



TEXTS ADOPTED

P9_TA(2023)0458

Implementation of the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument - Global Europe

European Parliament resolution of 12 December 2023 on the implementation of the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument - Global Europe (2023/2029(INI))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), and in particular to Articles 209 and 212 and Article 322(1) thereof,
- having regard to Regulation (EU) 2021/947 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 June 2021 establishing the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument - Global Europe, amending and repealing Decision No 466/2014/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council and repealing Regulation (EU) 2017/1601 of the European Parliament and of the Council and Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 480/2009¹,
- having regard to the Commission report of 8 November 2022 entitled '2022 Annual Report on the implementation of the European Union's External Action Instruments in 2021' (COM(2022)0578),
- having regard to various reports of the European Court of Auditors (ECA) on EU external financing, in particular to Special Report 14/2023 entitled 'Programming the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument - Global Europe: Comprehensive programmes with deficiencies in the methods for allocating funds and impact monitoring', and to Special Report 09/2018 entitled 'Public Private Partnerships in the EU: Widespread shortcomings and limited benefits',
- having regard to the joint communication from the Commission and

¹ OJ L 209, 14.6.2021, p. 1.

the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of 1 December 2021 entitled 'The Global Gateway' (JOIN(2021)0030),

- having regard to the Council conclusions of 14 June 2021 on enhancing the European financial architecture for development,
- having regard to the Commission report of 24 March 2022 entitled 'Commission's roadmap for an improved European financial architecture for development and 2021 progress report' (COM(2022)0139),
- having regard to the Council conclusions of 14 June 2021 on strengthening Team Europe's commitment to Human Development,
- having regard to the Council conclusions of 20 May 2022 on the EU's renewed partnership with Least Developed Countries,
- having regard to its resolution of 18 April 2018 on the implementation of the EU external financing instruments: mid-term review 2017 and the future post-2020 architecture¹,
- having regard to its resolution of 17 April 2018 on the implementation of the Development Cooperation Instrument, the Humanitarian Aid Instrument and the European Development Fund²,
- having regard to its position adopted at first reading of 27 March 2019 on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument³,
- having regard to its resolution of 24 November 2022 on the future European Financial Architecture for Development⁴,
- having regard to its resolution of 23 June 2022 on the implementation and delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)⁵,
- having regard to its resolution of 15 June 2023 on the implementation and delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals⁶,
- having regard to its recommendation of 15 March 2023 to the Council and the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy taking stock of the functioning of the EEAS and for a stronger EU in

¹ OJ C 390, 18.11.2019, p. 76.

² OJ C 390, 18.11.2019, p. 33.

³ OJ C 108, 26.3.2021, p. 312.

⁴ OJ C 167, 11.5.2023, p. 57.

⁵ OJ C 32, 27.1.2023, p. 28.

⁶ Texts adopted, P9_TA(2023)0250.

the world¹,

- having regard to its resolution of 25 November 2020 on improving development effectiveness and efficiency of aid²,
 - having regard to Rule 54 of its Rules of Procedure, as well as Article 1(1)(e) of, and Annex 3 to, the decision of the Conference of Presidents of 12 December 2002 on the procedure for granting authorisation to draw up own-initiative reports,
 - having regard to the joint deliberations of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Development under Rule 58 of the Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the opinion of the Committee on Budgets,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Development (A9-0374/2023),
- A. whereas the European Union and its 27 EU Member States together remain the world's biggest provider of external assistance, accounting for approximately 43 % of the total official development assistance (ODA) provided by all OECD ODA donors to developing countries; whereas external financing instruments are the main mechanism for supporting the EU's action on the global scene, and whereas the EU's external action is of increasing importance to European citizens;
- B. whereas the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe ('the Instrument') entered into force on 14 June 2021 and merged previous instruments into a single instrument; whereas the Instrument, with an overall budget of EUR 79,5 billion, marks a historic change in the EU's external and development policies;
- C. whereas the Commission is responsible for identifying, formulating, implementing, monitoring and evaluating EU assistance; whereas the European External Action Service (EEAS) is tasked with ensuring the continuity and coherence of EU external policies with the integrated approach that includes this Instrument; whereas Parliament is responsible for democratic oversight and scrutiny and as a co-legislator under the co-decision procedure; whereas the creation of the Team Europe approach should contribute to developing a single strategic coordination framework for the EU's external response to major challenges; whereas this approach enables further cooperation between the EU institutions, the Member States and the European Investment Bank (EIB), continuously increasing the EU's collective effectiveness and

¹ Texts adopted, P9_TA(2023)0077.

² OJ C 425, 20.10.2021, p. 73.

visibility; whereas the Instrument is to be implemented through a mixture of modalities, including bilateral cooperation, grants to a range of partners and an investment framework;

- D. whereas the Instrument's external investment framework brings together blended finance and guarantees under the European Fund for Sustainable Development Plus (EFSD+) External Action Guarantee (EAG), which is to be implemented by eligible partners in an open and collaborative approach, with a specific role for the EIB; whereas the EFSD+ considerably expands the financial envelope of its predecessor, the EFSD, and will be able to guarantee operations up to EUR 53,4 billion through the EAG; whereas the 'policy first' principle must result in cooperation driven by policy objectives and ensure that the European financial architecture for development is aligned in this regard;
- E. whereas the Global Gateway strategy aims to increase the EU's geopolitical weight in the global arena by boosting smart, clean and secure links in digital, energy and transport and strengthening health, education and research systems across the world, within the framework of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its SDGs;
- F. whereas inequalities are among the root causes of instability, insecurity and violence;
- G. whereas the promotion of human rights is a cornerstone of the EU's external action;
- H. whereas human development remains a key area for the EU's external and development policies; whereas investments in healthcare, education, nutrition and social protection are paramount in order to ensure universal access to these services, which constitute basic human rights;
- I. whereas due to limited resources, the EU's external financing instruments have often been stretched to their limits; whereas, since the adoption of the Regulation establishing the Instrument, events such as the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine, which worsened the global food crisis, triggered an energy, cost of living and debt crisis worldwide and created economic uncertainty, potentially further destabilising Member States and third countries, and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic have exacerbated the situation to such a degree that an early mid-term evaluation (MTE) of the Instrument and a mid-term revision (MTR) of the multiannual financial framework (MFF) are necessary;
- J. whereas the COVID-19 pandemic has deepened the already significant SDG financing gap and caused an overall decline in resources of USD 700 billion, while, at the same time, a significant increase is needed to respond to the pre-pandemic gap in developing

countries; whereas 80 % of the cushion has already been used and an increase to it should be considered; whereas the EU's current political and financial leadership and the efforts by the EU are not sufficient for achieving the European Consensus on Development, the SDGs and the goals of the Paris Agreement and addressing other acute global challenges, in particular worsening climate change, the consequences of COVID-19 and violent conflicts, meaning that joint engagement at international level is required to ensure that the Instrument is able to respond to these emerging challenges;

- K. whereas project implementation under the Instrument cannot yet be evaluated fully, as it is still in its early stages; whereas the MTE expected in 2024 should assess whether the Instrument contributes to the EU's strategic priorities and effectively promotes its values in partner countries, advances human rights, contributes to reducing poverty and inequalities and promotes the sustainable development of third countries, and whether funding under the Instrument is allocated on the basis of third countries' needs and development strategies;
- L. whereas the ECA concluded in 2023 that there were deficiencies in the methods for allocating funds and monitoring impact, that the wide scope of the Instrument could limit its impact and that improvements were needed in the way development aid was allocated and monitored;
- M. whereas the Instrument should be used to form closer and more effective partnerships, that deliver tangible results, with third countries, on the basis of mutual interests, strategic priorities, structured and effective cooperation and clear-long term goals; whereas EU-Africa and Neighbourhood relations are of particular strategic importance; whereas the Instrument should be used to ensure a fair green transition, promoting local added value and respecting the 'do no significant harm' principle; whereas the efficiency, effectiveness and development impact of the Instrument are key indicators to track;
- N. whereas since the adoption of the Instrument, geopolitical competition has evolved and increased; whereas this places the Instrument in a new and more urgent light; whereas the Global Gateway is a response to this challenge, aiming to provide a viable and attractive alternative for partner countries that delivers lasting benefits for local communities; whereas there is a need to better communicate and increase the visibility of EU actions in partner countries; whereas, despite the Global Gateway's focus on the EU's geopolitical objectives, the Instrument's ODA must serve long-term sustainable development in partner countries;

General considerations

1. Welcomes the Commission's proposal for a revision of the MFF 2021-2027 with additional funding for Heading 6, since the current financial programming is insufficient for the Instrument, which is underfunded, and should better reflect the geopolitical ambitions of the EU and its global commitments; takes note of the additional funds proposed by the Commission for Heading 6, of which EUR 9,5 billion would be allocated to responding to the external dimension of migration, including external challenges, EUR 3 billion to the Instrument's 'Emerging challenges and priorities' cushion and EUR 2,5 billion to the Solidarity and Emergency Aid Reserve;
2. Underlines the need to review the EU's external and development policies in light of the funding gap, the increasing inequalities between and within countries and global food insecurity; recognises the impact of geopolitical changes, in particular Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, the EU's new priorities, the enhanced importance of strategic partnerships with partner countries, aligned with the principle of Policy Coherence for Development, and the specific role of EU investments, which have to reflect both the values and interests of the EU and the interests of our partners; further stresses the need for this review to assess whether the Instrument's objectives of reducing poverty and inequalities and promoting human rights and the long-term sustainable development of partner countries are being met;
3. Reaffirms, in the face of the ongoing Russian war of aggression, its unwavering support for Ukraine, in all its dimensions, including humanitarian assistance, recovery, reconstruction and modernisation, in the face of the ongoing Russian war of aggression; stresses, however, that this support should not come at the expense of ODA, other partners and third countries who are adversely affected by the Russian war of aggression and whose EU funding should not be cut; calls, therefore, for a thorough evaluation of the Instrument's resources, which should also assess whether they are sufficient to meet the Instrument's objectives as set down in the Regulation establishing the Instrument, for the Instrument's resources to be increased accordingly, and for it to be ensured that they continue to be relevant in the context of ongoing geopolitical challenges, allow the EU to be seen as a trustworthy partner and counteract the influence of other global powers;
4. Welcomes the consolidation of most of the EU's external action in a single Instrument, gradually streamlining and harmonising the numerous previous instruments; is of the opinion, however, that although this simplification has enhanced flexibility and efficiency, it has not been accompanied by sufficient levels of effective accountability and transparency; underlines, in this regard, that measures can only be considered effective when this can be proven by clear and comparable monitoring and evaluation mechanisms; recalls the findings of the ECA's Special Report 14/2023, which

pointed out that more than 20 % of the sampled indicators had either no baseline or an unclear baseline and 24 % had either no targets or unclear targets, while data sources in the multiannual indicative programmes (MIPs) were fragmented or missing; calls on the Commission to make the use of Global Europe Results Framework indicators compulsory, which should be the norm, for measures throughout the entire implementation cycle of MIPs, namely planning, implementation and reporting of results, and to considerably increase the capacities of EU delegations; emphasises that the Instrument should provide for efficient, effective, coherent and inclusive implementation, underpinned by the 'policy first' principle and in line with the strategic interests and values of the EU and the priorities of partner countries; reiterates its call on the Commission to publish, at least biannually, an aid effectiveness progress report that consistently includes standardised, comprehensible and comparable indicators, covering joint planning, joint implementation and joint results frameworks; calls on the Commission to present this progress report to Parliament;

5. Expresses deep concern about the escalation of geopolitical turmoil, authoritarian trends and recent attacks globally on the foundations of democracy and the rule of law; calls for the MTE to evaluate in depth the Instrument's capacity to achieve the EU's overall external policy goals, and particularly the objective of contributing to the promotion of multilateralism and sustainable development and of protecting, promoting and advancing democracy, the rule of law and human rights and fundamental freedoms; stresses that the EU's external democracy action, implemented under the Instrument, must adjust to a new geopolitical reality marked by competing governance models in order to better prevent and respond to democratic backsliding; calls on the Commission to assess through a critical lens, and with an appropriate level of information granularity, the progress made on the implementation of the Instrument across programmes, spending targets and benchmarks, abstaining from repeating shallow policy positions; reaffirms that according to the Treaties and the New European Consensus on Development, the primary objective of development cooperation should be to eradicate poverty and to foster the sustainable economic, social and environmental development of developing countries; stresses that the 'policy first' approach should be guided by the principles and objectives set out in the EU's Strategic Compass, the European Consensus on Development, the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda;
6. Calls, in particular, for an honest and thorough assessment of the use of Article 42(4) and recital 40 of the Regulation establishing the Instrument, the latter of which states that assistance could be suspended in the event of degradation in democracy, human rights or the rule of law in third countries; calls for ex ante assessments to

determine the possible implications and risks of projects with regard to human rights, in line with Article 25(5) of the Regulation; calls for human rights monitoring throughout the implementation of projects in third countries, particularly for projects entailing a high risk of violations; calls for a suspension or modulation of projects that contribute to human rights violations in third countries; calls on the Commission to share all assessments relating to human rights with Parliament in a proactive manner; underlines the necessity for the EU to take a more principled approach with regard to partner countries that are moving in the opposite direction when it comes to central values and principles; supports the suspension of budget support as a good example in this regard;

7. Is concerned that the financing of assistance for Ukraine through the mobilisation of the Instrument's cushion, rather than through the appropriate budgetary instrument, has exhausted much of the cushion, leaving the Instrument with limited ability to respond to unforeseen challenges; welcomes the Commission proposal on establishing the Ukraine Facility¹, which should ensure sustainable long-term financing for Ukraine while preserving the Instrument's ability to cope with future challenges;
8. Requests that the MTE provide legal and political clarity with regard to the listing of Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia as beneficiaries under the neighbourhood chapter of the Instrument; notes that Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova have become candidates for accession to the EU while Georgia is considered a potential candidate for EU membership; underlines, against this backdrop, that Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia should therefore be listed as beneficiaries with the adequate budgetary transfer of bilateral financial envelopes to the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA III) Regulation², which has a distinctive legal basis and policy framework separate from the Instrument and the European Neighbourhood Policy, which would reduce the pressure on the Instrument, welcomes the Commission's proposal for a new and dedicated Ukraine facility that would pool future support in a separate single instrument under Heading 6 of the MFF in order to meet immediate needs, but stresses the importance of using a long-term instrument;
9. Calls for the MTE to assess, in particular, the extent to which funding has delivered tangible results in Africa, in line with the Instrument's objectives, the EU-Africa Strategy and the outcomes of

¹ Commission proposal of 20 June 2023 for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on establishing the Ukraine Facility (COM(2023)0338).

² Regulation (EU) 2021/1529 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 September 2021 establishing the Instrument for Pre-Accession assistance (IPA III) (OJ L 330, 20.9.2021, p. 1).

and priorities set at the 6th African Union-EU Summit in 2022, and to examine whether a review of priorities and objectives is necessary; stresses that analysing the tangible results of the assistance provided, on the basis of clear indicators, is particularly important for adequately assessing the effectiveness of the use of funds; invites the Commission to make better use of the option to combine geographic envelopes for the benefit of pan-African programmes, as provided for in Article 4(2) of the Regulation establishing the Instrument, in support of EU-African Union commitments; underlines the necessity for the EU to continue to actively support the new African Continental Free Trade Area, including through this Instrument, building on its own experience in developing the European Single Market, in order to spur sustainable economic development, boost job creation, reduce poverty and increase shared prosperity in Africa; stresses the need to support African partner countries by harnessing the continent's great untapped renewable energy potential and to accelerate progress on SDG 7 in Africa, which will not only boost economic growth, job creation and social development, but also significantly increase the global share of renewables;

10. Strongly reaffirms the commitment set out in the Instrument to eradicate poverty, fight climate change and food insecurity, fight inequalities and discrimination and promote sustainable human development; recalls the commitment made by the EU and the Member States to increase their ODA to 0,7 % of gross national income by 2030, including contributing at least 20 % of the ODA funded under the Instrument to social inclusion and human development, such as health, education, nutrition and social protection, and providing 0,2 % of the EU's gross national income as ODA to the least developed countries; underlines that the EFSD+ should aim to support investments as a means of contributing to the achievement of the SDGs; emphasises the importance of adopting a holistic approach to human security, as a new guiding paradigm; calls, in the context of the forthcoming programming process, for the EU Gender Action Plan III to be implemented in full, with a strong commitment to gender perspective and mainstreaming, and for the EU Global Health Strategy and the Youth Action Plan to be made operational in EU external action; underlines the need to enhance the EU's efforts to promote and protect human rights in its external action, welcoming the mid-term review of the implementation of the EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy; highlights the importance of taking a strong anti-corruption stance in all EU development efforts and supports the Council conclusions of 4 May 2023 on corruption as an obstacle to development;
11. Stresses that investments in human development are crucial for the fight against inequalities and for education, including vocational training, and should remain a clear priority in the forthcoming programming process, given that they enable developing partner

countries to unlock the human capital potential of their young people and to boost human development, economic growth and employment in their countries; calls on the Commission to introduce a child policy marker that builds on existing methodology developed in the areas of gender, climate, migration and digitalisation, in order to allow EU institutions and partners to measure and monitor investments in children; stresses that tracking and monitoring the EU's investment in children is fundamental in order to show the EU's added value and effectiveness; underlines that COVID-19 was a wake-up call for low- and middle-income countries, highlighting the need to accelerate progress towards building universal, publicly financed health systems; requests that the programming of the Instrument prioritise grants and the promotion of the public sector in the field of health in order to ensure that development aid reaches people first; stresses the importance of continuing to commit enough budget to improving social outcomes and addressing systemic issues;

12. Expresses concern about the state of LGBTIQ+ rights worldwide, as well as the general backlash against women's rights, gender equality and sexual and reproductive health and rights in developing countries; calls on the Commission and the EEAS to address the setback to the recognition and protection of these rights; underlines, in this regard, the need to prioritise targeted support to civil society organisations (CSOs) and communities advocating respect for sexual and reproductive health and rights, women's rights, gender equality, the LGBTIQ+ community and other marginalised populations, including enhanced measures to decriminalise homosexuality; recalls that at least 85 % of new actions implemented under the Instrument should have gender equality as a principal or a significant objective and at least 5 % of those actions should have gender equality and women's and girls' rights and empowerment as a principal objective;
13. Stresses the importance of meeting all the Instrument's spending and programme-related targets and calls for detailed information on the progress made in this regard; regrets the substantial deficits in reaching the Instrument's 30 % climate target, in contributing to the 10 % biodiversity target under the MFF for 2026 and 2027 and in ensuring that the EU's global financial commitments under the UN framework are fulfilled, in particular as regards the contribution to the Loss and Damage Fund; recalls that climate change will increasingly put pressure on food production and access, particularly in vulnerable regions, undermining food security and nutrition; further recalls that biodiversity is a crucial factor in combating climate change and that the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services will undermine progress on approximately 80 % of the assessed targets for the SDGs; calls for a detailed plan outlining how the Commission intends to meet the spending and gender targets by the end of the MFF;
14. Reaffirms the commitment outlined in the Instrument to addressing

the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement; is of the opinion that, without prejudice to unforeseen circumstances, the commitment within the Instrument to dedicate an indicative 10 % of the Instrument's financial envelope to actions supporting the management and governance of migration and forced displacement within the objectives of the Instrument should be respected and that this clause should not be reopened; notes, however, that 14 % of the funds committed in 2021 contributed to the migration spending target; expects to receive regular substantial updates on the state of play;

15. Regrets the fact that the current use of the rapid response pillar does not visibly and effectively contribute to promoting EU interests in the world; requests, therefore, that re-establishing programme-related support to the EU's foreign and security policy objectives be reconsidered during the 2024 MTE;

Securing the necessary resources and mobilising investments

16. Stresses that under no circumstances should the 2024 MTR of the MFF result in the Instrument's funds being cut or reallocated between the long-term thematic and geographic programmes dedicated to sustainable development; is concerned that the Instrument has been underfunded since the start of the MFF 2021-2027 and that its geographical focus has come at the expense of important thematic funding lines, such as the 'People' priority area of the Global Challenges budget line, which was under even greater pressure because of COVID-19, leaving little to no room for manoeuvre to fully honour the EU's commitments to supporting multilateral health initiatives in the coming years; underlines that the lack of funds creates a dangerous gap between the EU's ambition and its ability to deliver on its promises; recalls that insufficient funding will also create damaging competition between short-term needs and long-term investments, and between core development sectors, ultimately hampering the effectiveness of EU aid and its contribution to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda; underlines the key role of the Instrument, the EFSD+ and the EAG in providing a strategic framework for blended finance, de-risking investments and guarantees and in mobilising resources from the private sector with the support of the EU budget, particularly in light of increasing geopolitical and economic competition; stresses that blended finance projects and effective partnerships with the private sector in developing countries must focus on maximising development outcomes and be consistent with the SDGs, the Paris Agreement and national development priorities; recalls that private-sector support is an addition to, rather than a replacement for, public investments, in particular in critical services, such as health, education and social protection, which provide crucial long-term prospects for exiting poverty; calls for the EFSD+ not to finance investments that have a negative impact on the achievement of the SDGs, particularly as

regards combating climate change; asks that the long-term budget be adapted to protect the EU's positive impact, influence and credibility on the global stage;

17. Recognises the specific role of EU investments, which must reflect the strategic interests and development objectives of both the EU and our partner countries, as well as the EU's values, and underlines the important part played by the budgetary guarantees in delivering them under the 'policy first' principle; highlights the importance of ensuring that the guarantees counterbalance the risk involved in the highest-risk countries for investment so that relevant investment is also directed to them; stresses that the EU should lead by example in this regard, in view of the ongoing debate on the reform of multilateral development banks;
18. Notes the specific role played by the EIB in the European financial architecture for development, as set out in Article 209 TFEU and in Article 36 of the Regulation establishing the Instrument, and acknowledges the EIB's potential to mobilise additional funding that contributes to the Instrument's objectives; welcomes the creation of EIB Global, which has been operational since 1 January 2022 and sets out to increase the bank's presence and expertise in developing countries; notes that since the new development branch was set up, EIB Global has made record use of the dedicated investment window provided by the Instrument, delivering over EUR 10 billion in 2022, notably in support of Ukraine and the Global Gateway; recalls the importance of the EU budget as the sole guarantor for the EIB's activity providing loans outside the EU in support of EU policies; calls for an increase in the guarantees granted to the EIB by the EU budget in order to allow the EIB to continue to deliver vital public- and private-sector operations in Ukraine and expand its activities in the Global South; calls on the EIB to use its position to mobilise investments for sustainable development in line with the purpose and criteria established by the EFSD+; highlights the important role of the EIB in partnering with the Commission to deliver EUR 100 billion of the EUR 300 billion committed under the Global Gateway strategy; calls on the EIB to prioritise a sustainable development agenda; calls on the EIB to take greater risk in financing projects with high social returns; calls on the EIB to continue strengthening its presence in the field by building on its current approach of co-location within EU delegations, while further exploiting possible synergies with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and other European development finance institutions (DFIs); encourages the EIB to continue to actively engage in developing planning, monitoring and evaluation at country level, hand in hand with the EU delegations and through co-financing with DFIs; calls for stronger coordination between the Commission and the EEAS and EU delegations to facilitate discussions and cooperation with relevant actors on the ground in order to identify the projects that best meet development

effectiveness objectives;

19. Welcomes the ‘open architecture’ of the EFSD+, which was established to support private-sector investments, and calls on the Commission, the EIB, the EBRD, the Member States and DFIs to fully utilise the options provided by the EAG and the relevant investment windows to promote sustainable private-sector investments; underlines the need to leverage private-sector financing, with a particular focus on small and medium-sized enterprises, and calls for increased efforts to address bottlenecks and obstacles to investment; recognises, furthermore, the important role of the private sector in generating new investments, employment and financing for development where possible; recalls Parliament’s power of scrutiny and the need for transparency in the implementation of the EFSD+;

Strategic approach

20. Welcomes the Team Europe approach and its aim of increasing the coherence, impact and visibility of EU development projects, and calls for more joint actions with the Member States, in particular Team Europe Initiatives (TEIs); recalls the ECA’s observation that individual Member States’ contributions to TEIs are not indicated in the MIPs, causing uncertainty regarding the Member States’ financial support, which contributes to making the future of TEIs as a collective initiative unclear; calls on the Commission and the Member States to review the effectiveness of the approach and to inform Parliament of their findings; calls on the Commission to clarify the roles within the Team Europe approach and to propose a mechanism that increases the transparency and democratic scrutiny of the initiatives; further calls for joint action by the EU and the Member States to increase effectiveness and maximise resources; encourages the Member States, DFIs, the EIB and the EBRD to play a more active role in Team Europe with financial commitments and joint actions, steered by the Commission;
21. Welcomes the Global Gateway strategy as a concerted EU response to global challenges; is of the opinion that in times of new geostrategic challenges, EU foreign and security policy and development cooperation actors must coordinate better in order to increase the EU’s presence and visibility worldwide by means of infrastructure investment that creates national value in partner countries, in line with the SDGs; recalls that the Global Gateway is to be understood as a strategic concept in which foreign, economic and development policy are integrated; stresses that massive investments are required in both hard and soft infrastructure in developing countries, from digital, transport and energy networks to health, education and food systems; regrets, however, the lack of transparency and of a regulatory framework for the strategy’s governance and implementation within the Instrument’s objectives and priorities; stresses the need for adequate parliamentary

involvement and scrutiny, as well as consultation with the business sector and CSOs through a light governance framework that would quickly boost investment and the EU's visibility in partner countries in a complex geopolitical context; calls on the Commission to update the joint communication on the Global Gateway to clarify the governance framework, including Parliament's scrutiny role, and to provide a clear definition of what a Global Gateway project is and what sets such projects apart from other investment projects; calls for clarity as to how the EU financial regulation and public procurement rules apply; calls for the strategy to be implemented more quickly in light of existing and emerging global challenges;

22. Regrets the lack of clarity on the financing for the Global Gateway strategy and recalls that such new initiatives should be financed through fresh appropriations and the related upward revision of the Heading 6 ceiling; calls on the Commission to involve CSOs more systematically in Global Gateway projects and TEIs and to consider actively involving local CSOs in the programming for each country;
23. Underlines the importance of more efficiently utilising synergies and better harmonising the financing initiatives that are undertaken by the EIB, the EBRD and other DFIs and target European neighbourhood countries, with particular importance being given to EU candidate countries;

Parliamentary scrutiny

24. Recalls Parliament's powers of political and budgetary control and consultation and stresses the role of the high-level geopolitical dialogue in providing general orientations for the implementation of the Instrument; stresses the importance of having detailed information about the budget that has been or will be executed; underlines that Parliament needs full and timely access to documents and must be able to monitor the impact of projects and the progress made on them in order to better evaluate their scope and impact, which is why it needs full access to standardised baseline and target indicators, as well as data sources; calls on the Commission to provide a consistent interinstitutional information flow, with Parliament being kept informed of investment projects, including Global Gateway projects, and to make the Result Management Framework fully available; reiterates that Parliament's positions need to be fully taken into consideration; further reiterates that Parliament resolutions constitute part of the overall policy framework for the implementation of the Instrument; urges the Commission to significantly improve the timely provision of documentation to Parliament in advance of the high-level geopolitical dialogue, as well as the way in which it takes into account Parliament's recommendations, notably by engaging in a written procedure after each dialogue indicating how it will follow up on each specific Parliament recommendation;

25. Calls on the Commission to take advantage of the MFF revision to refine the nomenclature of the Instrument by including more budget lines to allow the budgetary authority to exercise its scrutiny powers, particularly as regards the neighbourhood budget lines, in order to strengthen transparency so as to achieve a data-driven policy that can be audited as regards its objectives and to better reflect a strategic approach and improve long-term programming; points out that the overlap between financial instruments, for example in the context of guarantees, makes scrutiny difficult; calls on the Commission to provide, following consultations with Parliament, a comprehensible, clear and complete overview, in a single document, of the financial instruments, their relationship with each other and the different actors involved, as well as a complete and precise overview of grants and guarantees and how they are covered; calls on the Commission to provide the budgetary authority with quarterly updates, including on the use and amounts of budgetary guarantees, together with the estimated provisioning and future forecasts, as well as the state of play as regards the spending and programme-related targets;
26. Stresses the importance of the programming process, underlining the crucial role of the EEAS and the EU delegations in this regard, as well as in ensuring the proper inclusion of partner countries and other development actors throughout the process, including by fostering close and transparent consultation of and association with regional and local authorities, in order to identify common priorities and enhance partner countries' ownership; underlines the importance of guaranteeing an effective needs-based and people-centred approach in the EU's external action and highlights the essential role that local partners and civil society should have in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes; stresses the importance of CSOs and, where relevant, the private sector in the implementation of the Instrument, in particular in the programming process; reaffirms the need to step up support to civil society worldwide;
27. Regrets the rushed programming process that took place in the second half of 2021, preventing adequate scrutiny by Parliament; notes with concern the findings of the ECA's Special Report 14/2023, which concluded that the programming process could be improved; expects the Commission and the EEAS to act on the recommendation made by the ECA and take the lessons learnt into account in the next programming exercise; calls on the Commission to ensure a more predictable and transparent programming exercise, to develop a standardised, comparable and transparent methodology for allocating funds to neighbourhood countries, to ensure rigorous application for non-neighbourhood countries and to clarify the methodology for assessing the impact of EU's support and ensure its relevance in a changing geopolitical context;

28. Welcomes the recent macro-financial assistance (MFA) instruments adopted to support several countries, notably Ukraine, in facing the consequences of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine; regrets the lack of information given to the budgetary authorities on the management of the financing of the interest costs of the MFA; is concerned that the current financing of the MFA interest costs through the mobilisation of the Instrument's 'Emerging challenges and priorities' cushion, rather than through fresh appropriations, risks exhausting most, if not all, of the cushion for the remaining period, leaving the Instrument unable to respond to unforeseen challenges; underlines, therefore, the need to find sustainable long-term financing solutions, while preserving the ability to cope with future challenges;
29. Regrets the Commission's failure to always notify Parliament before the cushion is mobilised and deplores the practice of sending letters that arrive after mobilisation, effectively undermining Parliament's right of scrutiny and impeding the Commission from fully taking into consideration Parliament's observations on the nature and objectives of the mobilisation and the financial amounts envisaged; calls on the Commission to always inform Parliament in detail before the cushion funds are mobilised and to take its observations into account, in line with recital 71 of the Regulation establishing the Instrument;
30. Regrets the fact that the Commission's use of the cushion does not respect the spirit of Article 17 of the Regulation establishing the Instrument, in particular as regards the financing of new legislative initiatives; is concerned that 80 % of the funding available in the Instrument's cushion for 2021-2027 has already been earmarked, leaving only EUR 1,9 billion (21 %) for the period up to 2027; regrets the fact that 60 % of the remaining funds for the cushion have been pre-allocated without taking into consideration anticipated future needs, such as the Syrian refugee package;
31. Recalls that greater involvement of Parliament at all stages of the Instrument's governance and implementation was a condition for accepting that previous external financing instruments would be merged under the Instrument (as set down in Parliament's resolution of 18 April 2018 on the implementation of EU external financing instruments: mid-term review 2017 and the post-2020 architecture and in Parliament's 2019 negotiating mandate for the Instrument); recalls that the Instrument offers the possibility to make legislative amendments to the regulations on the Instrument and the IPA III and suggests an in-depth assessment of Parliament's role in providing strategic steering and scrutiny or with regard to Parliament's insufficient involvement in the suspension of aid or the use of the cushion, as well as regular meetings of the committee for the Instrument, which have unrealised potential;
32. Expects Parliament to be fully involved in the programming exercise

for the second half of the MFF and for MIPs for 2025-2027;

33. Considers that the current arrangements for reporting on what the EU is doing in any given country, region or thematic area are insufficient and excessively legalistic; calls for pragmatic and swift improvements with regard to updating useful data and for examples of best practices in implementation to be provided to Parliament flexibly and in good time, applying appropriate confidentiality rules where needed; considers that the public projects database is not user friendly and does not help with updated information; underlines that EU investment projects should be subject to evaluation, monitoring and reporting in order to determine their effectiveness and avoid unintended negative impacts;
34. Calls on the Commission, together with the EIB, the EBRD and other European DFIs, to develop standardised procedures, including ex ante and ex post evaluations and the application of the Commission's Result Management Framework; urges the Commission to publish this Framework and to make sure that DFIs using their own indicators clearly define them and explain their application and comparability with the Framework; calls on the Commission to monitor the environmental, social and governance standards of all investment projects; calls on the Commission to make the EFSD+ Result Management Framework accessible to facilitate scrutiny with a view to progress towards more accountable development finance;

Way forward

35. Requests that the MTE be used to the fullest extent possible in order to update either the Instrument or its delegated acts on priority areas and to reassess the validity of the geographic and thematic MIPs, including more prominent conditions relating to compliance with international law, human rights, the rule of law and democracy, alignment with the EU's foreign policy and the application of the associated suspension mechanism, as a last resort, where the foreign policy of an Instrument beneficiary country diverges completely from EU foreign policy; stresses the importance of increasing the visibility of EU actions, particularly development cooperation efforts; calls, therefore, for the EEAS and the EU delegations to be equipped with the necessary tools to develop their strategic communication capabilities so that they can better explain EU actions to decision makers and the general public in third countries and counter disinformation; calls for the EU to oppose any support to aggressor states and their policies, in particular the Russian Federation in its war of aggression against Ukraine;
36. Stresses that the MTE should be accompanied by the necessary legislative changes to the Instrument and the IPA III so that the relevant regulations reflect Ukraine and Moldova's new status as EU candidate countries, and by a new delegated act setting out the

specific objectives and priority areas of cooperation for each region; stresses the importance of providing funding, through DFIs and the EIB, that targets access to critical raw materials and related actions on skills, infrastructure and the regulatory framework in compliance with the EIB's environmental and social standards, as part of shared planning by the EU and its partners to develop renewable energies in the context of achieving the SDGs;

37. Considers that the geopolitical challenges that emerged with the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine and the growing malign influence and assertiveness of the People's Republic of China require the Instrument's budget to be increased considerably; highlights that the challenges are spread all over the world, meaning the EU must increase its geopolitical influence while remaining committed to its values and principles; stresses that it will only be possible to respond to these challenges in a balanced way if the proportion of allocations for each area of the Instrument is kept the same; expresses concern that the EU is losing influence and visibility to alternative offers made by China and Russia; calls for the EU to respond to the expectations of partner countries and deliver quickly on the political agreements made with them, such as the Post-Cotonou Agreement, to reinforce its status as a reliable ally in development cooperation and to demonstrate that the international rules-based system can meet contemporary challenges;
38. Insists that Parliament is part of Team Europe and should be treated as such, and therefore expects more frequent, detailed and meaningful information about the implementation of the Instrument, including the list of EIB investments involving the Instrument's funds;
39. Notes that pilot projects and preparatory actions are new initiatives that might turn into EU funding programmes should they turn out to be successful; underlines that they are an opportunity for Parliament to introduce programmes that would not otherwise have been financed; highlights that the Instrument, when interpreted broadly, theoretically constitutes a legal basis for all initiatives, thus preventing eligibility and making de facto initiatives by Parliament impossible;
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40. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the Council, the European Investment Bank and other relevant European financial development institutions.