. 71 Funding for GPE is provided through ‘Investing in People’.

Another DCI thematic instrument, ‘Non-State actors and Local Authorities in Development’, can be applied for by NGOs working to help involving civil society in service provision and management. This is a way to train SMS and others for educational improvements. The objectives are to build civil-society networks to improve service delivery, to empower citizens to access basic services, to improve service delivery by supporting innovative partnership between NSAs, local authorities, the private sector and government institutions, and to empower citizens to exert an impact on policy formulation and implementation concerning basic services. A browse through supported projects in the previous programme period of 2007–2013 reveals that support to local authorities and NSAs that support local schooling is specifically prioritised.

EU budget support and project support: both have pros and cons for education

The EC has increasingly made use of general budget support (GBS) and sector budget support (SBS), a clear priority of the Agenda for Change. From 2007 to 2010 the amount channelled through GBS almost doubled from $873 to $1621 million. 72 While in line with international agreements, indicators are vague and impact difficult to measure. 73 The EC promotes a shared approach to budget support but faces pressure from member states who want to be able to trace aid, show results and thus argue for an increased use of project-based aid. 74 The EC is likely to provide less budget support in the new programme due to the emphasis on democracy and rights. 75

67 UNESCO 2012 has calculated that an average of fifty percent of aid reported as for unspecified areas goes to support basic education.
69 The geographical areas are Africa, the Caribbean and The Pacific (ACP), Asia. The thematic areas do not include education. It usually falls under ‘investing in people’ if put into the thematic framework.
70 EC 2011, Study on donor policies, practices and investment priorities to inform the preparation of an EU sector strategy for education in developing countries. Independent report by HTSPE Limited and Euro Trends.
73 The European Court of Auditors (2010).
75 Written interview, Marja Karjalainen, EC education.
General and sector budget support yields results, and the EC follows national sector priorities.\textsuperscript{76} An evaluation of EU aid to basic and secondary education in 2000–2007 further concluded that SBS and GBS have led to increased coordination and policy dialogue, especially when provided together with technical assistance.\textsuperscript{77} A joint evaluation of EC, Danish, Irish and Dutch aid to Tanzania concludes that, despite the challenges, neither project nor basket funding could have achieved the same results with the same degree of efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability as GBS did.\textsuperscript{78}

The EC budget support follows conditions and is coordinated with member states. GBS is only given where the EU trusts that aid will be spent in pursuing the values and objectives of the EC and according to international standards.\textsuperscript{79} If such conditions deteriorate, the EC will respond in a way that limits the impact on poor people by allocating funds to sector programmes, channelling funds via NGOs or reinforcing aid modalities such as projects. Choices should be coordinated between the EC and member states. In fact, the EC promotes a shared approach to budget support.\textsuperscript{80}

In challenging circumstances, the EC often relies on a greater extent of pooled funding and project support. The latter increases the likelihood of reaching the intended public but puts a greater administrative burden on the EC delegations.\textsuperscript{81} The European Court of Auditors (2010) finds that the analysed \textit{projects generally delivered activities and results but were unsustainable} because of a lack of funding and inadequate institutional arrangements. Civil-society organisations are laden with vast numbers of requirements to apply and spend valuable time with a very limited likelihood of success: this is harmful for impact on education. Procurement processes are bureaucratic and limit the access of smaller NGOs to funding, despite the intention to diversify and have strong involvement by and use of NGOs and civil-society actors.\textsuperscript{82} The mid-term review suggests two criteria for funding, which will link project support: have an impact on and carry forward the agenda in education (give the EU a voice in debates, establish platforms, support networks), and support the testing and scaling up of innovative approaches that ensure equality and quality.

\section*{EC priorities in practice}

The EC prioritises equity and quality education for children and youth, and has a strong focus on involving civil society in governance and thus ensuring these priorities. Nonetheless, impact is lacking and there is clearly room for improvements to ensure that priorities are followed by practice. This is even more important as the EC, in its new round of programming, prioritises support to fragile states, where the need to ensure equitable access to quality learning is immense.

\begin{itemize}
  \item[\textsuperscript{76}] The European Court of Auditors (2010).
  \item[\textsuperscript{77}] EC 2010, Thematic Evaluation of the European Commission’s support to the education sector in partner countries (including basic and secondary education).
  \item[\textsuperscript{81}] The reason for these hampering processes is a conservative system and strict auditing and control mechanisms. Special Report No.13/2013 – EU Development Assistance to Central Asia.
  \item[\textsuperscript{82}] The mid-term review of the thematic instrument ‘Investing in People’ states that annual calls for proposals received large numbers of applications (2007–2009) but that only a few received funding. EuropeAid (2010), Investing in people: Mid-term review of strategy paper for thematic programme 2007–2013.
\end{itemize}
Equity in access and participation: room for improvement

Access has been a firm priority of the EC, but with too little impact. In Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, although significant progress has been made in EC support to ensuring access to basic education, only 45% of the targets set were achieved (MDG2), and intended improvements are occurring too slowly to ensure that the 2015 targets will be met.83

The EC prioritises equitable access, especially for girls. An independent evaluation states that the EC has substantially contributed to increasing access and working towards MDGs up to 2007, as well as contributing ‘substantially’ to ensuring equitable access for boys and girls by supporting the enrolment of girls and recruiting female teachers (MDG3).84 A recent report confirms that the EC focus on inclusion has been significantly a matter of gender inequality, leaving out a host of other inequalities and disadvantages.85 However, in the regional strategy paper of 2008–2013 detailing EC cooperation with the regions of East and South Africa and the Indian Ocean, ‘increased equality of access’ is defined as ‘addressing geographical, gender and social imbalances’.

Clearly, equity and inclusion are areas where the EU can scale up its impact. To do so requires a much more sophisticated elaboration of inequalities than merely gender, and should draw extensively on the EU’s own experiences but also on the many experiences of NGOs working with specific forms of inequality and inclusion. An EC-commissioned study on donor policies from 2011 argues that a specific priority for the EU should be, ‘Education for social inclusion’. This requires EC and member states to work in stronger alignment, building on their collective longstanding tradition to work with social inclusion within Europe.86

Quality in education: a need for fundamental change

Quality is specifically prioritised by the EC in new programming. The priority of quality has so far not been followed by indications of how exactly this can be prioritised and measured. The EU should be encouraged to contribute actively to the discussion and development of indicators for quality that do not merely increase testing but are also used to develop better quality education.

The EC has been committed to quality in education, but impact is lacking. In ‘More and Better Education’ from 2010, quality is described as the foundation for education to combat poverty, inequality and conflict etc., and it includes an enabling environment, a relevant curriculum, good teachers, good school management and government accountability regarding education. However, in practice such improvements are difficult to find. The evaluation of EC support to the education sector in partner countries highlights the efforts made by the EC to assist partner governments in tackling the lack of quality in education, but it concludes that funding is inadequate and that the EC response is still not strong enough.87 Only a few of the intended improvements in quality were achieved. One reason is the fact that insufficient attention has been paid to developing indicators for quality education. Although the focus is on learning achievements, these are difficult to measure without sufficient data. Hence, they have been

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83 The European Court of Auditors report on EU aid to basic education in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia (2010).
84 For example, a targeted programme in Pakistan was highly successful in increasing girls’ enrolment in primary schools and in ensuring their access to secondary school. One way to ensure this was by training female teachers and promoting their leadership through quota in management roles. EC, 2010, ‘Thematic Evaluation of the European Commission’s support to the education sector in partner countries’ (including basic and secondary education).
85 EC 2011, Study on donor policies, practices and investment priorities to inform the preparation of an EU sector strategy for education in developing countries. Independent report by HTSPE Limited and Euro Trends.
86 EC 2011, Study on donor policies, practices and investment priorities to inform the preparation of an EU sector strategy for education in developing countries. Independent report by HTSPE Limited and Euro Trends, and Deutsche Institute for Entwicklungs politik (2012), ‘Can the EU confront inequality in developing countries?’ Briefing paper 14/2012.
87 EC 2010, ‘Thematic Evaluation of the European Commission’s support to the education sector in partner countries (including basic and secondary education)’. 
measured according to quantitative measures of examination pass rates, numbers of trained teachers and the school environment, and although EU aid has contributed to single indicators in different contexts, none of them are in any way sufficient to ensure quality.

The EC’s focus on quality suffers from a lack of data. The EC, like many donors, relies on education management information systems that are applied in many countries. Evidence shows that there are still great deficiencies in data, and reporting them is highly random. Nepal is one example, where every school has to report to EMIS and various other systems, yet research demonstrates a need for much more support in providing proper reporting. Monitoring of EU-funded interventions, SBS especially, is primarily done through joint reviews with development partners in the sector. Such reviews cover mostly financial issues and activities or processes rather than educational outcomes and impact. Equity and quality issues therefore cannot be measured.

Quality is not well defined. It is acknowledged that to ensure quality learning, the EC must prioritise ‘soft’ skills and go beyond measurable targets. According to the report from the EU High Level Conference on Education and Development in 2013, quality is not only important to ensure that pupils learn to read and write: it also means promoting non-violence, peace, tolerance, critical thinking and decision-making abilities. The EC mentions curriculum development as an important point, but does not provide clarity on the linkages between the different areas of human and social development and the content of the curriculum. These issues are of fundamental importance, especially in fragile states.

Citizen inclusion and governance: comparative advantages

In recent years, the EU has intensified its priority to support civil inclusion and involvement in education in several ways. This is specifically mentioned in the strategic priorities, and a new policy is under way. Thematic instruments specifically support local actor involvement in education, and the ‘structured dialogues’ (in Europe and abroad), which Alliance2015 is also part of, enhance civil-society inclusion in the EU’s educational work.

The EC has supported the setting up of School Management Committees, and in several instances this has increased community and especially parent control over head teachers and the proper use of resources.

Moreover, the EC has a specific aim, and instrument, to support non-state actors (NSAs) in service provision. The EC has also supported citizen involvement through SBS programmes as well as the project modality. A browse through calls for proposals from 2006 to 2014 reveals that citizen involvement to ensure provision of and accountability for education is an increasing priority, especially in fragile states. One evaluation concludes that the EC’s support to NSAs has added value to education support and improved local-level democracy. There are examples of civil-society watchdog support being integrated into education programmes and successfully ‘collecting, commenting on and publishing achievements within the education sector’. Supporting this, the mid-term review of the ‘Investing in People’ instrument 2007–2013 recommends supporting the strengthening of NGOs and civil-society involvement in policy dialogue and the testing and scaling up of innovative education projects (new attempts to ensure equality and quality across the board).

Finally, the EU has a great advantage by being home to a large group of the best-established and best-performing NGOs within education. These NGOs work with non-state actors and civil-society organisations

88 The European Court of Auditors 2010, ‘Joint evaluation of the education sector programme in Nepal’.
89 European Court of Auditors (2010), Petersen (2013).
91 EC 2010, ‘Thematic Evaluation of the European Commission’s support to the education sector in partner countries (including basic and secondary education)’.
92 Revealed in calls for proposals.
93 EC 2010, Thematic Evaluation of the European Commission’s support to the education sector in partner countries (including basic and secondary education), p. 86.
in partner countries. Coordination with these NGOs to ensure that the instruments supporting NSAs and civil society are integrated strategically as a primary means for ensuring both equitable access and quality in the EC’s education work should be enhanced post-2015.

**Education in contexts of fragility and conflict, including for young people**

As a response to the global education challenges and current priorities of global donors, the EC is committed to prioritising its support more strategically to those countries most in need, especially poor countries and fragile states. This will require a change from the trends of 2006–2013. UNESCO and INEE, among others, have demonstrated the immense importance of education in shaping peace and stability, as evidenced by the OECD’s Education in contexts of fragility and conflict, which provides greater emphasis on fragile states and on bridging humanitarian and development, argues for increased coordination and less bureaucratic procedures on the part of the EC to ensure such bridging. International Development Committee (2013) EU development aid.

There is a need for better coordination between the different instruments so that specific parts of peace and stability funds are earmarked for education as a crucial factor for ensuring peace, and as an important way to improve the bridging between humanitarian and development work. Education is one area in which such bridging is crucial because evidence shows that the largest peace and development dividends occur where aid is not only provided rapidly by humanitarian organisations but also followed up and taken over by NGOs with great experience of working in unstable situations, as well as providing longer-term assistance, which is the sine qua non for building sustainable education. One example is Liberia, where a number of NGOs provided Accelerated Learning Programmes (ALP) to provide young people with a second chance to achieve a primary education, while at the same time cooperating with the government. This resulted in ALP being integrated into the official education policy.

The OECD–DAC peer review notes that the disconnect between development and humanitarian assistance is a main constraint for the EC. In the new strategy, the EC aims to link humanitarian and development programmes to ensure that education plays a role in state-building. There are no concrete details as to how this highly relevant issue will be handled. The EC has strengthened its engagement with INEE through its increased focus on fragile states, and such engagement should be supported to enable more bridging between humanitarian and development work, as well as to ensure a focus on relevance and quality in highly sensitive circumstances.

**EU capacity and expertise on education: a necessity to make priorities come true**

One of the greatest challenges hampering the EU’s impact on education is the lack of expertise. The European Court of Auditors has requested at least one education expert be recruited for every country where the EU has a sector programme, as the lack thereof clearly weakens policy dialogue, participation in joint working groups and monitoring. The situation is serious, and even in terms of support from headquarters, there seem to be inadequate procedures for ensuring needs and priorities. After the recent merger into DG Development Cooperation-EuropeAid, the team working on education has been reduced to only four persons.

In South Sudan, for example, EU joint programming is piloted but has been hampered because of serious delays in scaling up the EU delegation. In Liberia, EC support to education was seriously delayed, which adversely affected many activities and results. Although the High Commissioner for Development

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96 Petersen (2013), op. cit.
97 Especially because of the compartmentalisation of numerous small projects that are not sought to be linked, either to each other or to sector institutions or any longer-term framing. OECD (2012), DAC Peer Review of the European Union. DfID, which is a lead agency on fragile states and on bridging humanitarian and development, argues for increased coordination and less bureaucratic procedures on the part of the EC to ensure such bridging. International Development Committee (2013) EU development aid.
98 Interview with Karen Schroh, GPE. Also emphasised in the European Court of Auditors (2010).
100 International Development Committee, the House of Commons (2013) EU development aid.
personally drew attention to the problem, it took 25 months for a technical expert to arrive to assist the programme. Sierra Leone will receive education sector support from the EU for the first time, and the head of the EU delegation confirms that they coordinate matters closely with DfID and other donors and expect to get ‘the necessary specialist knowledge’ to deliver on the programme.\(^{101}\)

In the previous programme period, most delegates around the world who are responsible for health and education (a joined position) have had their professional backgrounds in health.\(^{102}\) In order to influence education to ensure equality, quality and help strengthen governance and civil involvement in it, the EC will need more expertise. Currently, delegations have to obtain advice and support in matters of education from EC headquarters. This is, of course, a longer process and represents a large burden for a small office of education staff, given the number of countries that the EC supports.

The role of the EC in alignment and coordination

Following the Paris Declaration, and the Lisbon Treaty, the EC has a strong priority to ensure alignment with national priorities and coordination with EU member states and various global actors in development work.

National priorities versus conditionality

*The EC has successfully increased the alignment of its support to education with partner country policies and priorities*. One independent evaluation notes that a main strength of the EC is its agreement and ability to follow national priorities.\(^{103}\) Member state donors that are or have been present in countries where the EC supports the education sector confirm this point.\(^{104}\) The evaluation notes that, when supporting partner countries through budget support, the EC has tended to overestimate the quality of existing structures, assuming that they can reform and become quality-oriented, for example, and to underestimate costs and time necessary for additional improvements.\(^{105}\) This is an important point indicating the need for the EC to provide long-term and substantial funding, supplemented by capacity development in order to follow quality measures through.

The EC and its delegations make thorough analyses to choose the most appropriate modalities in each context. In fact the evaluation concludes that ‘the EC is probably one of the most coherent and persistent development partners in this respect’.\(^{106}\)

*Recently the EU has been more strategic and has entered into dialogue with national priorities*. In the recent 2014–2020 programming exercise, many delegations found they had limited room for manoeuvre in terms of priorities, given what were seen as ‘prescriptive instructions’ from Brussels. It was felt that in some countries national priorities were being neglected to a substantial degree. One officer explains how sector choices were made before the programming process had even started, ‘but we still have to pretend that there is a process’.\(^{107}\) Exact numbers are still not official, but education seems to have been a less common choice as a priority sector across EU programming for 2014–2020 than in the past.\(^{108}\) At the same time,

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\(^{101}\) Written interview, EU delegation, Sierra Leone.

\(^{102}\) Interview with Karen Schroh, GPE.

\(^{103}\) EC 2010, *Evaluation of the European Commission’s support to the education sector in partner countries (including basic and secondary education)*.

\(^{104}\) Interviews (DfID Sierra Leone, Danida Nepal).

\(^{105}\) EC 2010, Evaluation of the European Commission’s support to the education sector in partner countries (including basic and secondary education).

\(^{106}\) EC 2010, Evaluation of the European Commission’s support to the education sector in partner countries (including basic and secondary education), p. 87.

\(^{107}\) Herrero, Alisa; Galeazzi, Greate; Krätke, Florian (2013), ‘Early experiences in programming EU aid 2014–2020: Charting the Agenda for Change’, European Center for Development Policy Management, Briefing Note 54

\(^{108}\) Marianne Kress of EEAS says that numbers are only made available to member states in late March.
some countries have now selected the education sector for support, encouraged by the delegation where
the EU has not previously provided education support (for example, Sierra Leone and Haiti).

In the Agenda for Change, the priorities placed on human rights, good governance and greater democracy
are linked with more conditionalities. At the same time, the intention to work with differentiated
development partnerships to seek to target resources where they are needed the most to address poverty
reduction, and where they could have greatest impact (and value for money), necessarily implies less
willingness to take risks. In combination, this could result in ‘less or no development grant aid’ for several
countries and a different aid relationship with others. Such an approach has adverse implications for
education. It makes support to the work of building up an education system in fragile situations, for
example, after conflict, highly difficult. As DfID notes, research shows that conditionalities are not
conducive to reform, as they hinder performance and are overburdening. DfID makes it clear that to reach
the poorest, and to aid the building up of badly governed education systems, good governance and
democratisation conditionalities can have adverse effects. Research confirms that conditionalities in ACP
countries can conflict with the EU objectives of promoting development and poverty reduction.

In terms of the cooperation with national governments, the recent OECD–DAC peer review notes that the
EC is strong in policy dialogue, and a recent Dutch evaluation concludes that that is even more the case
when it is conducted by the EC and member states in cooperation. Following the comprehensive
approach of an Agenda for Change that emphasises linkages between education and other areas may
provide a basis for the EU to encourage donors and countries to prioritise education and realise the
fundamental importance of education for achievements in other development areas. While support to
central government institutions is strong, a recent EC report on donor policies points to the importance of
supporting the decentralised levels, which is where implementation and changes at the local level should
be initiated and supported.

To scale up the impact, the EU must be encouraged to build on its strengths in following national priorities
and lessening conditionalities regarding aid to education. At the same time, the strength in policy dialogue
should be encouraged so it can be put to use for increased support for education among donors and
partner countries.

Coordination between the EC and member states

The EU prioritises coordination and alignment, especially between the EC and member states. In the
‘Agenda for Change’, ‘A Decent Life for All’ and the new Multi-Annual Financial Framework, coordination,
cooperation and joint EU (EC–member states) programming are listed as top priorities.

The European Consensus on Development of 2005 defines development cooperation as a shared
competence between the European Commission and the member states. The statement places strong
emphasis on improving coordination and complementarity. Specifically, it states that the Commission’s
global presence enables it to ‘respond to a wide variety of situations, including fragile states where member
states have withdrawn’.

Contemporary European Research 7(3).
110 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, 2013. The Netherlands and the European Development Fund: principles and
111 Expectations should not be too high, though, as evaluations of general budget support indicate that donors rarely achieve much
in policy dialogue.
112 EC 2012 Study on donor policies.
In the Commission staff working paper accompanying Agenda for Change, greater alignment and coordination between the Commission and member states in carrying out development aid is strongly emphasised. It is stated that a maximum of three sectors and fewer geographical areas will strengthen EU impact. Selection needs to be based on the strength and special advantages of the EC and member states within these areas. This means that the EC will no longer be a ‘gap-filler’ where other countries are absent or have withdrawn. In the current EU landscape, where several member states are cutting their bilateral aid to education, this strategy can have adverse implications for partner countries and for achieving MDG2.

There are many examples of coordination between the EU and its member states (and other donors). One is from the world’s largest basic education programme, Sarva Shikshya Abhiyan (SSA) in India, where the EC was concerned with quality and public–private partnerships in education, and coordinated well with the World Bank and DFID to avoid duplication. DFID was specifically concerned with ensuring access and issues of equity. In Nepal and Sierra Leone, member state donors (Denmark and UK) have experienced willingness on the part of the EU delegation to engage with and follow the recommendations of existing donors within the sector, to where they lacked capacity.

In practice, EU member states coordinate with other donors who are present in the local context, be they EU members or not. The EC is a valued partner and is generally acknowledged for drawing on bilateral donors’ expertise and following an agreed division of labour, but member states do not wish to systematise a joint approach, as it will limit their independence. In the recent new policy on budget support, the Commission encourages member states to adopt the same policy to achieve a coordinated approach on the part of the EU as a whole. However, not all member states favour budget support, and such a coordinated approach is unlikely to happen.

**The EU and the global agenda**

The EU plays an active role in all large-scale debates and forums on education, such as the post-2015 goal formulation, representing a shared position. Through the EC’s engagement in the GPE and the International Task Force for Teachers, the Association for Development of Education in Africa and the Inter-Agency Network on Education in Emergencies, the EU contributes to global debates and actions that have a bearing on equity and quality development.

Several bilateral donors assert that the EU is a strong vehicle for addressing global challenges for education, especially because the EC is active in a range of sectors (for example, construction, which few member states engage in) and activities (such as policies on trade, agriculture, energy, migration etc.), which allow for a comprehensive take on the multiple facets preventing equal access and quality. Through its new structures and enhanced focus on fragile states, it also has the potential to join areas of humanitarian and development aid and diplomacy, and to influence global priorities by representing the voice of the EC plus member states, as was the case with ‘A Decent Life for All’ presented in Bhusan in 2011.

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117 Interviews with DFID–Sierra Leone and Danida–Nepal.
118 To improve implementation, the Practitioners Network for European Development Cooperation has been established. Here, practitioners from different member state bilateral aid agencies meet to exchange experiences and feed into the enhanced impact of EU development aid and cooperation. The network is an attempt to enhance the practical take on priorities and thus enhance impact. See the network homepage: [http://www.dev-practitioners.eu](http://www.dev-practitioners.eu)
The EC and the Global Partnership for Education

A main way for the EC to align itself is through its support to the Global Partnership for Education. Countering the recent trends in EC funding, GPE support helps assure that EC funds are directed towards basic education in countries that are most in need. The EU pledged to allocate €31.8 million to the GPE fund between 2011 and 2013. The GPE is in line with the priorities of the EC, and the EC plays an active role on the board. One of the biggest advantages of the GPE for the EC is the fact that it has strong expertise in education and valuable networks of competent persons that the EC can draw on and align with when supporting countries where it lacks capacity.

At a European High Level Conference on Education and Development in 2013, Andris Piebalgs reconfirmed the strong EC commitment to the GPE. There are high expectations that the EU will increase its pledge at the next replenishment conference in 2014, since it will be hosted by the EU in Brussels.

Six member states’ aid to education

Major changes, drawbacks and improvements have occurred in recent years to member state aid to education, changes that influence overall EU aid to education. They are dealt with one by one, as their trends, specific strengths and weaknesses and strategic priorities are very different and thus entail different prospects for increasing the impact on education. There is great variation in data availability, and the exact data found in OECD–DAC databases, annual reports and publications analysing these countries (especially the Education Aid Watch) have proved difficult to verify (graphs based on OECD-DAC data are annexed). The data on aid used here primarily come from OECD–DAC (commitments). A matrix of member states’ priorities is annexed.

Denmark prioritises multilateral education aid and is strong in advocacy

Denmark is a strong donor, increasingly so to education. The country is among the top ten providers to education among EU member states. Several trends are apparent First an increasing commitment to education. Between 2007 and 2012 Danish ODA support to education rose from $53 to $206 million, and aid to education as a share of total aid is now 7.7%. This indicates a strong and growing Danish commitment to education. The recent Eurobarometer also shows strong public support to aid and to education, despite a lack of knowledge about development.

Second, in terms of distribution, support to basic education (bilaterally) has declined but is still strong and makes up 43%. Aid to secondary education has increased, but from an immensely low level of less than $1 million in 2006 to $9.5 million in 2012. Post-secondary education support has been hugely increased (from barely $2 to $45 million), and so has support to education, level unspecified (from around $1 to almost $131 million USD in the period).

Third, Denmark provides its education aid primarily to Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia (mostly Nepal and Afghanistan). Provisions are difficult to capture, but aid is increasingly channelled through GBS and SBS, with some additional project funding for NGOs.

Fourth, multilateral aid is the top priority. Denmark attempts to channel as much funding as possible through multilateral donors, especially the GPE, provided they are in line with Danish priorities. By 2015, all bilateral partnerships will be phased out, except Afghanistan. Denmark has also been a ‘champion’ in

120 Interview with Karen Schroh, EU representative to the GPE, and Jesper Anders, responsible for Education and Danish involvement in GPE, Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
122 GPE 2013 Education Aid Watch.
supporting the Global Education First Initiative. Fragile states are the exception, where support is often provided through UNICEF. Denmark is phasing out all bilateral aid (except in a few fragile states like Afghanistan) by 2015. Consequently, multilateral contributions should increase.

Fifth, fragile states are the highest priority. Denmark’s support to education has made a sharp turn towards fragile states since 2006. South Sudan and Nepal have been priority countries, but in recent years they have been replaced in this respect by Afghanistan. Denmark is a lead bilateral donor to education in Afghanistan. Denmark has increasingly adopted a strong focus on results and effectiveness since 2006, and has remained firm in its commitment to the principles of good governance and democratisation as necessary components in facilitating education.

Denmark has been strong in its bilateral support to national education plans and is perceived as ‘results-oriented, realistic and fair’. Countries from which bilateral aid to education has been withdrawn will find new ways of acquiring funds, but they decry the loss of a long and trustful relationship and of a partner with expertise and context sensitivity.

GPE support
Besides a general increase in funding for education, Denmark has provided active leadership in its support to the Global Partnership to Education, both politically and financially. GPE is in line with Denmark’s strategic priorities (fragile states, supporting girls, equality, quality, financing). Since 2011 funding previously going to bilateral education programmes has been allocated through the GPE. Around half of all aid to education is now provided through GPE (2013), and Denmark is expected to increase its financial support and its influential role further in the future.

The strategic priorities
Denmark no longer has an education strategy. In 2012, a new development strategy, ‘The right to a better life’, emphasised all persons’ right to education, a specific concern with security and stability in fragile states, and the strengthening of Denmark’s multilateral engagement in education. The most explicit mention is of poor farmers and especially young people’s education (improved opportunities for vocational training are crucial) to raise productivity and create jobs.

- Equitable access and participation is an explicit priority, especially concerning girls and women, but also other minority groups. Equal distribution and rights to education is a top priority in influencing supported multilateral donors and organisations and in dialogue with developing countries. Denmark has remained firm in supporting equal access for girls for a long time.
- Quality is not directly mentioned in the new strategy, but it has traditionally been a strong focus in Danish bilateral aid through support to teacher training, curriculum development, monitoring and assessment tools. In terms of content, education should be based on democratic values and promote active citizenship and non-discrimination. The educational level to be supported is also not carved in stone, due to the policy of following national priorities.
- Civil-society involvement is favoured by Danish development aid, which has a specific strategy for civil-society support and involvement. Civil-society actors are supported in demanding rights and in holding government, especially at the local and district levels, accountable for delivering education. Local authorities’ capacity development should be supported alongside civil-society organisations’ concrete programmes to enhance equality and good education.

Denmark has played a strong and commendable part as a role model in providing education aid to countries most in need, following national priorities and advocating education, both for the Global

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123 Frank Rothaus of the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, citing a Nepalese counterpart.
124 Interview, L. Awasthi, MOE, Nepal.
125 The right to a better life, Danish strategy for development cooperation, Danida 2012.
Education First Initiative and by hosting the first GPE replenishment conference. This is clearly a comparative advantage of a relatively small country. Advocacy has due weight because Denmark is appreciated for its efforts in former partner countries.

France is a large donor with too much inflated aid but strong policy support

France is the second-largest donor to education within the EU, having provided $1487 million in 2011.\textsuperscript{126} France increased budget support from 2009-2011, and the OECD–DAC peer review commends France for its engagement at the global level and for promoting innovative financing.\textsuperscript{127} Nonetheless, the numbers disguise three discouraging trends. First, declining support to education. Since 2006, French education support has declined by more than $300 million (from $1790 million to $1429 million in 2012). A majority of the French public does not support cutting aid, but less than a third consider education to be an essential priority.\textsuperscript{128}

Second, there has been too little support for basic education. By far most of the French aid to education, 73% (in 2011), is given to the post-secondary level, and this is masking the fact that France reports scholarships and livelihood support to students from developing countries coming to France as development aid. In 2006, aid to basic education was $105 million and to secondary education $72 million. From 2007 to 2010 the support was increased to an average of around $200 million per year to basic education and an average of almost $250 million to secondary education, the latter being the largest, which is highly unusual. However, in 2011 aid to both levels was drastically cut to $132 million to basic education and only $112 million to secondary education. In 2011 basic education in Sub-Saharan Africa received only four percent of total aid to education.\textsuperscript{129}

Third, geopolitical self-interest partly directs French aid to education. France is concerned to support countries most in need, but primarily in francophone Africa. Recent analysis shows that by far the largest sum of aid to education is allocated to French territories and former colonies.\textsuperscript{130} Until 2011, almost fifty percent of education aid to Sub-Saharan Africa went to the former French overseas territory (middle-income) of Mayotte in the Comoros Islands.

GPE support

France is a strong moral supporter of the GPE and committed $47 million to it from 2011 to 2013. It has been commended for the active role of its country-level experts in leading the Local Education Groups in several countries. French representatives are also very actively engaged on the board.\textsuperscript{131}

Strategic priorities

France has a strong focus on creating professional skills and expertise, which explains the high support it gives to higher education.

- Equitable access is prioritised as increasing access without discrimination, with the specific aim of supporting the MDG of gender equality.

\textsuperscript{126} Based on EU external assistance annual reports.
\textsuperscript{127} OECD–DAC peer review of France 2013.
\textsuperscript{128} http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_405_fact_fr_en.pdf
\textsuperscript{129} GCE 2013 Education Aid Watch 2013.
\textsuperscript{130} The GCE (2013) Education Aid Watch 2013 shows how, until 2010, the small Comoro Island of Mayotte received 52 per cent of all French aid allocated to education in Sub-Saharan Africa. However, from 2011 this Island could no longer be classified as an aid receiving country according OECD, indicating that Mayotte is far from being on a level with most of Sub-Saharan African where the education crisis is most apparent.
\textsuperscript{131} Interview with Karen Schroh, GPE.
Quality of education should be supported through improved teacher training. High-quality basic schooling and middle schools are a priority. Support to government in achieving this has the aim of improving living conditions, strengthening national cohesion and bolstering institutional legitimacy.

There is no direct mention of civil-society involvement. This is a criticism made by the recent OECD–DAC peer review.\textsuperscript{132}

France is an important player in both the EU and GPE, where it is commended for being highly supportive of the strategic priorities. It is the lead agency in several of the LEGs. However, the strongly inflated aid to exchange students should not be reported as education aid; instead aid should be redirected to countries that are most in need. More transparency in aid reporting is also required, as is much more civic involvement.

**Germany will mainstream education in all aid, but has high imputed student costs**

Germany has an ambitious education strategy and shows a strong political commitment to the importance of education, both in the actual amount of funding and in the relative importance given to education in its aid.\textsuperscript{133} Germany is by far the largest provider of aid to education in the EU. Between 2008 and 2010, Germany was the second-largest donor to education in the world. There is relatively strong public support for prioritising aid to education.\textsuperscript{134} The trends are for increased support to education: the amount gradually increased from $1367 million in 2006 to $1998 million in 2012.\textsuperscript{135} From 2006 to 2013 the share of overall aid allocated to education grew from 13% to 15%. This is a considerable share compared to most donors, and above the recommended 10%.\textsuperscript{136} Moreover, \textit{aid to basic education in Sub-Saharan Africa has increased} as well. In a recent policy paper, UNESCO stated that \textit{Germany was among the four countries that had increased aid} to education and thus helped to ease the general decline in support for basic education.\textsuperscript{137} There is a second, less positive trend: \textit{imputed student costs account for most education aid}. In fact, in 2012 imputed student costs made up as much as 62% of the German aid budget to education, compared to an annual average of 54% between 2008 and 2011.\textsuperscript{138} According to UNESCO, scholarships and imputed student costs make up eleven times the amount provided for strengthening national systems of secondary and vocational training. Germany has recently increased its commitment to basic education in Africa, but actual allocations are decreasing because more than expected has been distributed to higher education.\textsuperscript{139}

Germany records the imputed student costs of students from developing countries studying in Germany (a cost that is actually covered by the federal states) as ODA.

Third, although Germany is committed to education support, there are several limitations. A two decade-old budget regulation places restrictions on aid, \textit{allowing only thirty percent of aid to be channeled through multilateral funds}. This constrains Germany from coordinated action and support provided through the GPE. Moreover, since 2009 Germany has decreased budget support and increased the tying of aid to improve the visibility of German aid.

**GPE support**

\textsuperscript{132} OECD–DAC peer review of France 2013.
\textsuperscript{134} http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_405_fact_de_en.pdf
\textsuperscript{135} OECD–DAC data, extracted from OECD.stat on 15 November 2013.
\textsuperscript{136} GCE 2013, ‘Education Aid Watch 2013’, Global Campaign for Education.
\textsuperscript{138} GCE 2013 Education Aid Watch 2013. As a comparison, 14 out of 23 DAC donors did not even count such costs as aid, and those who did spent an average of around 23% of their total aid to education on imputed student costs. UNESCO has been highly critical of German priorities, noting that money spent on students (scholarships and imputed costs) makes up eleven times the amount provided to education directed at young people in need, i.e. secondary education and vocational training.
\textsuperscript{139} GCE 2013 Education Aid Watch 2013.
Germany strongly supports GPE, and has launched the important BACK UP initiative (which does not count as multilateral aid), which provides funds for GPE board constituencies from partner countries to meet and prepare their positions prior to meetings. This has greatly increased their influence and thus partner impact on education support.  

Strategic priorities

Germany has an ambitious strategy aiming to mainstream education as a key area of its development policy. Ten objectives for more education have been adopted to guide the process of mainstreaming education as a key area of German development policy:

- Overcoming educational deprivation is the top priority
- Promote education on a holistic basis
- Improve the quality of and access to basic education
- Further expand vocational education and training
- Strengthen higher education and research instead of neglecting the talent available
- Replace outmoded concepts with innovative approaches in education
- Involve all important actors to a greater degree
- Cooperate more closely with the private sector
- Make education measures more effective
- Make education more relevant and more visible

Working through a vision of holistically embracing three dimensions – the ‘system’, the ‘actors’ and the ‘people’ – the strategy aims to address all areas of education. It is stated that universal access to high-quality education helps individuals take control of their lives. The programme will cover all levels from early childhood to adult education and especially address the concern that people should acquire skills for work.

- In terms of equity, education for women and girls is a special priority. The aim is to cooperate with governments to introduce gender equality in legislation and education reforms. It will provide scholarships for girls, ensure more female teachers and make schools more ‘girl friendly’ in equipment, teaching methods and curricula. It will specifically advocate the abolition of discriminatory rules. There is a concern to ensure special courses for disabled people and to integrate disadvantaged children and young people in conflict areas with the aim of preventing violence, providing political education and raising awareness of human rights.
- Quality education should be promoted through teacher training (especially of women) and curriculum development. The latter is a main priority in cooperation with partner countries to ensure that education is relevant to children’s needs. There is a strong focus on the need to pay close attention to curricula in order to ensure quality and make education play a role in peace, sustainability and preparation for work.
- Civic involvement is also a priority. Germany supports the participation of communities and parents in promoting primary education. A specific concern is to motivate parents to send girls to school and to counter corruption in school.

Germany is making a strong call for continued support to the large number of poor people living in middle-income countries as a main way to combat inequality. It also aims to continue providing massive support

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140 Interview with Karen Schroh, GPE.
142 Deutsche Institute for Entwicklungspolitik (2012), ‘Can the EU confront inequality in developing countries?’, briefing paper 14/2012.
for exchange students. The policy straitjacket of 70-30 bilateral-multilateral allocation should be a concern for national advocacy, to alter regulations so that Germany can follow the global call for coordinated support. In a similar vein, Germany is decreasing its general budget support and will instead use project implementation to increase the visibility of German support. This is a trend that runs counter to the Paris Declaration, as well as to the recommendations and priorities of the GPE. However, if the aim to mainstream education in development is turned into practice, Germany will be a lead donor in this respect.

The Netherlands deprioritises education

This small country has been a champion within development aid, and until 2010 it was a lead donor within education. In fact, in 2008, the Netherlands was the world’s second-largest donor to basic education. From 2011, aid priorities in the Netherlands underwent a fundamental transformation. 143 There is one overarching trend: education is no longer a priority area, and apparently, by 2017, there will be almost no education aid left (there is a planned 75% reduction from 2010 to 2014). 146 In 2014–15 most Dutch aid will go to secondary and higher education, and by 2017 only 40 million Euros will remain as aid to education and will be used to support exchange students. The massive shift away from education does not reflect public opinion in the Netherlands, where 41% consider that education should be a main priority post-2015. 145

Up until 2011, the Netherlands strongly supported aid to basic education. UNESCO argues that Dutch reductions have had a marked effect on general aid to basic education in that total aid decreased by 25% as the Dutch aid was cut. 146 The cutback in aid will reduce the number of countries receiving bilateral aid from 33 to 16 by 2015.

GPE support

While bilateral aid has been cut, the Dutch have committed €30 million per year (2011 to 2014) to the GPE. The Netherlands, in its heyday as a provider of aid to education, was among the founders of the EFA Fast Track Initiative’ (FTI), now the GPE, and has been a crucial partner in formulating GPE policies. Clearly, the Netherlands has had a strong advantage as an advocate within education. 147 The Netherlands is still a strong proponent within the GPE, where it is part of a constituency on the board, but of late its voice seems to hold less weight. 148 Practice preaches, and such a drastic turn away from education undermines trust. Nonetheless, the Netherlands will continue to support GPE as an alternative to terminated Dutch aid, and it has unique expertise and experience in influencing decisions, although there is no gap-filling by GPE when bilateral donors withdraw.

Strategic priorities

The Netherlands has shifted its focus from social to economic sectors and from dependence to greater self-reliance. In a letter outlining development cooperation, education is defined as a non-priority, only to be supported if it is directly related to productivity or trade, or to peace. It will continue or even increase support to vocational and general education in fragile states as part of its aim to promote peace.

- Equality is mentioned as a necessity to increase the agricultural productivity of girls and women.
- Quality is taken care of through the support provided to GPE. Basic education is supported through UNICEF with the purpose of making people more resilient and independent and strengthening

143 The analysis of Dutch aid to education provided by the GCE Education Aid Watch 2013, drawing on OECD–DAC statistics, show very different trends than those appearing from a retrieval of the same data from OECD–DAC as of mid-November 2013.
147 GCE 2013 ‘Education Aid Watch 2013’.
148 Not officially but in practice according to several interviewees.
peace and social cohesion. The Netherlands will invest in vocational and higher education by providing student grants and teacher training where these are directly linked to the key priority areas of food security, water and sexual and reproductive rights.

- There is no direct mention of civic involvement in education. The Netherlands has supported civic involvement but primarily through Dutch NGOs, not southern NGOs, as OECD–DAC recommends it to do.\(^{149}\)

The Netherlands has influenced recent EU policy-making on EDF and the use of budget support, and is clearly committed to ensuring EU impact. The Netherlands can contribute to scaling up the EU impact on education because of its unique and long-term experience as a lead donor and as an appreciated partner in education. This requires a re-commitment to education, if not as prioritised sector, then through strategic support to GPE and other partners and by sharing expertise and by connecting partners to other donors and possibilities when bilateral aid is withdrawn. The role of the EU in mitigating the effects of Dutch withdrawal needs special attention, as it may not entail gap-filling but support to connecting with other financing possibilities.

The Republic of Ireland has decreased aid but strongly supports basic education in the poorest countries

Ireland is a small contributor to education on a global scale, but it is not insignificant in the EU due to its high quality. The recent trends are decreasing aid to education, but with commitment to education remaining high. Although Ireland was tremendously affected by the economic recession, the level of aid to education has only fallen to the same level as in 2006 (around $63 million) after peaking in 2008 at $119 million. Perhaps surprisingly given the crisis, the Irish public still largely support Ireland’s commitments to aid and aid to education.\(^{150}\)

Second, basic education and countries most in need are the main recipients. Despite the cuts, the recent GCE report ‘Education Aid Watch 2013’ commends Ireland for retaining a strong focus on aid to basic education in some of the African countries that are most in need. Seventy percent of all aid to education is allocated to Sub-Saharan-Africa.\(^{151}\)

Third, almost all Irish aid to education is going directly to partner countries, and it is a characteristic of Ireland that its quality of aid is high (very little tied and inflated aid).\(^{152}\) Ireland has a strong focus on supporting national education systems and plans.

Irish Aid’s operational plan for 2008–2012 focused on adopting an increasingly results-based approach. Unlike the general trend among donors, Ireland has not adopted a specific priority of fragile states, but it achieves this nonetheless through its support to the GPE. OECD–DAC commends Ireland for its strong focus on poverty, its effectiveness and for being flexible, predictable and committed to following the national priorities of partner countries.\(^{153}\)

GPE support

Ireland has committed almost 14 million euros to the GPE for the period 2011–2014 and pledged to allocate 50% of its aid to education to four GPE partner countries. Ireland is actively engaged in the GPE and has been commended for its good and qualified work by other members.\(^{154}\)

Strategic priorities

\(^{149}\) OECD—DAC 2011 Peer review, the Netherlands.


\(^{151}\) Irish Aid, ‘Education Policy and Strategy: building sustainable education systems for poverty reduction’.

\(^{152}\) GCE 2013, ‘Education Aid Watch 2013’.

\(^{153}\) OECD–DAC 2009, Peer review Ireland.

\(^{154}\) Interviews with Jesper Andersen, Danida, and Karen Schroh, GPE.
Ireland prioritises access to primary education, the strengthening of national systems, quality education and education for girls, as well as increased research.

- **Universal access and equity are specified as concerning specifically girls**, albeit also meeting the needs of marginalised and vulnerable children and young people. Ireland wants to advocate policies and strategies to remove barriers to educational access for the poorest and most disadvantaged.

- Ireland prioritises significant improvements in quality through the support of national systems, with a special focus on teacher training, curriculum development and quality assessment systems, and is thus very much in line with the recommendations of the recent EFA Global Monitoring Report. The main emphasis is on high-quality primary education in developing countries, especially for marginalised and vulnerable children not in school.

- **Civil involvement is a high priority**, and Ireland is commended for its structured approach to cooperation with NGOs. It will support civic participation through work with civil-society organisations that advocate and provide services for marginalised and disadvantaged groups excluded from educational services. It will also continue to support a broad range of civil-society organisations to develop capacities for advocacy, coalition-building and basic education delivery aligned with national plans.

Ireland is a small donor country, but a model of sincere commitment to education, with a strong focus on equity, quality and civil involvement, and with by far the majority of funds going to countries that are most in need. Moreover, it is a role model for following national priorities and not tying aid. However, Ireland needs to increase its aid to education to previous levels as soon as this is financially feasible.

The United Kingdom has outstanding strength in aid to education

The UK is a strong player in both development aid and aid to education.\(^{155}\) The UK’s aid priorities seem to be supported by public opinion.\(^{156}\) The strongest trends are, first, opposing global trends: the **UK is increasing aid budgets, including for aid to education**. The UK is the third-largest donor to education within the EU (raising aid from $412 to $1046 million between 2006 and 2011)\(^{157}\) and is increasing aid to education as a part of its total aid budget, from 9% in 2008 to 12% in 2011.

Second, **the UK has become the world’s largest donor to basic education** due its strong commitment alongside cuts by other major donors. In 2011, 40% of all aid to education went to basic education and only 6% to secondary education (until 2007 UK aid to secondary education was almost zero). It prioritises aid to low-income countries and those furthest away from meeting the MDGs 2 and 3.

Third, the UK is **spearheading the current turn towards supporting education in conflict-affected and fragile states**. As much as half of its bilateral aid to education will now be spend in such countries.

Fourth, the UK **strongly supports multilateral aid to education**, including through UNESCO and the World Bank’s International Development Association (IDA), and with its current influence and its continued support it is an important influence on others.

Fifth, **value for money and results monitoring are now main priorities** for the UK. DfID therefore spearheads assessments and monitoring, for example, through its Multilateral Aid Reviews and its funding of new ways of monitoring, as is the priority given to the Girl’s Education Challenge programme. It is also exploring a new approach of ‘payment by results’ in a few countries. Some the recent changes counter global

\(^{155}\) In fact, it is the first of the G8 group of rich countries to meet the commitment of 0.7% of GNI allocated to development aid. GCE 2013 ‘Education Aid Watch 2013’.


\(^{157}\) OECD–DAC data, retrieved 15 November 2013.
recommendations. The UK’s political concerns with ‘anti-corruption’ and ‘value-for-money’ approaches have led to a decrease in bilateral aid provided through general budget support. In four country programmes, DfID has started financing low-cost private education, the argument being that such education is often the only viable option in fragile environments such as Pakistan. Both trends entail less support to building up national education systems and more tying of aid, but they observe findings from fragile states that service provision may best be ensured by non-state actors.158

DfID is the most resourceful of all education sections in the EU. It has more than thirty education experts at its headquarters and in partner countries and is a lead donor, not only financially but in terms of technical input and supervision in many countries.

**GPE support**

The GPE is regarded the only significant pooled funding mechanism in education by the DfID review of GPE. The UK Department for International Development (DfID) plays a significant role as a main financial contributor and pledged £220 million for 2011–2014. In fact, the UK provides around 25% of total GPE funding. The UK also plays an important role in defining priorities through its membership of the GPE board.159

**Strategic priorities**

The UK follows a rights-based and result-oriented strategy for development. In 2013 a new education position paper was launched.160 The main education priorities are to improve learning, reach all children, especially in fragile states, and keep girls – especially the marginalised – in school. Moreover, a priority is to commission more research to ensure better aid. Unlike the other donors, DfID sets clear targets for its aid and prioritises research to influence better practice.

- **In terms of policies**, the UK has a leadership role in focussing on inequalities and the inclusion of marginalised children. *Equity is a top priority, and girl’s education is a main priority*, because they are immensely disadvantaged and are more likely to pass education benefits on to others. Poor families should have access to quality schools close to home, a principle that has led to support of low-cost private schools in four countries with the aim of seeing if this can be a way to ensure quality education for all. It is argued that supporting children early can significantly improve equality of opportunity. The Girl’s Education Challenge is a large initiative launched to reach about a million excluded girls (see below). A recent guidance note also emphasises the need to address disability to achieve the MDGs.

- **Quality is a top priority.** The UK will work with governments to improve quality and standards of teaching and to provide simple, low-cost, small-scale tests to monitor and improve learning. The main ways of ensuring quality are to work with governments to provide and improve teacher training, professionalize teaching and ensure incentives, to use advocacy to increase demand in areas with a large number of out-of-school children, and to work through the GPE and World Bank to improve the quality of education systems and train teachers in poor countries.

- **Civil involvement is also prioritised** by the UK. The aim is to give parents and citizens a say in their children’s education and to be able to monitor how the money is spent. In some contexts, DfID will work with non-state actors to improve education for poor people, women and girls. DfID’s Girl’s Education Challenge specifically focuses on involving civil society in ensuring equality and quality learning, but it also supports civil involvement through various funding mechanisms to strengthen voice and accountability, advocate pro-poor education and directly provide education services, especially in fragile states.

159 Interview with Karen Schroh, GPE.
160 DfID 2013 Education position paper, ‘improving learning, expanding opportunities’, UK Aid/DfID.
A new way of working
The ‘Girls’ Education Challenge’ is a new, large-scale, centrally managed initiative providing £350 million (approx. $570 million) to support marginalised girls that usual aid does not reach. The model is competitive and calls on NGOs, charities and the private sector to get girls into school and provide them with quality learning. It consists of three funding windows: one for new small-scale innovative models, one for scaling up the existing good practices of NGOs, and one for strategic funding initiatives aimed at getting large private-sector actors to invest in education. To ensure quality learning, extensive evaluation is prioritised. This can contribute new knowledge to increase learning, but it is also a highly risky element because it requires enormous capacity, which rarely exists or is in short supply in the countries being supported. The initiative is partly managed by private-sector actors, especially Price Waterhouse Cooper. According to DfID’s central manager of the GEC, these actors are very efficient but do not have much capacity within development. DfID cooperates closely with them to build capacity. This is an important initiative exploring new ways of funding and is central to the debate on finding ways of measuring and producing quality learning. Finally, it is an initiative that may provide a model for scaling up the EU impact on education. Alliance2015 members should follow and monitor this initiative in the partner countries.

The UK is an important partner for efforts to scale up the EU impact on education. It is closely and critically engaged with EU policies and coordinates with EU delegations (sometimes it seems to be a form of informal capacity-building) in many of the countries where the EU supports education. The UK is a role model in aid to education in many respects financially, in spearheading new initiatives and in having by far the greatest expertise. Cautious monitoring by civil society is still required to ensure that the involvement of private-sector actors and support to private schooling does not deviate from the overall goal of building national education systems.

Conclusion and Recommendations
To draw out the main findings from the analysis, this section concludes by focussing on the strengths and weaknesses of the EC and member states in their support to education and, based on this, considering how the EU can help to build better education systems and ensure more equitable, quality learning, and help to ensure financing for education. Finally, some initiatives for Alliance2015’s influence and advocacy are suggested.

Strengths of the EU in education: a strong basis for enhanced impact

Strong donor with a wide reach. The EU (EC and member states) is a big donor to education, committed to the MDGs and the EFA, and engaged in the post-2015 agenda, a main aim being poverty eradication. The EC’s programmes reach more widely than those of any member state, including to a number of poor and fragile countries where individual member states cannot reach. Therefore, the EU is uniquely placed for policy dialogue on various aspects of equality, quality and citizen involvement in these countries, voicing collective EU priorities.

Ambitious policies of the EC and several member states. The Agenda for Change, amplified by commitments made by the Commissioner for Development, reveals an ambitious focus on education as the basis for ensuring other development objectives. The UK also has very ambitious policies, and experience with ensuring inclusion and quality. Germany wishes to mainstream education into all development work, by far the most ambitious priority which still needs to be materialized. Several member state agencies declare their development policies to be comprehensive, with education as an integral element.

161 Interviews, DfID-Sierra Leone, Danida-Nepal.
EC programming is long-term and predictable. The EC programming period lasts for seven years. This allows for predictable, long-term funding, which is a prerequisite to building education systems.

The EU is home to strong advocates, specialists and role models in education. The EU is home to some of the strongest advocates within education. It has unique expertise, especially in the UK, but also in the other countries. Several member states are increasing aid to education (Denmark, Germany and UK), and support basic education and countries most in need (Denmark, Ireland and UK). Denmark is small but has played an outstanding role in its advocacy of education at global events. Ireland, also small, has a strong poverty and education focus and is actively engaged in the Global Partnership for Education (GPE). France is active in supporting GPE and leads the local education groups in several countries. Germany is a strong advocate for education, and has found ways to get around its thirty percent restriction on allocations to multilateral organisations by funding the BACK-UP initiative as alternative GPE support. The UK is by far the most influential member state donor financially, as well as in developing new areas within education and in terms of expertise.

Alignment with national priorities and global actors. The EC and member states such as Ireland, Denmark and the UK align with national priorities. They have been among the frontrunners in prioritising budget support.

Unique platform for coordination. The EU, with the EC as a central actor, and several lead donors in education among its member states, is a unique platform for coordination. Formal channels already exist, although it seems that systematic coordination beyond specific partner countries could be enhanced. Coordination, alignment and the division of labour are strengths when it comes to implementation and policy dialogue.

Strong support for the GPE. The EC and member states all emphasise their commitment to the GPE and acknowledge its importance, and they play unique roles in supporting and influencing its impact. France is leading many local education groups in partner countries, Germany has launched the BACK-UP initiative to support the impact of partner country constituencies in the board, Denmark is a strong advocate for support to the GPE, and both Ireland and the Netherlands actively support the GPE in policy terms.

Strong civic involvement. The EU has a comparative advantage in ensuring citizen involvement in education. The EC prioritises civil-society involvement through a new policy, structured dialogues and the strategic use of the thematic instruments ‘Investing in People’ and ‘Non-state actors and Local Authorities in Development’ to support the scaling up of existing practices, with good results, through support piloting of new approaches, but also to involve local people in improvements in equity and quality by including them in piloting new modes of teacher training, curriculum content, school-building and maintenance.

The weaknesses of the EU in education: hampering impact

There is generally a lack of clear equity and quality targets, except for the UK. The EC does not have an education strategy to set out how education will be prioritised in the new development policy. A lesson learned from the past period of global commitments is that, without clearly defined measures and targets, the EC and member states cannot be held accountable, nor can they be held to upholding high ambitions to ensure equity and quality in learning.

Financing is inadequate and not primarily directed at those countries, groups and education levels most in need. The EC still allocates a large part of its aid to middle-income countries and its own neighbourhood, although the new programming period includes more fragile states. The Netherlands is de-prioritising aid to education, which is not only bad for financing in general but leaves a funding and expertise gap in the
countries affected. Secondary education in general receives too little support from the EU. All are strong supporters of the GPE but, apart from the UK, most need to increase funding.

**Priorities often lack clear targets**, especially with regard to equality and quality. Apart from the UK, clear targets are needed for donors within the EU, not least also to ensure, through a division of labour, that ambitious change can be secured.

**Inflated aid.** The EC, and especially France and Germany, record imputed student costs as aid to education. This does not build up education systems and is a major concern, which, when taken into consideration, contributes to making generous donors appear much less generous.

**There is a shortage of education expertise in the EC,** which is a great hindrance to increasing impact. The EC needs proper capacity to influence global processes, carry out education-sector support, engage in a qualified policy dialogue involving marginalised groups and ensuring quality learning.

**The EC is rather slow, bureaucratic and inflexible.** The EC is a large and bureaucratic system, which is a major reason why ambitious policies are not always sufficiently implemented. Moreover, the seven-year programming period, while ensuring predictability, hampers flexibility.

**Lack of coordination when member states reduce their support.** Decisions to decrease aid, withdraw from countries or redirect support to other geographical areas and levels of education are not always coordinated with other EU donors, nor do they take into account the question of ensuring the long-term sustainability of education support to the countries and people that are most in need. The Netherlands and Denmark have withdrawn their bilateral assistance, which leaves a funding gap in the affected countries and will constitute a serious blow to long-term sustainability in education support if other forms of support are not provided.

**How the EU can help to build better education systems and ensure equitable, quality learning**

**Implement the ambitious policies.** Education is prioritised alongside health and social protection in the Agenda for Change as fundamental to human development. Recently, the Commissioner for Development has emphasised the importance of education and commitments to ensure equity and quality learning for all children by 2030. Most member states (except the Netherlands) have ambitious policies. These ambitions must be backed by practice, as they can greatly increase the impact on education if implemented.

**List the strengths of the EC and member states and promote role models.** The EC and most of the member states have strengths and reveal positive trends that should be drawn together to enhance impact. A division of labour building on strengths can enhance impact, and the positive examples can also be used as role models to inspire and strengthen others. For example, the UK has expertise in which the EC is lacking, and the UK can help develop capacity in the EU in new areas of education such as fragile states and alternative models for financing. The EU as a whole has comparative advantages in ensuring equality for marginalised groups in access and participation, in involving various civil actors in the provision and management of education, and in ensuring new and innovative forms of education.

**Continue and systematize coordination, not least when donors withdraw.** Considerable coordination takes place, but it is often not very systematic. Member states coordinate with each other and EU delegations in concrete geographical settings and for specific tasks, but there is room for improvement in relation to coordination prior to withdrawing from partner countries and coordination to ensure that, when new countries are selected, the focus on one’s own strategic priorities pays attention to the number of EU donors already present, their capacities and focus areas.
Member states coordinate when they are donors in the same countries, but they could increase their impact by drawing on each other’s capacities within specific areas and in influencing the EC’s positions. A division of labour has already been agreed, but more strategic use of the comparative advantages of each country would enhance overall impact.

Ensure a balance between bilateral and multilateral support. Bilateral aid to education on the part of the EC and member states is highly valued for its alignment with national priorities, and as a counter-weight to development banks, with their greater number of conditionalities. Support through the GPE is also aligned with national priorities and focuses on poor countries and basic education, and is therefore important in combination with the bilateral support.

Specific equity and quality priorities with clear definitions and targets, preferably through an education strategy. Equality and quality are common priorities, but whereas equality is primarily about gender and needs to be broadened, there is very little specification of what quality entails. There is a need for an education strategy specifying the EU’s priorities.

Continue to enhance civil-society involvement for good governance. The structured involvement of civil society bridges the EC, member states and partner countries, and is a key to enhancing impact through innovative new ways of working, scaling up and adopting a bottom-up approach to ensuring proper governance. Also, a more strategic use of the thematic instruments would be useful to ensure that non-state actors, civil society and NGOs are part of ensuring education priorities by receiving support to scale up initiatives with a good impact and developing new innovative practices to ensure equity, quality learning and good governance. However, procedures for NGOs to acquire thematic funding need to be simplified.

Stop decline in budget support and limit conditionalities. The EC prioritises budget support, but it is in decline, which is also the case for several member states. The EC follows national priorities and is acknowledged as a sensitive and well-coordinated partner by other donors and partner countries. With the new EC programming, and with the resulting focus of several member states, more conditionalities apply. Conditionalities should be limited. The EU should continue to convince member states to use budget support.

Strengthen education expertise in the EC. This is vital for proper involvement in the GPE and global education settings. It is central to ensure coordination with member states and not least to ensure qualified support to the work on equality and quality.

Promote and explore new practices. Innovative practices like the BACK-UP initiative and DfID’s Girls’ Education Challenge are new ways potentially to scale up the impact in areas that have hitherto been unexploited.

How the EU can ensure financing for education

Be accountable for commitments. For the EC, there is a need for more specific and concrete commitments to allocate twenty percent to health and education. For the member states there is a need to set clear, ambitious, long-term targets for the financing of education.

The EU should stand out as a role model in financing when hosting GPE replenishment. Hosting the replenishment conference obliges the EC, but also member states, to show their commitment to ensure financing for education. For countries like Denmark and the Netherlands that are phasing out bilateral aid,
there is a need to enhance their pledge to show commitment to education. This will benefit low-income and fragile countries, and show a commitment to focus on countries that are most in need.

**Collective commitments are needed to ensure alternative sources of financing.** The EC and member states need to show sincere effort, and set targets, for developing and encouraging new sources of financing for education. The EU is uniquely placed to find new forms of financing for education. Several initiatives are already underway. The EU should be encouraged to use its position in policy dialogue more actively to explore, with governments, prospects for domestic financing, and to use its relations with the private sector to leverage funds, and to encourage philanthropic funds and diaspora groupings within the EU to support education. It is important to ensure that alternative, especially private-sector financing of education does not compromise policy priorities.

**Decline in bilateral funding should be followed by increased multilateral, especially GPE, funding.** Adverse funding trends in the Netherlands and Ireland should be followed by an increase in multilateral funding, especially to the GPE. The GPE should provide data to the OECD–DAC to allow monitoring and the holding of EU donors to account, not least donors like Denmark that are redirecting almost all their aid from bilateral to multilateral support.

**Broad-based knowledge of, and support for, education is needed within the EU.** The EU public is generally in support of development aid. But support is falling, and one reason for this may be that there is a fundamental lack of knowledge about the crucial importance of education for other aspects of development. Communication about these aspects by the EC and member states respectively is highly important to increasing public support and pressure and, as an effect of this, financial support from private-sector actors.

**Annexes**
Annex 1. Study approach, methodology and notes on data

The Study

In 2006, Alliance2015 published a report on education with a detailed statistical analysis of the EU’s progress towards the MDGs. This report is different, although supplementary. First of all, it is primarily a qualitative study (although drawing on multiple statistics from 2006-2012). Secondly, it focuses on the political aspects of financing, policies and strategies and on future priorities, paying specific attention to the priorities of selected members states to enable forward-looking conclusions on the future potential for scaling up the EU impact on education, partly based on experiences with living up to the present global MDG2.

The study analyses recent trends, changes and gaps with regard to the EU’s (EC and six selected member states) aid to education, especially with regard to fulfilling MDG2, and analyses recent political and strategic priorities. It is very difficult to obtain transparent, unambiguous, reliable and thus comparable data on financing to education by different member states and the EC. Therefore the concern is with overall trends and priorities.

Against this background, and in the light of the global challenges, it identifies the potential for increasing the EU impact on education after 2015. Special concern in the analysis is given to Alliance2015’s priorities regarding equitable access and participation, quality education for effective learning and issues of governance and the inclusion of citizens. 162

The EC is analysed separately. Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland have been selected for country analysis. 163 Together these countries provide around eighty percent of total aid (ODA) to education from EU member states. In different ways, these countries are the main contributors within EU aid to education (UK, France, Germany and Netherlands are the four highest contributing member states; Denmark and Ireland are small but frontrunners in financial provision, strategic priorities and advocacy within education aid). Moreover, the analysis of these six countries has revealed important trends and shifts within aid to education (bilateral withdrawal of education aid, diminishing support to basic education, the growing focus on member states’ own geopolitical priorities, but also increasing aid, the strengthened focus on fragile states etc.). Finally, they cover six countries in which Alliance2015 members are based that play a significant role within education. 164

Methodology

The main weight in this report is placed on analysing the qualitative and political aspects of EU aid to education, as well as future priorities. These discussions are backed up by ‘hard’ data on financial distribution and priorities (especially education level, geographical area and thematic focus) and insights

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162 ‘Equitable access and participation’ are analysed in terms of ensuring enrolment, attendance and completion for children, young people and adults, regardless of gender, class, caste, race, religion, ethnicity, disability and language. Special consideration will be given to whether marginalised groups are included. The ‘quality aspects’ of education are analysed as including language, teacher-training, pedagogy, curriculum content and teaching materials, and the extent to which these include a focus on equity. The ‘inclusion of citizens and issues of governance’ are analysed as parents’ and communities’ access to information, and their involvement in decision-making and in the design and monitoring of education policies and practice. This may be through school management committees, parent-teacher associations or similar arrangements.

163 The Global Campaign for Education (GCE) has recently published an insightful report in which each of these countries is analysed from the main perspective of revealing their contributions to basic education in countries that are most in need. This report will draw on this insights and findings regarding other levels of education.

164 See Appendix, Education Aid (ODA) by donor. This also reveals that, although countries like Spain and Belgium provide considerable education aid, they have not been selected as they are not Alliance2015 countries, nor do they have significant policy influence.
from evaluations of implementations. The study is primarily a desk study and consists of three strings of analysis:

Statistical analysis
Trends and changes in size and focus, including in financing modalities, based on OECD-DAC, EU, UNESCO (UIS) and member state statistics (as available in annual reports) from 2006 to 2012 (although most countries have only reported up to 2011), to uncover overall financing to education, priority areas (education level, geographical area/income level), as well as instrument and modality. Finding appropriate, reliable and relevant data has been a challenge. Notes on data availability and inconsistencies can be found in Annex 2.

Qualitative analysis of available documents
The major part of the analysis is based on written sources. Policies, strategies, annual reports, OECD–DAC peer reviews, relevant evaluations and academic conference papers are analysed. The availability of documentation varies, especially for member states. Standards of reporting differ and, for example, following qualitative priorities through to their implementation is not really feasible in more than a few cases. The insights from document analysis will be related to the global challenges and trends in the EU’s qualitative priorities, as well as assessing how priorities are fulfilled (implementation and impact) and to what extent priorities are based on partner countries’ needs and on EU’s role as a coordinator of aid. Due to an increased use of general budget support, with a lack of policies, and limited indicators for measuring progress, specifically on education, the analysis of aspects of equity, quality and governance build largely on policies and interviews and are thus general in nature.

Supplementing interviews
Seven interviews have been carried out with relevant persons in the EU, GPE and some member states (headquarters as well as country representations), and with a few NGO representatives to provide additional insights on the EU’s qualitative priorities and their implementation (concern with partner country priorities and capacities, strategy when member states withdraw aid), on new initiatives and on the role of the EU as a coordinator of aid to education.

Notes on data availability and inconsistencies
The availability of disaggregated data, not only statistics but also qualitative information, at the EU and member-state levels and of data that allow for systematic comparison among the different member states is scarce and highly random. The different countries and institutions report in different ways, and even countries that the OECD commends for high levels of transparency and systematic reporting, such as Denmark, only issue overall statistics and analysis.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁵ Size and focus: data are available on size and focus in terms of allocations to basic education, secondary education and post-secondary education, as well as education level unspecified, and provide insights on trends and changes on an annual basis. Modalities: data are available on the instruments used at the EC level, but it is difficult to obtain exact data on how much is provided respectively as project support, sector support and general budget support specifically for education. Data on the modalities used under each instrument are not available.
¹⁶⁶ France does not set out its education strategy in English, only annual reports. Fortunately, the Global Campaign on Education has gone some way to address this in its recent Education Aid Watch 2013 report.
¹⁶⁷ There are two trends that can explain this. First is the increasing use of joint funding through GPE, for example, and of funding education through multilateral organisations and general budget support. Second is the change in policies and strategies on the part of several countries (and the EC) away from social services, and where social services are still prioritised, they are often lumped together under the general headings of ‘human development’, ‘social inclusion’ or the like. Several countries place an overall priority on inclusion, for example, and then another priority under which education (overall) is mentioned.
Some data are only available on commitments and not disbursements, and as UNESCO states, disbursements are almost always lower than commitments. Similarly, different countries report differently (some include activities as ODA which others do not consider as aid at all). This is clearly a problem when it comes to identifying the actual scale of the funding. Many donors increasingly use budget support and allocations through multilateral organisations and joint funding institutions, and there is a lack of documentation on how education aid is allocated once it enters national education budgets (for example, in terms of showing whether support is directed towards quality, equity and governance issues). In the case of the Netherlands, OECD–DAC data are misleading according to national analysis.\(^\text{168}\) Hence, data and statistics on aid to education must be regarded as indicative only and have been used as such. Not only is reporting to OECD–DAC voluntary, there are also great variations in how countries report, in what is included as aid to education (e.g. scholarships and imputed student costs, social protection for vulnerable children enabling them to go to school etc.). Moreover, as a lot of aid is provided through pooled arrangements as well as general budget support, monitoring and measurement are highly random.

\(^{168}\) GCE Education Aid Watch 2013, and personal conversation with the author responsible for the research on the Netherlands which is more comprehensive than this study permitted.
### Annex 2. Priorities of main global actors in education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Global player</th>
<th>Financing</th>
<th>Equity in access and participation</th>
<th>Quality in learning</th>
<th>Governance/citizen inclusion</th>
<th>Other main focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UN secretary general(^{168})</td>
<td>Urge countries to support education</td>
<td>Putting every child to school – no one should be left out</td>
<td>Main priority – improve the quality of learning</td>
<td>Putting every child in school, improving the quality of learning and fostering global citizenship are the main priorities</td>
<td>Prioritising basic education A youth advocacy group is linked to the initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Partnership for Education (GPE)(^{170}) Pledge reports</td>
<td>Replenishment as a platform for global pledges to basic education in low-income countries, strong focus on financing</td>
<td>Enhanced focus – increasing equity of access to education for the most marginalised children. Focus areas are children with disabilities and girls.</td>
<td>Enhanced focus on improving quality – ensuring that children learn when in school. Quality is a main priority, which starts from early childhood education. Focus on learning outcomes, numeracy and teachers. Alignment with the principles of the Learning Metric Task Force to ensure better data on learning.</td>
<td>GPE is unique in having a strong focus on citizen involvement. There is a requirement for civil society and teacher representation in Local Education Groups to ensure an inclusive national education sector plan.</td>
<td>Building strong national systems and education plans is a main priority and the fundamental justification for GPE Aid Effectiveness Conflict-affected and Fragile States Early Childhood Care and Education Early Grade Reading Out-of-School Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO(^{172}) EFA Global Monitoring Reports</td>
<td>Strong focus, documents a serious gap and outlines prospects for alternative financing(^{172})</td>
<td>A strong urge to ensure equal access and equitable learning. Highlighting especially girls from poorest rural families and mentioning disability as the most neglected disadvantage in education</td>
<td>A growing focus on how lack of quality can fuel conflict, create frustration. The report highlights the learning crisis as the most serious problem alongside inequality. Children and young people MUST learn when taking part in education</td>
<td>There is a call to place importance on parent and community involvement, but main focus is on education systems</td>
<td>Conflict and fragility (GMR 2011) Youth, skills and job relevance (GMR 2012) Learning (GMR2013/14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNICEF(^{173})</td>
<td>Education is one of UNICEF’s strings of work</td>
<td>Equitable access to preferably formal schools is a priority, as is a specific focus on girl’s education and gender equality. Leadership in the United Nations Girls’ Education Initiative (UNGEI). Equality also means ensuring that all children start at the right age</td>
<td>Early childhood education and school readiness to ensure that children learn Quality education and child-friendly schooling are central priorities Quality education is the first peace dividend in post-conflict societies</td>
<td>Implicit in ensuring children’s education</td>
<td>Co-lead Education Cluster in Emergencies (conflicts and natural disasters) with Save the Children Prioritising education in emergencies and post-crisis transitions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDA/World Bank(^{174})</td>
<td>Invest early to ensure that all children and young people acquire skills and knowledge that translate into a lifetime of learning</td>
<td>Invest for all – ensure that education investments benefit all, including girls and various disadvantaged groups. Reach under-served populations and eliminate</td>
<td>Invest smartly – make sure that investment in education supports efficient interventions and proper policy reforms.</td>
<td>Main two aims in new strategy are to strengthen education systems to achieve learning goals, and to build a high-level global knowledge base for learning for all</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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168 UN Secretary General’s initiative is described at [http://www.globaleducationfirst.org](http://www.globaleducationfirst.org)
170 The GPE strategy ‘Strategic plan 2012-2015’ sets out these objectives, and a 2012 pledge report shows the concern with financing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other important actors</th>
<th>Pledges for additional aid to reach MGD 2</th>
<th>gender disparities</th>
<th>education systems</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong advocacy – financing seen as greatest problem for fragile states</td>
<td>Strong focus on equitable access, especially because various vulnerable groups, ex-combatants, displaced peoples, refugees and others need equal targeting</td>
<td>Very important in conflict and fragility contexts, as education risks underpinning discrimination and inequality and fuelling conflict</td>
<td>A strong focus on aid coordination in education through GPE and IDA. Supervising entity for most GPE-funded projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INEE</td>
<td>Strong advocacy – financing seen as greatest problem for fragile states</td>
<td>Strong focus on equitable access, especially because various vulnerable groups, ex-combatants, displaced peoples, refugees and others need equal targeting</td>
<td>INEE has developed Internationally Acknowledged Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies: Preparedness, Response, Recovery - A Commitment to Access, Quality and Accountability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Campaign for Education</td>
<td>Strong advocate on increased financing</td>
<td>Strong focus – advocating against private schools etc. that may create disadvantages</td>
<td>GCE is a civil-society pendant to the GPE and thus is strongly concerned with the important role to be played by civil society to ensure equitable access and quality education.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Annex 3. EU and member state aid to education 2006-2012

Annex 3.1. EU Development Aid to Education 2006-2012

Disbursements; € Millions.
Source: EU External Assistance Annual Reports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disbursements, € Millions</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
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<tr>
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<td>517</td>
<td>635</td>
<td>737</td>
<td>625</td>
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<td>101</td>
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<td>157</td>
<td>193</td>
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<td>Secondary education</td>
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<td>100</td>
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<td>143</td>
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<td>54</td>
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EU Development Aid to Education, 2006-2012

Managed by EuropeAid
Managed by other DGs
## EU Development Aid to Education 2006-2012, Geographical Allocation

### € Millions
Source: EU External Assistance Annual Reports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commitments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACP</td>
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<td>62</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>63</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>197</td>
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<td>ENPI South</td>
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<td>ENPI East</td>
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<td>56</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>559</td>
<td>546</td>
<td>517</td>
<td>635</td>
<td>737</td>
<td>625</td>
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</table>

![EU Development Aid to Education 2006-2012, Geographic Allocation](image-url)
### Annex 3.3. EU Development Aid to Education 2007-2012, Instruments

**Commitments, € Millions**

**Source:** EU External Assistance Annual Reports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
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<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
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<td>224</td>
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<td>691</td>
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#### EU Development Aid to Education 2007-2012 divided by Instruments (Commitments)

![Graph](description)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENPI</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
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![Development Aid to Education Channelled through the ENPI, 2006-2012](chart.png)

Legend:  
- **Blue**: Education, level unspecified  
- **Red**: Basic education  
- **Green**: Secondary education  
- **Purple**: Post-secondary education
Annex 3.3.2. European Development Fund

<table>
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<tr>
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<td>149</td>
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Development Aid to Education Channeled through the EDF, 2006-2012

- **Education, level unspecified**
- **Basic education**
- **Secondary education**
- **Post-secondary education**
### Annex 3.3.3. Development Cooperation Instrument - Geographic

<table>
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#### Development Aid to Education Channelled through the DCI (Geographic), 2006-2012

- **Education, level unspecified**
- **Basic education**
- **Secondary education**
- **Post-secondary education**

![Development Aid to Education Channelled through the DCI (Geographic), 2006-2012](chart.png)
### Annex 3.3.4. Development Cooperation Instrument - Thematic

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#### Development Aid to Education Channeled through the DCI (Thematic), 2006-2012

![Chart showing development aid by year and education level]
### Annex 3.3.5. Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance

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**Development Aid to Education Channelled through the IPA, 2006-2012**

- **Education, level unspecified**
- **Basic education**
- **Secondary education**
- **Post-secondary education**
## Annex 3.3.6. Other Instruments

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<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
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<td>81</td>
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</table>

### Development Aid to Education Channelled through 'Other' Instruments, 2006-2012

- **Education, level unspecified**
- **Basic education**
- **Secondary education**
- **Post-secondary education**

The chart shows the development aid to education channelled through 'Other' instruments from 2006 to 2012, with a breakdown of aid by education level.
### EU Member States Development Aid to Education 2006-2012

**Commitments, $US Millions (Current prices)**

Source: OECD DAC

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Member State</th>
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<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
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### EU member state Development Aid to Education, 2006-2012

![Graph showing EU member states' development aid commitments from 2006 to 2012](image_url)
Annex 3.5. Selected EU member states Development Aid to Education 2007-2012

$US Millions (Current prices) Source: OECD DAC

Annex 3.5.1. Denmark

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Denmark</th>
<th>2006</th>
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<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
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<table>
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<td>Post-Secondary Education</td>
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Danish Development Aid to Education, 2006-2012

USD Millions (Current Prices)

Danish Development Aid to Education, 2006-2012

USD Millions (Current Prices)

Education, Level Unspecified
Basic Education
Secondary Education
Post-Secondary Education
### Annex 3.5.2. France

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Percent

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</table>

**French Development Aid to Education, 2006-2012**

![Graph of French Development Aid to Education, 2006-2012](image)

**French Development Aid to Education, 2006-2012**

![Graph of French Development Aid to Education, 2006-2012](image)
### Annex 3.5.3. Germany

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### German Development Aid to Education, 2006-2012

#### USD Millions (Current Prices)

![Bar chart showing German Development Aid to Education, 2006-2012](image)

- **Education, Level Unspecified**
- **Basic Education**
- **Secondary Education**
- **Post-Secondary Education**
Annex 3.5.4. Netherlands

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### Annex 3.5.5. The Republic of Ireland

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ireland</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education total</strong></td>
<td>63,9</td>
<td>99,7</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>89,8</td>
<td>63,5</td>
<td>61,6</td>
<td>43,3</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Education, Level Unspecified</strong></td>
<td>12,6</td>
<td>12,7</td>
<td>70,7</td>
<td>45,9</td>
<td>41,9</td>
<td>28,1</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Basic Education</strong></td>
<td>36,8</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>32,2</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>15,2</td>
<td>26,4</td>
<td>12,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Secondary Education</strong></td>
<td>8,5</td>
<td>15,5</td>
<td>11,2</td>
<td>7,2</td>
<td>3,1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Post-Secondary Education</strong></td>
<td>5,9</td>
<td>0,3</td>
<td>4,9</td>
<td>3,6</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>0,08</td>
<td>5</td>
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</table>

### Percent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ireland</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education, Level Unspecified</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Basic Education</strong></td>
<td>58</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Secondary Education</strong></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Post-Secondary Education</strong></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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![Irish Aid to Education, 2006-2012](chart1.png)

**Irish Aid to Education, 2006-2012**

- Education, Level Unspecified
- Basic Education
- Secondary Education
- Post-Secondary Education

![Irish Aid to Education, 2006-2012](chart2.png)

**Irish Aid to Education, 2006-2012**

- Education, Level Unspecified
- Basic Education
- Secondary Education
- Post-Secondary Education

54
Annex 3.5.6. United Kingdom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>United Kingdom</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education total</td>
<td>411,98</td>
<td>737,46</td>
<td>577,52</td>
<td>815,38</td>
<td>751,12</td>
<td>1046,21</td>
<td>1016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education, Level Unspecified</td>
<td>190,95</td>
<td>350,71</td>
<td>190,97</td>
<td>417,27</td>
<td>333,27</td>
<td>487,15</td>
<td>471</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Education</td>
<td>218,79</td>
<td>331,56</td>
<td>339,76</td>
<td>326,34</td>
<td>268,23</td>
<td>421,25</td>
<td>386</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secondary Education</td>
<td>0,77</td>
<td>0,65</td>
<td>6,09</td>
<td>14,09</td>
<td>53,05</td>
<td>62,16</td>
<td>55</td>
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<tr>
<td>Post-Secondary Education</td>
<td>1,47</td>
<td>54,55</td>
<td>40,71</td>
<td>57,68</td>
<td>96,57</td>
<td>75,66</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Education, Level Unspecified</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Education</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Education</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Secondary Education</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
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</table>

United Kingdom Development Aid to Education, 2006-2012

United Kingdom Aid to Education, 2006-2012
**Annex 3.6. Education aid as share of total aid**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>$US Thousands</th>
<th>Aid to Education</th>
<th>Total aid</th>
<th>Aid to Education as share of total aid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EU Institutions</td>
<td>590</td>
<td>1090</td>
<td>10245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>63,9</td>
<td>43,3</td>
<td>1021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>153,78</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>1976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>1790,25</td>
<td>1429</td>
<td>10600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>1367,14</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>10434</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>121,8</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>3954</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>15,79</td>
<td>206,34</td>
<td>2236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>1295,96</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>5451</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>411,98</td>
<td>1016</td>
<td>12459</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Annex 4. Recent changes to EU development cooperation

Recent changes to EU development cooperation

The European Union has seen major political, institutional and legal changes in the last five years, all with profound consequences for its external affairs and development cooperation, including the future of EU aid to education. Of the greatest importance has been the provision in the Lisbon Treaty introducing the new European External Action Service (EEAS) and major changes to EU delegations, the new EU development policy, Agenda for Change, and the programming of its bilateral aid for the period 2014-2020. Before describing recent institutional and legal changes in the EU, key policies on and milestones in EU development cooperation will be discussed.

Key milestones in EU development cooperation

With no stress on specific geographical or thematic priorities, the developing world became an integrated part of the EU in 1956, when, during negotiations leading to the Treaty of Rome, France demanded that its overseas territories be associated with the European Economic Community. As most of these countries gained independence, the Yaoundé Convention was signed with the ‘Associated African States and Madagascar’ (AASM) in 1965. Ten years later, in 1975, 46 African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) states signed the Lomé Convention on cooperation with the Community, and setting out instruments for achieving this. Subsequent five-year conventions were signed in 1980 and 1985, culminating in Lomé IV in 1990. From an agreement on strictly economic and supposedly ‘neutral’ cooperation, these arrangements gradually acquired a political dimension as well after Lomé IV, including contentious issues such as human rights.

When the Maastricht Treaty was signed in 1993, a legal basis for development cooperation was established, ensuring that the cooperation would become permanent. The Treaty on European Union (TEU) sets out how the Union’s development cooperation was now to be ‘complementary to the policies pursued by the member states’ (Article 130 u, TEU) and among other things foster ‘the sustainable economic and social development of the developing countries, and more particularly the most disadvantaged among them’ (ibid.).

Lomé IV functioned all the way through the 1990s, but as the partnership with the ACP group seemed to be heading for change, the Commission launched a Green Paper in 1996, starting a wide-ranging debate on what was to succeed the Lomé Conventions. Subsequently, in Benin in 2000, the Cotonou Agreement was signed, marking a change in the relationship from one ‘geared towards the economic and social aspects of development to a more global partnership integrating all the many facets of the political dimension’, including a special focus on the contribution to peace, security and democracy.

As the Commission increased its agency in the 2000s, promoting its role and presence on the international scene, it began engaging in promoting the convergence and coordination of the EU’s and member states’ development policies. In 2005 this resulted in the European Consensus for Development, still used today as

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175 Dieter, Frisch (2008), ‘The European Union’s development policy’ European Center for Development Policy Management Report 15
a yardstick for new policies. The Consensus started as a Commission document and was subsequently ‘sold’ to the member states by the then Development Commissioner Louis Michel. The Consensus is a common framework to guide EU institutions and member states in developing development cooperation. It highlights and reiterates key principles, including ownership, partnership, in-depth political dialogue, the participation of civil society, gender equality, state fragility, aid effectiveness, complementarity and coordination, policy coherence for development, and many more issues, as well as adopting a multidimensional understanding of poverty.

Following the Consensus, the Code of conduct on complementarity and division of labour in 2007 was the next step in increasing coherence and securing coordination between the EU’s and member states’ development policies.

As the world approached the last third of the timespan towards achieving the MDGs, in 2010 the EU adopted an Agenda for Action on Millennium Development Goals in 2008 and a Plan of Action on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment 2010-2015. Both action plans were tributes to the immense power of the MDGs in drawing attention to the task of reducing poverty towards 2015.

In 2009, the Lisbon Treaty presented the greatest institutional and legal changes to EU development cooperation in many years. In the Treaty, poverty eradication was legally enshrined as the primary objective of EU development cooperation: ‘Union development cooperation shall have as its primary objective the reduction and, in the long run, the eradication of poverty’ (Article 208 TFEU on development cooperation). Moreover, describing its overall values in the EU’s engagement with the rest of the world, we read: ‘In its relations with the wider world, the Union shall uphold and promote its values and interests and contribute to the protection of its citizens. It shall contribute to peace and security, the sustainable development of the Earth, solidarity and mutual respect among peoples, free and fair trade, eradication of poverty...’ (Article 3.5 TEU on the overall values of the EU). The Treaty furthermore introduced a new external action service (with a High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy), new EU delegations and other features. The Lisbon Treaty is dealt with in greater depth in what follows.

Soon after the Lisbon Treaty came into force in 2010, a new development policy was introduced, culminating in 2012 in the adoption of the document ‘Increasing the impact of EU development policy: an Agenda for Change’ (or Agenda for Change (AfC)). Like the Consensus for Development (and as required by the Lisbon Treaty), the AfC places poverty reduction at the centre of future development cooperation. Aside from this, the policy has quite a few novel approaches and reflects new thinking, giving a higher profile to good governance and human rights (further linking this to conditionality of cooperation) as one of two thematic pillars; growth, employment and the leveraging of private-sector funds as the other; sector concentration, only allowing future aid programming of the EU to provide funding for three sectors in each country; differentiated partnership and new allocation criteria for development aid; and a further focus on joint EU work. As such, it moves substantially away from the Consensus in terms of content and the future direction of EU development cooperation.

As the final years of the 2000-2015 term of life for the Millennium Development Goals began to fade away, the EU presented its position on the post-2015 framework on development, which was being negotiated in
the UN in the summer of 2013. The position adopts a broad approach to sustainable development, argues for a focus on all three aspects of this concept (social, economic and environmental), prefers a universal framework with conditionality and requirements for rich countries as well as poor ones, and acknowledges that development efforts must go beyond aid into the realm of policy coherence for development, making sure that the non-aid policies of rich countries do not negatively influence developing countries’ opportunities for growth and progress.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Treaty or document</th>
<th>Content and principles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>Treaty of Rome</td>
<td>Overseas territories were associated with the future European Economic Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>Yaoundé Convention</td>
<td>First formal convention on cooperation between EEC and the ACP group. Economic support to ACP countries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Maastricht Treaty</td>
<td>First legal basis for EU development cooperation, making cooperation with the developing world permanent. EU and member state development policy was to be complementary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Cotonou Agreement</td>
<td>Guides partnerships with the 78 ACP countries towards 2020.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>The European Consensus on Development</td>
<td>A common framework to guide EU institutions and member states in development cooperation, including common values, principles and objectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Code of conduct on complementarity and division of labour</td>
<td>Agreement on measures to increase coordination and complementarity between EU and member states’ development cooperation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>EU Agenda for Action on Millennium Development Goals</td>
<td>Meant to enhance collective efforts to eradicate poverty in the context of the Millennium Development Goals and their conclusion in 2015.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>EU Plan of Action on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment 2010-2015</td>
<td>Binding for both the Commission and member states, the three-pronged approach of this plan of action builds on political dialogue, mainstreaming and focused programmes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Lisbon Treaty</td>
<td>Amending the Treaty of Nice, poverty eradication now has a legal basis. Also introduced the EEAs, the HR/VP and EU delegations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>An Agenda for Change</td>
<td>Poverty reduction still central, but focus is now on two thematic pillars: good governance and growth. Furthermore emphasizes sector concentration, differentiated partnership and joint EU work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>A decent life for all</td>
<td>EU negotiating position on the future framework of development cooperation post-2015.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Lisbon Treaty

With the Lisbon Treaty, which came into force in December 2009, the EU established a legal basis for institutional changes that were meant to ensure a more coherent and effective EU on the global stage. With it came more power for the European Parliament at the expense of the rotating EU presidencies, but perhaps most important was the introduction of the European External Action Service (EEAS) headed by a High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, who is also the Vice President of the European Commission (hence the commonly used title HR/VP). The HR/VP and the Development Commissioner are now responsible for managing and ensuring consistency in EU external action.

On the legal side, the emphasis on the objective ‘to foster the sustainable economic, social and environmental development of developing countries, with the primary aim of eradicating poverty’ (Art. 10a/21) has now been raised to have equal importance with what has so far been the primary aim of EU external action, namely to ‘safeguard its [EU, ed.] values, fundamental interests, security, independence and integrity’. Hopes have been high for some, in terms of the prospects of increasing the effectiveness, quality of delivery and impact of EU and European development cooperation in developing countries. Others have found that, although the prospects for European integration and EU global action may be bright, the outlook for EU development cooperation was and is not all glitter and gold.

The introduction of EEAS

The Lisbon Treaty only describes the EEAS and its aims in very general terms, stating that it should ‘work in cooperation with the diplomatic services of the member states and shall comprise officials from relevant departments of the General Secretariat of the Council and of the Commission as well as staff seconded from national diplomatic services of the member states’ (Article 27.3 in the TEU on the EEAS). When Baroness Catherine Ashton was appointed as the HR/VP in December 2009, her task was declared to be preparing a proposal on the EEAS. After months of deliberations among member states and in the European Parliament, a Council decision was made in July 2010 on the organization and functioning of the EEAS.

The EEAS functions ‘alongside and in conjunction’ with the European Commission, with the aim of contributing to a more coherent EU external action. It is responsible for strategic and political dialogue with partner countries, and has also been tasked with leading the programming efforts of EU development aid. DEVCO, on the other hand, now defines development policy and handles implementation.

The EEAS was reviewed in 2013, with a number of potentially unsurprising conclusions, including short-term changes that can be carried out without any legal changes and more long-term challenges for the new Commission as well. Worth mentioning is the need to streamline the organization by reducing executive layers and simplifying lines of command. Perhaps most important is the fact that the many responsibilities of the HR/VP have turned out well in potentially increasing the coherence of EU external action, yet in practice the burden of work has been unrealistic for any single person.

Unsurprisingly, the review does not make any comments on the levels of knowledge of and experience with development issues in the EEAS, which was a preliminary concern of the development environment. However, a study of EU bilateral aid programming for 2014-2020 by Herrero et al. (2013) hints that EEAS staff seem to have a certain lack of interest in engaging in development-related issues. This seems to be linked as much with a lack of knowledge and capacity within the field as to the actual downgrading of development as a priority. Overall, the EEAS still seems to lack the sufficient human and financial resources to engage fully in the political work that it is meant to take part in, and much will depend upon the selection of a new HR/VP towards 2015 with the Commission forming.

The changing role of EU delegations
With the Lisbon Treaty, the Union’s delegations (around 140) have now been changed from European Commission delegations to EU delegations and placed under the auspices of the EEAS, with Heads of Delegations reporting to the HR/VP. To handle the new political role, delegations are gradually being equipped with appropriate staff, though in some developing countries this process seems to be at the expense of aid programming and management.  

With the increasing focus on joint programming (e.g. as evident in the Agenda for Change), EU delegations are expected to assume a coordinating role as much as the usual role of another in-country donor. Facilitating coordination with and among member states requires a substantial political and institutional capacity, as well as also internal coherence. To this end, the new structure of EU delegations is quite problematic. Delegations consist of staff from DEVCO, EEAS and seconded member state staff. Since instructions can be given by both Commission DGs and EEA, many delegations suffer from splits in their lines of command, instruction and reporting. The EEAS review also included recommendations on EU delegations, advising the creation of delegations in strategically important countries where the EU is not yet present.

The Multi-Annual Financial Framework 2014-2020
The EU’s Multi-Annual Framework for 2014-2020 (MFF) may not appear particularly interesting, but the political decisions made for funding allocations are important for the future of EU development cooperation.

Given the difficult economic environment in Europe, it is positively surprising that the external action and development cooperation of the EU has increased. The MFF provides the basis for EU development programming, and the new allocations are more poverty-focused (more on Sub-Saharan Africa) and concentrated on sectors that contribute directly to fulfilling the strategic priorities.

EU programming for 2014-2020
The programming of EU development aid for the period 2014-2020 for the two principal geographical funding instruments in the EU (the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) and the 11th European

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Development Fund (EDF)) has been underway for a long time, but it seems to be reaching a conclusion as we enter the first year of the programming period. The programming exercise has been a critical test for the new EU policy for development cooperation, An Agenda for Change (AfC), as well as for the legal and institutional changes implemented in the Lisbon Treaty.

With the formation of EEAS, the divisions of labour in programming EU aid have been made quite complex. DEVCO determines policy directions within the EU’s development cooperation, and EEAS is then tasked with the actual programming exercise, but under the responsibility of the Development Commissioner and not the HR/VP. After the programming exercise, DEVCO then becomes responsible for handling implementation.

As is most common in programming bilateral development aid, representatives present on the ground (in this case EU delegations) draw up an analysis of the country context relating to the political, social and economic environments, national strategies for development and the challenges and opportunities this makes possible. On the basis of this analysis and the overall political priorities and strategies of the donor in question, the delegations propose suitable areas for programming (sectors). Headquarters then evaluates the proposal and responds by engaging in a dialogue about funding priorities. In the best of worlds, the outcome would then be a decision with a healthy balance between national contextual needs and the political priorities of the donor to ensure ownership and optimal probability for impact. In the case of the EU, a multi-annual indicative programme (MIP) is subsequently drawn up by the delegation, which is then approved in the EU’s committee procedure.

To guide the 2010-2014 programming exercise, guidelines have been developed reflecting recent political, legal and institutional changes within the EU. According to a study by Herrero et al.\(^\text{180}\) (2013), these guidelines were amended according to three markers:

- Reflecting the post-Lisbon framework. EEAS now plays a strategic role in programming by sharing competence with DG DEVCO, and both the Commissioner for Development and the HR/VP have to submit the strategic programming documents to the College of Commissioners jointly.
- Simplifying the programming process. The 11\(^\text{th}\) EDF and the DCI guidelines have been joined as one, bringing together two different programming cultures. To further simplify the process, national or regional policy documents are used as points of departure, making it unnecessary to produce new Country Strategy Papers in contexts where other policy papers exist. Both simplifications mean that delegations can spend fewer resources on the process than earlier.
- Driving forward the Agenda for Change. The guidelines now reflect key principles laid out in the AfC, including ownership and alignment; comprehensiveness and coherence; synchronization and flexibility; sector concentration; differentiation; and joint programming and coordination.

By the end of 2013, reports seemed to be highlighting tensions between Brussels and EU delegations on the ground in terms of funding priorities.\(^\text{181}\) Perhaps surprisingly, EEAS has not been found attempting to orient development spending towards short-term foreign-policy interests, as the development community was

\(^{180}\) Herrero, Alisa; Galeazzi, Greate; Krätke, Florian (2013), ‘Early experiences in programming EU aid 2014-2020: charting the Agenda for Change’, European Center for Development Policy Management, Briefing Note 54

\(^{181}\) Herrero, Alisa; Galeazzi, Greate; Krätke, Florian (2013), ‘Early experiences in programming EU aid 2014-2020: charting the Agenda for Change’, European Center for Development Policy Management, Briefing Note 54.
inclined to fear prior to the programming exercise. Instead, it seems that DG DEVCO has been strict in enforcing the priorities and sector concentration laid out in the AfC, something that has been perceived as highly troubling by delegations.

Sector concentration seems to have been problematic, with delegations contesting the limitations to the number of sectors and the narrowness of sector-definitions (simply meaning that delegations have adopted an approach to sector definition so broad that it could include programmes from many different sectors). Many delegations found they had limited room for manoeuvre in terms of priorities, given what were seen as ‘prescriptive instructions’ from Brussels, and that national priorities were neglected to a substantial degree. One interviewee in the Herrero et al. (2013) study explained how ‘the choices were made by HW before we even started the programming process. But we still have to pretend that there is a process’.

Though appearing with some regularity, education seems to have been a less common choice as a priority sector across EU programming for 2014-2020 than in the past. Difficult choices were often needed between equally important public services such as education and health, because of sector concentration.\textsuperscript{182}

In conclusion, the 2014-2020 programming exercise seems to have been led by a strict DG DEVCO imposing the priorities of the AfC on to delegations without giving much thought to local dynamics and context. This has been problematic for the education sector, which has not received nearly the same attention as in earlier programming.

\textsuperscript{182} Herrero, Alisa; Galeazzi, Greate; Krätke, Florian (2013), ‘Early experiences in programming EU aid 2014-2020: charting the Agenda for Change’, European Center for Development Policy Management, Briefing Note 54.
## Annex 5. Education priorities in recent EU policies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Main focus</th>
<th>Equitable access/equity</th>
<th>Quality</th>
<th>Governance/citizen inclusion</th>
<th>Special focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agenda for Change (2011)(^{183})</td>
<td>EU assistance should focus on two priority areas: Human rights, democracy and other key elements of good governance, and Inclusive and sustainable growth for human development.</td>
<td>Strong focus. Social inclusion is a priority, and gender equality and the empowerment of women is specifically mentioned. Reduce inequality of opportunity</td>
<td>EU should enhance its support for quality education to give young people the knowledge and skills to be active members of an evolving society. Support to vocational training for employability Strengthen capacity to carry out and use research</td>
<td>EU should support the emergence of an organised local civil society to act as watchdog and partner in dialogue with national governments</td>
<td>Value for money EU and member states must speak and act as one – strategy for more influence and more efficient aid Coordinated and jointly committing action and program documentation could enhance impact proportionally to commitment levels Support sector reforms, through sector reform contracts Particular support to own neighbourhood and Sub-Saharan Africa always with a view to supporting those most in need, including fragile states.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commission staff working paper. Impact Assessment accompanying Agenda for Change(^{184})</td>
<td>Ensuring that EC remains a global actor on development issues while, as donor, concentrating its aid on those sectors and countries where impact will be the highest</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Considerations on (dis)advantages of different approaches to focus sectorally and/or geographically. May be relevant for advocacy and scale up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A decent life for all: ending poverty and giving the world a sustainable future (EU stand towards formulating post-2015 goals)</td>
<td>EU remains committed to do its utmost to achieve the MDGs by 2015 (the ‘unfinished business of the MDGs’) New main aim should be within a decent life for all – ending poverty and ensuring a sustainable future, education has</td>
<td>Access to primary education for all is essential for a decent life Equality, equity and justice is a priority Barriers to equal participation must be removed – through use of rights based approach,</td>
<td>Must move away from purely quantitative goals to address quality in education Goals should stimulate to improve standards in education</td>
<td>A need for close partnerships with civil society stakeholders including the private sector</td>
<td>Focus on specific needs of Sub-Saharan Africa Strong focus on employment and decent work for all, including youth Each country should be responsible to fulfil goals (incl. in education) – domestic reforms and involvement of various stakeholders, focus on domestic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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\(^{184}\) Commission Staff working paper, Impact assessment accompanying ‘Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions – Increasing the impact of EU development policy: an Agenda for Change’, Sec(2011) 1172 Final.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>EU High Level Conference on Education and Development – from Challenges to Opportunities</strong>&lt;sup&gt;185&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th><strong>EU commissioner for Development</strong>&lt;sup&gt;186&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th><strong>More and Better Education in Developing Countries – Commission Staff Working Document</strong>&lt;sup&gt;187&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th><strong>The European Consensus on Development – The Development Challenge (2006)</strong>&lt;sup&gt;188&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th><strong>Evaluation of the EC’s support to education in partner countries (including basic and secondary education)</strong>&lt;sup&gt;189&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education should be at the centre of the post-2015 development agenda. Strong focus on adequate financing.</td>
<td>Education will still be a high priority post-2015. Every child should complete at least basic education by 2030.</td>
<td>Education plays a fundamental role in enabling growth, productivity, poverty eradication, health improvements, empowerment of women, reducing inequality and contribute to state-building. Need to address four challenges: access, quality, balance and financing.</td>
<td>Under ‘Responding to needs of partner countries’ and subheading ‘human development’, it is stated: The EU aims to contribute to Education for All.</td>
<td>Focus is on evaluating EC support to basic and secondary education based on OECD–DAC evaluation criteria. Most support has been allocated to primary education and the evaluation recommends a shift towards more secondary education support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reducing inequalities and promoting gender equality</td>
<td>Main priority</td>
<td>Main challenge to be handled is access and especially for girls, disabled, poor and other disadvantaged groups.</td>
<td>Addressing inequalities, particular attention to promoting girls’ education and safety at school.</td>
<td>Successful contribution to enhancing access, and ‘considerable progress’ in achieving gender parity in quantitative terms (enrolment).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urging strong focus on equity</td>
<td>Main priority</td>
<td>Quality is the foundation for education to have intended effects on poverty, inequality, conflict etc. This includes enabling environment, a relevant curriculum, good teachers, good school management, accountability of government with regard to education.</td>
<td>Priorities are quality primary education and vocational training.</td>
<td>Quality and learning achievement remain in crisis despite EC support. Those countries that have improved quality score high on HDI and tend to receive SBS and sector support opposite the poorest countries where quality is lacking and where most funds are allocated through GBS. From the 10&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; EDF onward there is no mention.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved strong focus on quality and holistic life-long learning. Go beyond measurable targets, concern with ‘soft’ skills (non-violence, peace, tolerance, critical thinking, decision-making)</td>
<td>EU will work with, for example, private sector and youth representatives in partner countries.</td>
<td>Need to involve parents and wider community to ensure quality – involvement not enough; teachers, parents, etc. need training for good management and to avoid elite capture.</td>
<td>Support for basic education (primary and lower secondary) is the basis for further learning and skills development. Need for joint working on a whole sector approach (early childhood to life-long learning, links between education and work) .</td>
<td>Support will be given to nationally anchored sector plans and participation in regional and global thematic initiatives on education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communities, civil society and youth as well as parents should play a central role.</td>
<td>Continued support to the GPE.</td>
<td>Link humanitarian and development programmes to ensure that education plays a role in state building.</td>
<td>No mention</td>
<td>Positive indications of shift towards more SBS and GBS as it has enabled partner countries to set up management systems, strategies and policy frameworks and thus enhanced education system capacity. Lack of support to LDC and fragile states.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>financing although some will need aid</td>
<td>Increased funding to education in emergencies and stronger collaboration between humanitarian and development programmes will be sought.</td>
<td>Support for basic education (primary and lower secondary) is the basis for further learning and skills development. Need for joint working on a whole sector approach (early childhood to life-long learning, links between education and work) .</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>


<sup>189</sup> EC 2011, Evaluation of the European Commission’s support to the education sector in partner countries (including basic and secondary education), Independent evaluation.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regional Strategy Paper 2008-2013 of EC with Region of Eastern and South Africa and Indian Ocean</td>
<td>Increased equality of access (addressing geographical, gender and social imbalances)</td>
<td>Improved quality (in terms of number of textbooks, curriculum development, teacher training and teacher/pupil ratios)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiannual Financial Framework – budget post Global Europe</td>
<td>Strategic partners a top priority</td>
<td>Decentralised management of decision-making and resources</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Human and social development** achieved 12% of all aid in 2012.

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## Annex 6. Overview of main priorities of the six member states

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Main focus in education aid</th>
<th>Quality in learning</th>
<th>Equity and participation</th>
<th>Governance/citizen inclusion</th>
<th>Specific concerns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>Ambitious strategy, live up to global trends and norms. Focus on: Human rights and democracy, Green growth, Social progress, Stability and protection. ‘We will work for the right to food, health, education’</td>
<td>Is not directly mentioned in new strategy, has traditionally been a strong focus in Danish bilateral aid through support to teacher training, curriculum development, monitoring and assessment tools.</td>
<td>Strong focus on equity, especially girl’s education. Specific attention given to discrimination and marginalisation in access to social services. Equal distribution and rights to social services is top priority when influencing multilateral aid for and in dialogue with developing countries. ‘All persons, regardless of sex and gender, must have the same opportunities and rights to education’</td>
<td>Focus on creating strong civil society who can demand rights and hold government accountable to deliver services. ‘Denmark will work to enable governments in our priority countries to gradually ensure free and equal access for all to the highest possible standard in education and health, including an education system based on democratic values, active citizenship, gender equality and non-discrimination’</td>
<td>Security concern, focus on fragile states. Rights-based approach. The strengthening of Denmark’s multilateral engagement in education. Development contracts and budget support in social services. ‘Poor farmers must... have access to... education in order to raise productivity and create jobs, not least for the young, and outside the agricultural sector as well.’ ‘Improved opportunities for vocational training and education are crucial’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>Strong focus on creating professional skills and expertise</td>
<td>Is a priority. ‘In the education sector, AFD seeks to increase access – without discrimination – to high-quality basic schooling, which now includes middle schools’</td>
<td>‘In the education sector, AFD seeks to increase access – without discrimination – to high-quality basic schooling, which now includes middle schools’</td>
<td>‘The Agency also supports governments in their efforts to expand basic services, such as education and health care. Beyond improving living conditions, such projects strengthen national cohesion and bolster institutional legitimacy, both often tarnished by years of conflict.’</td>
<td>Support to own territories and students studying in France. ‘French cooperation actively supports higher education’ On priorities for Africa: ‘We also emphasize education and health care, particularly for mothers.’ Rights-based: ‘L’éducation est un...’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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191 The right to a better life: Danish strategy for development cooperation, Danida 2012.
| Germany 194 | Germany supports the participation of parents and communities in its initiatives to promote primary education. Experience has shown that parents’ involvement can motivate parents to enrol their children, especially girls, in school even if they did not receive any schooling themselves. ‘Corruption, poor education and a lack of funding often prevent the development of a credible and effective civil society.’ |
| Teacher training (special focus on female teachers) and curriculum development, Curriculum development is a key element of German development cooperation with the partner countries; it aims to align education more closely with schoolchildren’s needs. Promoting democratic conduct and peaceful community relations, environmental and health education, HIV/AIDS prevention and preparation for the workplace are all issues which are being integrated into the curricula. ‘Universal access to high-quality education remains one of the key challenges for development policy.’ ‘Access to high-quality education helps individuals take control of their own lives.’ |
| ‘We intend to mainstream education as a key area of German development policy. This will encompass early childhood education, primary and secondary education, vocational education and training, higher education and adult education.’ |

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195 Ten objectives for more education, BMZ 2012.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>The project is on integrating disadvantaged children, particularly child soldiers, refugees and street children, into the education system. The project also focuses on violence prevention in schools and non-school educational work, as well as on political education, for example on human rights issues. The project is currently supporting education programmes in Sri Lanka, Sierra Leone, Afghanistan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, among others. Germany aims to improve the situation of the disabled by means of special courses adapted to suit the needs of this target group. ‘create equal opportunities for girls and boys, and women and men’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| The Netherlands  | From lead-donor also in policy formulation, to a sudden de-prioritisation of education. Priority to support education that is directly linked to productivity and trade. ‘The letter outlining development cooperation policy identifies education and health care as non-priority themes’ The shifts include:  
  - a shift from social to economic sectors, from aid to investment;  
  - an emphasis on self-reliance, not creating unwanted dependence;  
  - public-private partnerships  
  Quality is not directly mentioned but emphasis is on support provided through the GPE. Besides, these are the main education aims:  
  - working with UNICEF on the Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy Programme. Focus on basic education to make people more resilient and independent, and strengthen security and social cohesion;  
  - investing in higher and vocational education through support for key priority areas such as food security, water and sexual and reproductive health and rights, e.g. in the form of student grants and teacher training. Focus on education to increase agricultural productivity of girls and women. |
|                  | Prioritises role of the private sector ‘aid for trade’, focus on Dutch economic interests.  
  Scholarship for students to study in the Netherlands which will facilitate international trade and development in their home countries.  
  Promotion of peace in conflict countries: ‘commitment to vocational education and education in weak states will continue or even increase’  
  ‘vocational education will be given extra attention where it relates to food security or water quality. Relevant policies, guaranteeing education for young people’ |

196 Human Rights in German Development Policy, BMZ 2011.  
197 Letter to House of Representatives presenting spearheads of development cooperation policy, Netherlands 2011/2012.
instead of market distortion;
- less fragmentation: fewer themes and fewer partner countries;
- better alignment with Dutch expertise and interests;
- less dependence on government financing from NGOs active in development cooperation.

### The Republic of Ireland

**Prioritising access to primary education, strengthen national systems, quality education, girls’ education and increased research**

Promoting significant improvement in the quality of education through support to national systems. Special focus on:
- Teacher training curriculum development and quality assessment systems
- ‘Promote significant improvements in the quality of education.’

‘Supporting partner governments to improve access and quality will be a priority for Irish Aid in the coming years.’

‘Irish Aid will support measures that enhance the quality of learning at all levels with a particular emphasis on improvements in teacher education and the school learning environment.’

‘While access remains a challenge, efforts to achieve primary education for all will be undermined without a stronger focus on quality.’

### The United Kingdom

**Main priorities:**
- improving learning
- reaching more children - especially those in fragile states
- keeping girls -

Will work with governments to improve the quality and standards of teaching and to create simple, low-cost and effective education tests so they, and their citizens, can monitor children’s learning.

‘In countries with large numbers of children out-of-school, strategies may need to focus on removing specific

Girls’ education is a main priority and increasing number of female teachers. Girls are disproportionately represented in education and they are more likely to pass on benefit from their education to others.

Young people’s education

Give parents more of a say in their children’s education so they can make sure their children benefit from high quality teaching. We also make sure that money is spent as intended by encouraging more parental involvement in schools and by enabling citizens to have a say in the education of their

Conflict-affected and fragile states is a main focus: Between 2010 and 2015, DFID is supporting 11 million girls and boys in school, especially in fragile and conflict affected states.

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198 Education policy and strategy, Irish Aid 2008.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>particularly the most marginalised - in school</th>
<th>barriers to access and encouraging the demand for quality education services through advocacy</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DFID has a strong focus on getting more research to ensure better aid</td>
<td>Want to make sure that poor families can send their children to quality schools which are close to home and provide a stimulating environment. Work with partner governments to improve teacher training and providing teaching resources. In some contexts we work with non-state actors to improve education services for the poor, women and girls. Our support of low-fee private schools in 4 countries aims to understand if private providers can help to provide quality education for all. At a global level, we work through the World Bank and GPE to improve the quality of education systems and train teachers in poor countries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Supporting young children born into poverty during these early years can significantly improve equality of opportunities’</td>
<td>children. Civil society: ‘In addition to the Girls’ Education Challenge, DFID supports civil society through a range of strategic and project funding mechanisms - both centrally and at country level - to strengthen voice and accountability; advocate for pro-poor education reform; and to provide services directly, particularly in fragile and conflict-affected states.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Value for money:</strong></td>
<td>The UK government is pioneering work on improving the value for money of textbooks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Burnett, N. and C. Felsman (2012). Post-2015 Education MDGs, Results for Development Institute, Overseas Development Institute.


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INEE (2010). The Right to Choose, the Right to Learn: Writings about Education by Youth Affected by Crisis. An Enabling Right: Education for Youth Affected by Crisis. J. Vinson, INEE.


