



EUROPEAN UNION

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION ACTIVITIES IN CAMBODIA



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WELCOME MESSAGE	4
EU-CAMBODIA DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION.....	5
AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT	7
CULTURE	9
EDUCATION	11
ENVIRONMENT	14
GENDER	17
GOOD GOVERNANCE AND HUMAN RIGHTS	19
HEALTH	22
PUBLIC FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT	25
TOURISM	27
TRADE AND PRIVATE SECTOR DEVELOPMENT	30
THE EUROPEAN UNION AT A GLANCE	32
MAIN EU INSTITUTIONS	33
OTHER INSTITUTIONS	34
EU REPRESENTATIONS ACCREDITED TO CAMBODIA	35





Welcome to the fifth edition of the 'Blue Book', detailing European Union (EU) development cooperation activities in Cambodia. Published by the embassies and cooperation agencies of the EU member states and the Delegation of the European Commission to the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Blue Book forms part of our commitment to transparency and openness while helping create awareness of the EU's comprehensive development programme.

Since the signing of the Paris Peace Accords in 1991 the EU has been a key development partner of Cambodia. We are the largest provider of Official Development Assistance (ODA) to the Kingdom, almost exclusively in the form of grant aid. At the recent annual government-donor meeting, the Cambodia Development Cooperation Forum (CDCF) held in December 2008, the EU pledged US\$ 201 million. This represented 22.7% of the total ODA pledged in support of Cambodia's development in that year.

EU assistance funds a wide range of initiatives in a variety of sectors. Our main priority remains to alleviate poverty, yet we also recognize the role trade plays in fostering development. Thanks to our 'duty free, quota free' policy towards Cambodia, the EU remains an important destination for Cambodian exports. We also continue to provide technical assistance, helping Cambodia take advantage of the considerable opportunities the EU's single market offers.

Human rights and democracy are fundamental to all EU activities in Cambodia. During 2008 our commitment to the reinforcement of democracy continued when an EU mission observed the national elections, the 4th time such a mission has taken place. Furthermore, the EU welcomed the start of the first trial at the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC), a process the Union has backed since its inception.

Aid effectiveness remains another key priority. A major goal has been to increase coordination and alignment of activities among the EU member states and European Commission. Progress in this respect has been made, with for example, a single EU development partner now representing the Union in the Technical Working Group for Partnership and Harmonisation. The format of this publication also reflects this approach, with activities now presented on a sectoral, rather than a by-country basis.

Furthermore, you will notice from this publication that the nature of EU aid to Cambodia continues to evolve. Budget support plays an increasing role while initiatives to mitigate the effects of climate change are also growing in importance.

We hope that you find this edition of the Blue Book both useful and interesting. Should you have any feedback or require further information please do not hesitate to contact us.



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The European Union (EU) is Cambodia's biggest development partner in terms of grant aid. EU donors active in Cambodia include Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Spain, the United Kingdom and the European Commission. In 2008, the EU (Member States and the European Commission) disbursed some € 166 million (over US\$ 214 million) in support of Cambodia's development agenda.

The EU has been a major development partner of Cambodia since the early 1990s. EU-funded initiatives have benefited millions of Cambodians, from villagers in remote areas gaining access to clean water for the first time to government officials being trained in skills that will benefit the entire nation.

In the early years, efforts focused around helping the country tackle the challenges of emerging from years of war: rebuilding infrastructure and communications, increasing agricultural production, relocating displaced persons, and clearing millions of land mines.

Over time, EU-Cambodia assistance has evolved. Poverty alleviation and meeting basic needs remain a priority while numerous activities take place in support of Cambodia's National Strategic Development Plan. These include initiatives in the rural development, basic education, tourism, health and environment fields amongst others. Meanwhile, support to the reform of public administration

and actions in support of human rights, governance and the consolidation of democracy also feature prominently. Of particular note in 2008 was the EU's observation of the national elections as well as the commencement of proceedings of the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia, which the EU has supported.

The export sector has matured rapidly, in no small part due to Cambodian products being granted quota and duty free access to the EU market since 2001. As a result, trade-related technical assistance has grown in importance and the capacity of Cambodian officials to handle the complexities that govern modern day trade has been enhanced.

The European Union has also increasingly turned towards providing budget support to Cambodian ministries in order to ensure more effective delivery of funding while at the same time providing technical assistance for the process of financial reform. Meanwhile, cooperation in the fields of higher education and culture foster links between the EU and Cambodia while building up key skills and capacities.

The global move towards greater aid effectiveness has been another key development. In 2006, EU donors in Cambodia established an EU Road Map for Increased Aid Effectiveness with the aim of supporting the rapid achievement of the Cambodian





Millennium Development Goals, specifically, sustainable poverty reduction. This is being achieved through the strengthening of country leadership and capacity in driving the aid effectiveness agenda. EU development partners are also exploiting their strengths and comparative advantages through a shared approach and actions, thus reducing costs and duplication.

Considerable strides have been made towards implementing the objectives of this Road Map. For example, joint positions have been arrived at on phasing out salary supplements what gave impetus to finding local solutions for this specific aid effectiveness topic. An EU consensus is reached prior to the Government-Development

Partner Coordination Committee (GDCC) and Cambodia Development Cooperation Forum (CDCF) while a single EU pledge is made at the CDCF.

At the end of 2008 the EU presented a position paper outlining its strategy for improved division of labour among EU partners with implementation starting in the health, education and decentralization and de-concentration (D&D) sectors. Furthermore, a single EU partner now represents the Union in certain working groups. The Road Map is being continuously revised to include new challenges for increased aid effectiveness in Cambodia. The EU is talking more and more in Cambodia with a single voice.





The European Union has been a major donor to Cambodia's agriculture and rural development sector since 1993.

Cambodia's population is close to 14 million, of which some 80 percent live in rural areas. It is estimated that five million live below the poverty line of US\$ 1 per day, while nearly 11 million fall under the US\$ 2 per day threshold. The general consensus is that the only viable long-term solution for reducing poverty and strengthening food security in Cambodia is by increasing agricultural productivity and diversification; a consensus heightened by the impact of the global economic crisis. Concerted collaboration and cooperation between the government, development partners and the private sector is needed to achieve this.

As a result, agriculture and rural development is reflected as a priority in the Rectangular Strategy. Meanwhile, the EU plays a key role in the Technical Working Group for Agriculture and Water to support a sound sector policy and facilitate coordination and harmonisation among stakeholders.

The EU is the largest donor to the sector, funding more than 60 on-going projects. Other significant contributions are made by the ADB, Japan, Australia and FAO while emerging donors such as China, India and Korea are also active.

Facilitating agriculture, improving livelihoods

Seven EU member countries (Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, and the United Kingdom) as well as the European Commission are active in the agriculture and rural development sector which also includes certain fisheries and forestry initiatives. Activities take place in nearly

all provinces although the majority are concentrated in the central plains where 80 percent of the rural population lives.

Poverty levels are highest in the peripheral areas (north, north-east and east) of Cambodia. Activities in these regions therefore focus on food security and providing a social safety net as well as landmine clearance to facilitate agricultural development and the improvement of local livelihoods. Many activities are implemented through NGOs in order to ensure maximum impact at the local level. Funding delivered by this means accounts for some 35 percent of the EU total.

In the central plains, projects are dedicated to productivity enhancement and diversification through irrigation development and cash crop production as well as by supporting extension and agricultural financial services. Particular focus is placed upon working with the government, local authorities and user associations to create an enabling environment to support sustainability by helping ensure infrastructure can be properly operated and maintained. In addition, the development of these rural areas is supported by an integrated approach that sees investment in rural infrastructure (e.g. roads, electrification, water supply and sanitation) and support given to Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to help bring product to market.

In the central area around the Tonlé Sap Lake, EU aid is balanced between agriculture and rural development, as well as between physical works and technical assistance. Several EU projects pilot new approaches to respond to important challenges faced by rural Cambodia. These include institutional weaknesses, insecure land tenure, weak agricultural research and extension, poor



infrastructure and irrigation facilities, lack of affordable credit, and poorly performing markets.

On average, some € 10 million is disbursed annually in the agricultural sector. Funding for rural development initiatives was around € 20 million (US\$ 25.8 million) in 2008 and should be more than € 30 million (US\$ 38.7 million) in 2009.

ECOSORN provides clean water

The EU-funded Economic and Social Relaunch of the Northwest Provinces (ECOSORN) project was launched in 2006 with the aim of substantially reducing poverty in the three north-western provinces of Banteay Meanchey, Battambang and Siem Reap.

The initiative aims to tackle a wide range of social and economic problems to promote sustainable long-term development for the rural population. More than 250,000 people will benefit from the project. One of the key activities is ensuring access to clean water and sanitation.

Tapping water from shallow ground water sources with buckets has several disadvantages. The main problem is that these wells are mostly uncovered

and water is drawn with buckets that are not always clean. This practice results in contamination of the water which creates health hazards such as diarrhea and worm infections. As a result, many households in these communities spend a substantial part of their income on medical costs.

Bek Kamphleung village lies about 40 km southeast of Siem Reap. It is home to 109 households and is one of the poorest villages in Siem Reap province's Sotr Nikom district.

Five Rovai Pumps (in Khmer language 'rovai' means to turn something by hand) have been installed to provide year-round safe-water supplies to the community as part of an ECOSORN Quick Impact Project. The new Rovai Pump system includes a cover for the well and a hand-operated pump to bring water up instead of using buckets. The new pumps are hygienic and convenient. They are also cheap and easy to maintain by the users themselves.

The results of this initiative have been excellent and as a result ECOSORN will construct another 65 wells with Rovai Pumps for other communities in the province.





The European Union Council reaffirmed in 2008 the role of culture and intercultural dialogue as a vehicle of rapprochement, reconciliation and conflict prevention between individuals and peoples. Cultural exchanges and cooperation help reinforce the role and place of civil society in the process of democratization and good governance, together with the promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The cultural sector also has strong economic potential, notably concerning the creative industries and sustainable tourism.

In Cambodia, the cultural sector is one of the Royal Cambodian Government's priorities, as emphasized in the National Strategic Development Plan 2006-2010. The preservation and sustainable development of Cambodia's cultural and natural heritage is seen as a key factor in facilitating the reconstruction and reinforcement of the nation's social fabric and encouraging cultural tourism.

Conserving heritage, promoting diversity

The European Union, and in particular France and Germany, have placed emphasis on the cultural dimension in their development aid policies in Cambodia. Activities in this sector focus on two key areas.

Concerning *the protection and conservation of the tangible and intangible heritage of Cambodia*, France has, since 1992, promoted protection of the Angkor area by supporting the APSARA National Authority. Working with Japan and UNESCO, and within the framework of the International Coordinating Committee for the safeguarding and development of the historic site of Angkor (ICC), France works towards the restoration, conservation and sustainable development of temples on UNESCO's World Heritage list.

The French-funded Angkor Heritage and Sustainable Development project comprises three main activities: a Regional Vocational Center for training in professions related to Heritage; the restoration of the Baphuon Temple (see below) and the modernization of the National Museum.

The German Apsara Conservation Project (GACP) of Cologne University of Applied Sciences has for more than 10 years worked to protect the irreplaceable bas-reliefs, apsaras, pediments and lintels of Angkor Wat and its surrounding temples. Meanwhile, the Commission for Archaeology of Non-European Cultures of the German Archaeological Institute and German government supported the work of German and Cambodian archaeologists to preserve the Prohear prehistoric burial site.

The promotion of cultural diversity is the second key area with a number of activities recognizing the strong links culture forges between Europe and Cambodia.

A European Union Film Festival is organized annually in Phnom Penh supported by the Embassies of EU Member States and the Delegation of the European Commission.

France supported the creation of the Bophana Center of Audiovisual Resources in 2006 which contributes to the reconstitution of the country's audiovisual memory following the destruction of the Khmer Rouge era.

The French Cultural Center builds bridges between traditional and modern forms of expression through creation, education and dissemination. The Meta House was founded in January 2007 by a German national and focuses on the resurrection of Khmer arts.



The Art+Foundation is a German organisation established in 2003 that mainly promotes Western classical music. The annual Phnom Penh International Music Festival has become a famous event throughout the region. Meanwhile, the French project Development of Writing in South East Asia supports the restoration of written memory and Cambodian literary production.

In 2008, the EU contribution to the culture sector was around € 3 million (US\$ 3.9 million). This sum should increase in coming years with the likely participation of other EU Member States.

The Baphuon Temple restoration

Located in the heart of Angkor Royal City, south of the Royal Palace, Baphuon dates back to the 11th Century and is one of the greatest religious monuments of ancient Cambodia.

Restoration undertaken by the archeologist Bernard-Philippe Groslier, then director of Angkor Conservation, was interrupted in 1971 because of the war. The disappearance of archives from the renovation site in 1975 and the extent of the repository field make it one of the most difficult renovation sites of the Angkor area.

Since 1995, Baphuon has been the object of an important restoration programme carried out by the Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient in partnership with the APSARA National Authority.

The French Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs provides financial backing.

This project is being carried out within the framework of a joint action by the International Coordinating Committee for the safeguarding and development of the historic site of Angkor (ICC), presided over jointly by France and Japan. This project aims to strengthen the three floors of the pyramid and restore the characteristic elements of the front side.

The initiative adds an extra dimension by undertaking the conservation and restoration of two of the monument's historical periods: the 11th century pyramid and the colossal 16th century Lying Buddha. The latter was ceremoniously consecrated by His Majesty King Norodom Sihamouni on June 4th 2008. More than 70 meters long and 12 meters high, its restoration has just been completed following nine years of difficult work.

This image is the biggest representation of Buddha in Cambodia and one of the most surprising archeological remains of the post Angkorian period.

In addition to restoring this hugely important site, the programme has also played an equally significant role by training craftsman in professions such as archeologists, architects, stone cutters, stone masons and carpenters. Presently, 189 people are employed on the site.



The adult literacy rate in Cambodia stands at 73.6 percent. Although gross and net primary enrolment ratios¹ compare favourably with other Mekong countries, the significantly lower gross secondary and tertiary enrolment ratios are a cause of concern. High drop-out rates in basic education, inequities in access for girls and in remote areas and the uncertain quality and standards of education services need to be addressed.

In recent years, there has been a strong focus on educational reform with the Ministry of Education Youth and Sport (MoEYS) launching a major overhaul of the sector. A sector-wide approach is being implemented in partnership with development partners. The Education Strategic Plan (ESP) sets out policies and strategies. Meanwhile, the Education Sector Support Programme (ESSP) outlines how Ministry systems, programmes and resources will actively implement key reforms for equitable access, quality improvement and enhanced management and financing of education services at all levels.

The priority for education is reflected in the Rectangular Strategy with the EU playing an important role in the Education Sector Working Group (ESWG) as well as in the Joint Working Group on Education to support the definition of a sound sector policy and facilitate coordination and harmonisation among stakeholders.

Reducing poverty through educational development

The overall objective of the EU is to assist the Royal Government of Cambodia implement its poverty reduction strategy through development in the education sector. Emphasis is placed upon creating improved access to quality education, especially for girls. Actions also seek to build capacity to manage reforms in the sector and to decrease reliance on external technical assistance.

Leading EU donors currently active in the sector are Sweden, France, Belgium and the European Commission.

In 2008, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency Sida channeled support worth € 3.6 million (over US\$ 4.6 million) through UNICEF's Expanded Basic Education Programme (EBEP 2). EBEP 2 has three key objectives: building capacity at national and sub-national levels to manage sector-wide education reforms; supporting the expansion of access to quality basic education in six provinces; and helping the MoEYS reach disadvantaged children with no access to formal pre-school or basic education.

Belgium, through the Belgian development cooperation agency BTC operates in the provinces of Siem Reap, Otdar Meanchey and Kampong Cham. It has provided funding



¹ standing at 18.7% and 2.8% respectively compared to 67.1% and 9.7% in Vietnam



worth € 13,450,000 (over US\$ 17.3 million) since 2003 to the Basic Education & Teacher Training (BETT) programme which will run until 2011. The aim is to expand and rehabilitate primary and lower secondary schools as well as teacher training facilities. Activities have included the provision of scholarships, in-school teacher training, support for regional teacher training colleges and building up educational management capabilities at different levels.

French cooperation takes place in the higher education sector. Interventions give priority to the setting up of Francophone studies at university level in the areas of health, law and economics, engineering, agronomy and human sciences in partnership with French and other European universities. In 2008, France allocated € 4 million (US\$ 5.1 million) to this sector as well as the support of 18 technical assistants. In addition, scholarships worth € 600,000 (US\$ 774,000) are provided annually for students to complete training programmes in Europe.

Education is the priority sector for the European Commission in Cambodia. It is providing € 10 million of sector budget support from 2008-2010 to support the MoEYS as it strives to achieve its "Education for All" basic education targets. A capacity development component focuses on supporting MoEYS's own institutional and procedural reforms in the areas of policy definition, human resources, finance, internal audit and basic education effectiveness.

The Child Friendly School approach becomes national policy

In 2001, a small-scale trial of the Child Friendly School (CFS) approach was launched in Cambodia, as a partnership between the Government, UNICEF and an NGO.

By 2004, 575 schools were participating and CFS featured in the Ministry of Education Youth and Sport (MoEYS) 2004-2008 Education Sector Support Programme. In 2005 and 2006, the Ministry took the lead in developing a CFS Framework for Cambodia, and the approach was mainstreamed in pre-service teacher training programmes.

By 2007, 40 percent of primary schools were participating in the CFS programme. In 2008, the CFS Policy and Master Plan were launched, establishing CFS as the umbrella policy for realizing access and quality goals for basic education in Cambodia.

The rationale for CFS in Cambodia is a focus on expanding primary education of good quality to all children. Child Friendly Schools nurture children's basic rights and value the contributions of all stakeholders. Child Friendly Schools are inclusive of all children and



contribute towards the development of child-centred learning environments. The Swedish development agency Sida has allocated significant resources in support of the CFS approach, primarily via a funding partnership with UNICEF. In complement, the EC has allocated € 750,000 through the Italian CIAI to promote inclusive, gender-sensitive, and holistic improvements in the learning environment and learning achievements of children. This targets 33,802 primary school level children in 80 schools and 6 districts across Phnom Penh Municipality and Kampong Cham Province and their teachers.

This eight-year progression from pilot programme to national policy demonstrates the potential for innovative approaches, when well grounded in practical application.

In Cambodia, the CFS approach consists of six 'Dimensions', each with a set of core activities. Development partners have collaborated closely with the MoEYS in the development of support materials, training manuals, 'train-the-trainer' activities and monitoring systems. This integrated framework has facilitated progressive expansion to new schools and

geographical areas, while maintaining standards.

Now that CFS is a national policy, it is possible to fully integrate child-centred learning approaches and the other CFS Dimensions into Cambodia's curriculum and assessment framework. As a result, 'child-centredness' will become integral to the education system, rather than being viewed as an optional add-on.

The focus of next steps will be on educational quality. Substantial support will be provided to train-the-trainer activities and peer learning, to maximize knowledge sharing between those with up to a decade of experience of CFS and those who are newly exposed to the concept.

Development partners will progressively shift away from service delivery towards targeted technical and institutional support. This will blend ministry-level policy engagement with province-based capacity building and norm setting, including policy advocacy focused on reaching the unreached as CFS progresses towards national coverage.



The European Union regards environmental issues as critical in supporting sustainable development in Cambodia. As a result, the EU member states and European Commission seek to include environmental considerations into all activities, projects and programmes. Likewise, most donors will have environmental screening procedures for projects, programmes and technical support while ensuring recommendations are taken forward during implementation.

EU direct support to environmental projects and programmes in Cambodia is relatively small but growing. Particular interest is developing in how to support efforts to tackle climate change – both by reducing emissions and helping the poor and vulnerable to adapt to future change. However, EU support in other sectors such as tourism, rural development and agriculture all feature significant environmental elements. For example, much of the work on forestry in Cambodia – including establishment of community forestry areas – provides not just commercial and private benefits in terms of fuel wood, poles, timber, non-timber forest products etc, but environmental benefits too.

The most significant donors currently active in the environment sector in Cambodia are the Asian Development Bank, Japan and the United Nations.

Climate change, a new priority

There are three main EU programmes taking place in the environment sector.

A programme funded by the Danish development agency Danida on climate change was recently agreed with the Ministry of Environment. The two-year, DKK 2 million (US\$ 348,000) "Climate Change Capacity Strengthening and Awareness Raising Programme for Cambodia" will raise awareness on climate change issues and build the capacity of various institutions to incorporate related concerns into their planning. Anticipated impacts include a significantly improved ability to plan for climate change impacts in Cambodia, through improved awareness, information and shared best-practice. This should, ultimately, benefit large numbers of vulnerable Cambodians.





France funds, with support from its Global Environment Fund, an ecosystem conservation initiative taking place in the Cardamom mountains (see case study below). Co-financed and implemented by NGO Conservation International, the total budget for this project is € 2,080,000 (US\$ 2,683,000) of which the French Agency for Development (AFD) funds € 840,000 (over US\$ 910,000).

Meanwhile on the regional level, the European Commission supports the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity based in the Philippines. The Centre supports ASEAN nations, including Cambodia in a number of areas, including: agriculture and food security, the sharing of benefits from biological and genetic resources as well as biodiversity conservation.

Continuity of EU action in the environment field will be provided by a number of upcoming actions. For example, the European Commission is planning to provide funds (potentially up to € 2.21 million or over US\$ 2.8 million) from the Global Climate Change Alliance (GCCA). This is an initiative between the European Union and developing countries likely to be hit hardest by the impact of climate change.

Denmark has already initiated some work on global warming, but more is in the pipeline while Sweden is also looking to initiate work on adaptation to climate change. Furthermore, Spain is in the early stages of identifying activities in Cambodia as part of a € 5.3 million (over US\$ 6.8 million) regional Conservation of Biodiversity and Sustainable Livelihoods programme which will run for four years in Vietnam, the Philippines and Cambodia.

The Central Cardamom Conservation Programme

The 402,000 hectare Central Cardamom Protected Forest (CCPF) in south west Cambodia is one of the largest protected areas in Southeast Asia. The site contains the world's largest population of Siamese crocodiles as well as elephants, trade-threatened animals such as bears and pangolins, rare cats including the elusive clouded leopard, bird species that have been hunted to extinction in other sites and a wide variety of rare and endemic plants.

The Central Cardamom Conservation Programme was initiated by the Cambodian Forestry Administration and has been supported since 2006 by the French Agency for Development/ French Global Environment Fund (AFD/ French GEF) and the NGO Conservation International.

This programme aims to preserve biodiversity and protect the Cardamom mountains watershed. By doing so it is possible to preserve natural resources essential for generation of revenue from hydropower dams. Water supplies for agriculture in downstream communities can be maintained and the dry season water flow into the Tonle Sap Lake preserved to maintain its inland fishery upon which millions depend.



Local populations have also been engaged in management activities. By educating communities in natural resource management, they can replace potentially harmful livelihoods, such as illegal hunting and forest clearance, with environmentally friendly activities such as improved agricultural practices and buffalo banks.

Initial efforts focused on providing training and technical support to improve management and law enforcement in the area as well as community support linked to conservation aims. Longer-term conservation strategies to target major threats were then developed and outlined in a CCPF Management Plan – the first Management Plan ever produced by the Cambodian Forestry Administration.

The result of this project is the management of the CCPF by trained government staff whose activities are effectively preserving globally

threatened species and a watershed upon which economic development and community livelihoods depend. The project also strongly enhances the livelihoods of the more than 3,000 indigenous people that live in the CCPF. This is crucial because these communities are guardians of these forests.

The long-term goal of the initiative is to develop a sustainable financing mechanism to provide funds for site management and community support. The feasibility is being explored of a Trust Fund backed by government, private sector and development community sources. These funds would be used to maintain a well-balanced management strategy based on a long-term vision shared by all stakeholders. This strategy would preserve Cambodian natural resources while helping to develop the national economy.





Gender equality is recognized as an essential condition for sustainable economic growth and poverty reduction. During the last decade, profound political, economic and social changes have offered women new opportunities to participate in Cambodia's development, but serious inequalities persist, as evidenced by the limited participation of women in decision-making and development, the lower educational levels of women and girls, poor health indicators, and the persistence of high levels of violence against women.

Gender equality is enshrined in the 1993 Cambodian Constitution and is regarded by the Royal Government of Cambodia as such a high priority that it was singled out in 2003 as one of the nine Cambodian Millennium Development Goals.

The National Strategic Development Plan 2006-2010 defines gender mainstreaming as strategic for all sectors. The enhancement of the social status of women, including by ensuring their right to equally participate in nation building, is recognized as a high priority.

The European Union (EU) emphasizes gender equality in all its activities. Main objectives are the political empowerment of women, the promotion of their rights and their access to justice; economic and social empowerment; awareness-raising on gender equality, access to reproductive health and social services; and combating violence and trafficking against women.

Making gender a priority

The European Commission, Finland, France and Spain support a variety of gender-related projects in Cambodia. These include the following:

The International Organisation for Migration's "Prevention of All Forms of Trafficking in Women and Children in Cambodia" initiative is run in partnership with the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MOWA), other ministries and the Women's Union. The project has helped consolidate the role of MOWA as a key player in the fight against trafficking and shape regional policies on trafficking and migration.

The NGO Gender and Development for Cambodia works to promote the participation of women in social and political affairs. This includes raising awareness of the rights of women at community level and supporting legal action for women in selected communes in Pursat, Kampong Chhnang and Prevey provinces.

The NGO DanChurchAid is carrying out a four-year project to enhance livelihood options for vulnerable girls through advocacy, training and employment. Meanwhile, the objectives of a three-year European Commission-funded project implemented by Adhoc, CDP and CWCC include increasing awareness of women's rights at community level and among authorities. The initiative also provides access to protection and services for victims and women-at-risk of domestic violence and rape.

The NGO Friends of Cambodian Children is working to mitigate the vulnerabilities and problems originating from human trafficking. The NGO Women for Prosperity has carried out a project to enhance the Female Commune Counselor's Network in eight provinces. A one-year project run by NGO Nyemo provided vocational training for vulnerable women in Phnom Penh. Meanwhile, the NGO AFESIP has implemented projects to identify, rescue and protect women and girls at risk of trafficking



and sexual exploitation and to repatriate them to their places of origin when relevant.

Furthermore, the NGO Paz y Desarrollo is running a four-year gender-related initiative. This focuses on women rights, with special emphasis on the implementation of the CEDAW Convention, social and economic development and sexual and reproductive health. Meanwhile, NGO Psícológicos Sin Fronteras is promoting the psycho-social wellbeing of indigenous women in Ratanakiri province.

The budget allocated to the above projects amounts to approximately € 4.5 million (US\$ 5.8 million) with EU support in the field of gender equality certain to continue in the future.

Supporting victims of trafficking

Trafficking in persons is a complex problem in the Greater Mekong Sub-region due to its different forms and the variety of factors encouraging it. These include personal and social circumstances, cultural values, the profits derived from trafficking, and weak law enforcement.

In Cambodia, trafficking is looked at principally as a matter of sexual exploitation and prostitution, mostly of women and minors. The Cambodian government is making strong efforts to tackle trafficking and local NGOs working in the field of counter-trafficking, such as AFESIP, are essential allies for the provision of necessary services to the victims.

The story of a 27 year-old Khmer woman, born in Kampong Thom province, is a good example of their work. She married when she was 17 years old but divorced two years.

After divorcing, she went back to live with her family for three months. She then left for Phnom Penh where she had been offered a well-paid job as a waitress in a restaurant. When she arrived, she was sold to a karaoke club, which was in fact a brothel. The owner forced her to have sex with customers. She stayed there for around three months before being rescued by the police and referred to AFESIP.

AFESIP sent her to their Rehabilitation and Vocational Skills Training Center, known as the Tom Dy Centre, in the outskirts of Phnom Penh where she was included in the vocational skills training on sewing.

After successfully completing her training she was reintegrated into her family with support to start a micro-business. The reintegration support grant amounts to US\$ 350. AFESIP provided sewing materials and equipment for her to set up her business.

Her business is growing and with her income she is able to assist her family. The family is pleased and supportive of her business and most importantly, she was able to move away from prostitution.



Multi-party democracy is a key requisite for Cambodia to ensure lasting peace, the rule of law, respect for human rights and long-term sustainable development targeting the poor.

A signatory to the Millennium Declaration, Cambodia has made significant progress towards meeting the goals by 2015. The Kingdom is also party to the six main UN human rights instruments.

The promotion of democracy, the rule of law, good governance and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms are core objectives for the European Union in Cambodia.

Like democracy, good governance is instrumental to achieving pro-poor, gender responsive and long-term development. This is especially pertinent in view of the present global economic crisis. EU support therefore seeks to promote good governance with the objective of strengthening democratic institutions and processes, working with both state and non-state actors.

The EU will also continue to support sub-national democratic development in coming years. Key areas will be building state capacity and institutions as well as providing support to civil society to raise the awareness and capacity of citizens to demand government accountability.

The continued political will of the Royal Government of Cambodia towards the full implementation of sub-national democratic development and human rights based, sustainable development will be critical for the future partnership between Cambodia and the European Union.

A key area of EU support

Concrete actions in the field of good governance and human rights undertaken by the EU include supporting judicial reform to enhance a more effective and free legal and judicial system and providing support to initiatives strengthening human rights.

Support to civil society remains a key priority for the EU as a means of ensuring checks and balances in Cambodia. The EU supported the National Assembly elections in 2008, which witnessed progress in certain areas of the democratic process although concerns still exist over some issues.

A number of EU donors are active in the sector as follows:

The European Commission, funded the EU Election Observation Mission in 2008 and currently funds 23 human rights projects implemented by NGOs. It also provides € 13 million (US\$ 16.8 million) to the Public Financial Management programme and the





Ministry of Interior's decentralization and de-concentration initiative, supporting the role and capacity of commune councils.

Denmark supports the coordination and communication of legal/judicial reform, the strengthening of judicial services through model courts, and the support of land registration issues for indigenous people. Funding in these areas totaled DDK 26.9 million (US\$ 4.7 million) between 2006 and 2008. A further DDK 14.6 million (US\$ 2.5 million) has been committed for the coming three years.

France contributes over € 2 million (over US\$ 2.5 million) to support legal, judicial and public service reform while Germany has granted € 7 million (US\$ 9 million) towards decentralization, deconcentration and administrative reform as well as the strengthening of auditing systems. Spain has contributed € 1.6 million (US\$ 2 million) to support the UNDP Access to Justice Project.

Italy has granted over € 1 million (US\$ 1.3 million) to strengthening the capacity of the Royal Government of Cambodia and especially its law enforcement agencies with emphasis on drug control as well as the prevention of drug abuse and human trafficking.

Sweden actively supports democratic development by providing over SEK 262 million (US\$ 30 million) towards: the decentralization and deconcentration process, public financial reform, the national elections, the National Institute of Statistics, OHCHR, the ECCC as well as to approximately 20 Cambodian NGOs.

Meanwhile, the United Kingdom has granted € 13.8 million (US\$ 17.8 million) for the decentralization and deconcentration process and a natural resource management livelihoods programme jointly implemented with Denmark. The UK Foreign Office also funds human rights projects relating to freedom of expression, media freedom and trade union rights worth GBP180,000 (US\$ 272,000).

Supporting decentralization and deconcentration

With the introduction of local government elections in 2002, Cambodia took a decisive step towards ensuring lasting peace. It also provided a greater opportunity for its citizens to participate in the democratic process, not least in rural areas where the vast majority of Cambodia's population lives.

The introduction of the Organic Law of 2008 saw a further consolidation of sub-national democratic development by paving the way for the introduction of elected councils at District and Provincial levels from May 2009.

A large part of EU funding in the governance area is dedicated to supporting decentralization reform; shifting access and control of funds and decisions from central government closer to the people.



The EU provides backing for the Project to Support Decentralization and Deconcentration (PSDD). This initiative is designed to enable local government to provide essential pro-poor services and investment in response to locally articulated demand. In 2008, the project helped the government to mobilize and harmonize resources from governments and 14 development partners. A total of US\$ 65 million was programmed and aligned to the annual plans and budgets prepared by 1,621 Commune Councils.

A group of elders in Battambang, interviewed by researchers from the Cambodia Development Resource Institute (CDRI), explained how they felt the Commune Council had changed: "Since the commune election in 2002,

the council is very different from before. Previously the leadership was very top-down. However, with decentralization it is now bottom up, and decisions do not rest on just the chief but are made by all councillors".

CDRI research shows that there is, without doubt, a perception of change at the local level. Some 53 percent of those asked thought that the commune election had resulted in an immediate change. Over 70 percent thought that the councils had been democratically elected with more than 90 percent confidently stating that they could vote the Commune Council out of power at the next election if it did not perform to expectations.





Despite encouraging improvements in recent years, Cambodian health indicators still remain among the least favourable in the Asia-Pacific region. The main challenges include reducing the persistently high maternal mortality rate and improving the population's access to health services, particularly for the poor. Improving the quality of health care services is also one of the Ministry of Health's strategic priorities.

These priorities are reflected both in the National Strategic Development Plan 2006-2010 (NSDP) as well as in the Health Strategic Plan 2008-2015.

The health sector was chosen as a priority sector for the OECD/DAC aid effectiveness initiative for which Cambodia is a pilot country. Moreover, Cambodia is a party to the International Health Partnership (IHP) and Providing for Health (P4H), which aim at improving health outcomes and financing through better coordination and exchange on best practices. International donors use fora like the Health Partners meetings and the Technical Working Group on Health to coordinate their support, to align it with the Royal Government's priorities and to help the government achieve the health-related Cambodian Millennium Development Goals. As far as European development cooperation is concerned, the European Commission, Belgium, France, Germany and the United Kingdom actively support health-related interventions.

Improving the Cambodian health system at every level

Belgium, France and the UK have joined with AusAID, UNFPA, UNICEF and the World Bank in the second Health Sector Support Programme

(HSSP2), thus bringing their projects under common management arrangements to more effectively support the implementation of the Health Strategic Plan. This new approach, based on performance, aims to improve the Cambodian health system at every level.

Belgium supports Health Equity Funds, contracting quality improvement measures, training and capacity-building at provincial level. France supports the University of Health Sciences and Calmette Hospital. Moreover, the regional network of Pasteur Institutes facilitates epidemiological research, training and monitoring, focussing on HIV/AIDS and emerging diseases.

The UK funds a maternal mortality reduction project and, together with USAID, supports a social marketing and behaviour change project for HIV/AIDS, reproductive and sexual health, and child survival. German cooperation focuses on reproductive and maternal health as well as on health service delivery, health care financing and human resources.

The European Commission, together with UNICEF supports a project to promote healthier lifestyles and improved primary health care services. The Commission and a number of EU member states also provide support to NGOs and the Global Fund to fight HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria for their activities in Cambodia.

The European partners' support at the policy and provincial level makes a significant contribution towards achieving the goals of the Cambodian Health Strategic Plan.

Key achievements include the procurement of essential drugs, the provision and social marketing of contraceptives, capacity-building



for key officials and policy-makers at the Ministry of Health and other institutions, training for health care providers, the development of quality standards and quality assessment tools for hospitals and health centres, and the promotion of clients' rights and providers' rights and duties.

Moreover, European partners' funds have helped pilot and expand different health financing mechanisms like community-based health insurance, health equity funds and vouchers in several provinces. These measures have contributed to improving access to health services, for an increasing number of Cambodians and preventing them from falling into poverty due to high out-of-pocket health expenditures.

In order to increase the predictability and effectiveness of their support, European donors in the health sector encourage long-term commitments. In this way, reform processes can be supported and national capacities built in an effective and sustainable way. Meanwhile, pooled funding in the context of the HSSP, and alignment of programmes with the Health Strategic Plan have increased national ownership and efficiency of external aid.

EU contributions to ongoing initiatives as well as those which took place in 2008 are in the region of € 71 million (US\$ 92 million).

The GRET/SKY community-based health insurance scheme

High out-of-pocket payments prevent many Cambodians from seeking health care. They are also a main cause of debt, the selling of household assets such as land and livestock, and impoverishment. Improving the access to quality health services, especially for the poor, is one of the Cambodian Ministry of Health's top priorities. The Strategic Framework for Health Financing in Cambodia 2008-2015 foresees the parallel implementation of different schemes, such as community-based health insurance and Health Equity Funds, with the aim of consolidating them by 2015.

To support the Cambodian government in this endeavour, France and Germany provide funds to the non-governmental organisation GRET (Groupe de Recherche et d'Echanges Technologiques) and its community-based health insurance scheme SKY (SKY stands for "Sokhapheap Krousar Yoeung", Khmer for "Health for our Families"). The health insurance scheme started in 1998 and currently





has around 32,000 members in Phnom Penh and the provinces of Kandal, Takeo, Kampot and Kampong Thom. Members pay a premium of US\$ 4 per year (US\$ 10 for Phnom Penh residents) and in return GRET/SKY covers all primary and secondary health care costs.

In an innovative pilot project in Kampot province co-funded by Germany, Cambodians identified to be under the poverty line have also enrolled into the GRET/SKY insurance scheme by using money from Health Equity Funds (sponsored by the HSSP) to pay for their insurance premiums.

All members are then treated equally and benefit from the same benefit package, which avoids any possible stigma. Moreover, with funds from AusAID poor members receive additional benefits such as transportation and food allowances in case of hospitalisation, to ensure that they can avail themselves of the services offered. Looking forward, a micro-insurance scheme to cover garment factory workers is being developed, the implementation of which should start this year. This scheme is foreseen to help the National Social Security Fund that will be launched in 2010.





In 2007 over 750 donor projects were on-going in Cambodia. Of the 360 donor missions that took place only 12 percent were coordinated with other donors while 121 parallel project implementation units were in operation. Only about 15 percent of the US\$ 612 million of aid that flowed into the country used government financial management systems.

Despite the volume of aid flowing into the country, its effectiveness was impacted by the sheer number of activities and partners involved as well as the capacity of the government to manage the situation and ensure sustainability.

As part of a comprehensive answer to the challenges laid down by the Paris Declaration as well as the subsequent Accra Agenda for Action, EU donors in Cambodia established an EU Road Map for Increased Aid Effectiveness in 2006. The goal is to ensure more rapid achievement of Millennium Development Goals, specifically, sustainable poverty reduction. This will be accomplished by strengthening country leadership in the aid effectiveness agenda and maximising the impact of EU aid to Cambodia through increased coordination and alignment among the EU Member States and the European Commission.

In Cambodia, EU member states and the European Commission are committed to progressively increasing the use of the Royal Cambodian Government's own systems for channeling support. In practical terms, this commitment is translating into the provision of budget support combined with technical assistance to support the Royal Cambodian Government's public financial reform programme.

Strengthening and using country systems

Strengthening Cambodia's public financial management (PFM) is essential for building confidence among donors to channel more aid through government systems. The European Commission as well as the Swedish (Sida) and UK (DFID) development agencies have pooled funds to support Cambodia's PFM reform programme. This is a multi-stage initiative which in the initial stages sought to build budget-process credibility and is now expanding to improve financial accountability within line ministries.

At the same time, the German development agency (GTZ) is helping the Auditor General's office improve transparency as well as checks and balances within government financial procedures. EU support to local government reforms, particularly the decentralization





and deconcentration initiative implemented by the Ministry of Interior, also supports the establishment of directly-elected commune councils and their financing through country systems.

The European Commission is also providing budget support to key areas of the education sector (finance, personnel, audit and basic education) in order to carry forward reforms that will help improve the quality of education in Cambodia.

EU donors have furthermore been instrumental in the design of a pilot budget-support programme. This places the government in the lead for the effective use of aid and aims to build, rather than circumvent and undermine, government systems. The programme provides flexible financing to support the Cambodian government's strategy to reduce poverty as set out in

the National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP). It is designed to increase incentives for reform in public financial management, land management and private sector development. These reforms are crucial to reduce the obstacles to continued growth and poverty reduction.

The budget support programme is a multidonor initiative that provides some € 17 million (US\$ 21.9 million) per year to the government to support the implementation of the NSDP. It is funded by the UK, European Commission, World Bank and Japan. The UK has committed to spend GBP 7.5 million (US\$ 11 million) over three years, while the European Commission has committed € 22.2 million (US\$ 28.6 million) over 2007-2010. After a design phase of nearly 18 months, the first payments were made at the end of 2007.





Tourism is a dynamic growth sector worldwide with Cambodia being no exception. However, tourism in the Kingdom tends to be concentrated around a limited number of destinations and its benefits do not adequately reach the poor. Siem Reap province for example, home to the country's main tourist attraction Angkor Wat, was, according to UNDP, the second poorest province in the country in 2004.

The rapid growth of tourism is stimulating unprecedented demand for new destinations, hotels, transportation, food and other services. This presents opportunities to generate employment, but policies and measures are needed to avoid rapid uncontrolled growth and any possible negative impact.

The EU's support to Cambodia's tourism sector is consistent with the Rectangular Strategy (2004 and 2008) which states that tourism will generate employment and incomes for Cambodians, thereby reducing poverty and improving well-being of Cambodians people, and foster the diversification and strengthening of the Cambodian economy supporting investment, among other sectors, in tourism; and ensuring appropriate protection and development of the reserved forest, including eco-tourism, for employment generation and additional income for the people. Meanwhile the National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) 2006-2010 highlights measures

including: increasing the length of stay of tourists, making tourism a priority area for investment as well as promoting natural areas as eco-tourist destinations.

A focus on capacity building

In Cambodia, the EU supports the development of tourism in two main ways: by encouraging the sustainable development of tourism to alleviate poverty and through training and capacity building for public authorities and local communities.

The lack of qualified human resources is one of the major weaknesses in this sector, especially at provincial level. Public sector officials in charge of tourism need the knowledge and skills that enable them to harness tourism to so as to reduce poverty. In parallel, communities with ecotourism potential need to be made aware of the possible benefits of this income-generation alternative and given the tools to do so.

Spain, through the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation and Development (AECID), and France are actively involved in this sector. A number of interventions are underway, such as two projects implemented by the Spanish NGO Fundación Promoción Social De La Cultura (FPSC) with Cambodian partner NGOs in the northeast of Cambodia.





The projects focus on the provinces of Kratie, Stung Treng, Mondulkiri and Rattanakiri. They provide training to the provincial Tourism Departments and Tourism Development Committees to improve their knowledge and skills as well as the development of sustainable Community-Based Ecotourism (CBET) in a number of communities. The total budget for these projects is € 633,830 (around US\$ 1 million).

Meanwhile, France provides expertise in "tourism engineering" through projects at the Royal University of Phnom Penh (RUPP) and the Royal University of Law and Economics (RULE), with the aim of fostering the development of tourism industry management and providing students with job opportunities adapted to the local market needs.

At RULE, training for tourism managers, in cost control, marketing, business plans and human resources was set up in 2008 and should admit its first students in 2009. At RUPP, the Department of French Studies within the Foreign Language Institute opened a Foreign Language & Tourism Degree in October 2008, in collaboration with the Université de Corse (France) and Ho Chi Minh City University of Pedagogy (Vietnam). Nineteen students have enrolled for the first year.

In addition, the Cambodian Ministry of Tourism, Université de Corse (France) and Department of French Studies of RUPP have agreed to organise training for public officials, helping them to initiate and develop tourism-related activities.

Eco-tourism for development

The Cambodian government has given high priority to the development of eco-tourism. While the northeast of Cambodia is one of the poorest and least populated areas in the country, it has considerable potential in this area.

Stung Treng province is home to a protected wetland area and attractions popular among international tourists such as the Mekong rapids, the Pha Met Waterfall and the Mekong dolphins. The commune investment plan therefore supports the establishment of sustainable tourism activities and the project being carried out by Fundación Promoción Social De La Cultura (FPSC) complements this initiative.

Located in the wetland area on the west bank of the Mekong, Preah Rumkel Commune comprises eight villages of approximately 1,000 households. The development of tourism here faces a number of challenges including the degradation of natural and cultural resources, poor infrastructure and insufficient funding. All need to be addressed for eco-tourism to develop in a sustainable manner.



The objective of the project is twofold. It seeks to improve the livelihoods of the people in Preah Rumkel through the establishment of community based eco-tourism and to empower the local communities to protect the natural resources and ecosystem in close cooperation with the local authorities and other stakeholders.

In order to achieve this objective, a community-based eco-tourism committee has been set up and bylaws, regulations and a management plan developed. The facilities and services required for visiting tourists are being identified with the local communities developing a blueprint for the construction of facilities such as a trail, small signposts, waste bins and a community restaurant as well as

ladders and handrails along the main trail to the waterfall. Skills training has also taken place.

One of the participants in the project is 44-year-old Ms Lok Chanto. "I really wanted to join this project as a way of getting new ideas and job opportunities. Before the project, I was only a farmer but now I am a home stay owner. My house has been decorated to receive tourists; some have already stayed in my home and more will come in the future".

"The community is working very hard and we all share the benefits. I feel enthusiastic about the project as it helps develop my village and gives hope to all Preah Rumkel's people," she adds.





Cambodia has benefited greatly from trade and private sector development to achieve the remarkable growth it has recorded over the last decade. Garment exports and tourism have been notable drivers of economic growth and sources of poverty reduction.

The Kingdom has shown considerable commitment in this area. After liberalizing its economy and trade regime in the 1990s, Cambodia joined ASEAN in 1999 and in 2004 became the first Least Developed Country (LDC) to join the World Trade Organization (WTO). Private sector development and export-led growth are also critical components of the government's National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP).

However with infrastructure, governance and production capacity all having plenty of scope for improvement, the challenges Cambodia faces to further develop the private sector are formidable.

Providing 'Aid for Trade'

The EU has consistently supported the Aid for Trade agenda on a global level. In October 2007, the EU adopted a joint Aid for Trade strategy, aimed at supporting all developing countries, and particularly LDCs, to better integrate into the rules-based world trading system and to use trade more effectively in promoting the overarching objective of eradicating poverty in the

context of sustainable development. The strategy commits the EU to channel more resources to Aid for Trade and to deliver the aid more effectively.

In Cambodia, EU development partners in collaboration with multilateral agencies have worked hard in recent years to put the principles of this strategy into practice.

The main EU donors active in trade-related assistance and private sector development in Cambodia are the European Commission, Denmark and France while Germany is still active in the field of private sector promotion in rural areas.

The European Commission is the largest contributor to the Trade Development Support Program together with the Danish development agency Danida (see case study). In addition, the European Commission funds a development programme for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs).

The regional EC-ASEAN Intellectual Property Rights Cooperation Programme (ECAP) has helped strengthen Cambodia's intellectual property rights infrastructure. This has included the development of 'geographical indications' for Cambodian products, for which it has worked closely with the French Development Agency (AFD). France is also providing support for increased productivity in the garment sector and development of the rubber industry.





EU support for the Trade SWAp

Under the lead of the Ministry of Commerce, the EU has been instrumental in supporting the establishment of a more integrated and comprehensive approach to trade-related assistance: the 'trade sector-wide approach', or 'Trade SWAp'. This is a move away from the type of development assistance that works through scattered donor-led projects, implemented by project-specific implementation units that present a heavy drain on government resources.

The Trade SWAp is based on a common policy document, the Diagnostic Trade Integration Strategy 2007, which was jointly developed by the Ministry of Commerce and international donors in Cambodia. The Ministry of Commerce's Department for International Cooperation has also taken up much of the work of the previous 'project implementation units'. Dialogue on policy orientation and resource allocation takes place on common

platforms, such as the government's Sub-Steering Committee for Trade Development and Trade-related Investment.

The main funding mechanism for the Trade SWAp is a multi-donor trust fund – the Cambodia Trade Development Support Programme or TDSP – managed by the World Bank and the Ministry of Commerce's Department of International Cooperation. The European Commission has provided € 7.1 million (US\$ 9.1 million) to this initiative while Denmark has contributed some € 4.4 million (US\$ 5.6 million). The third contributor is UNIDO with approximately € 154,000 (US\$ 200,000).

The TDSP will help boost government efficiency in formulating and implementing effective trade policies; in meeting its obligations to the World Trade Organization, including food safety standards; and in improving access by Cambodian firms to European markets, among other objectives.





- Total area** : 4,326,604 km²
Population : 492.8 million
Language : 23 Official languages
Currency : The EU's single currency, the euro "€" is shared by 16 countries and used by some 327 million European citizens.
- ODA** : More than half of global development assistance comes from the EU
- Trade** : 40% of total EU imports are from developing countries
- EC President** : H.E. Mr. José Manuel Barroso
- United in diversity** - The European Union is made up of 27 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, a

zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development has been built whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders.

Embracing a continent

1952	Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands
1973	Denmark, Ireland, United Kingdom
1981	Greece
1986	Portugal, Spain
1995	Austria, Finland, Sweden
2004	Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia
2007	Bulgaria, Romania

Access to EU Market

The Export Helpdesk is an online service, provided by the European Commission, to facilitate market access for developing countries to the European Union. This free and user-friendly service provides relevant information required by developing country exporters interested in supplying the EU market. This easily-accessible database contains trade statistics, technical and administrative requirements for entering the EU market, and other useful information. <http://exporthelp.europa.eu/>





European Parliament

The European Parliament is democratically elected voice of the European Union. The Parliament upholds citizens' rights, adopts legislation and monitors the use of executive power.

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu>

Council of the European Union

Usually known as the Council of Ministers, this key institution sees government ministers from each member state meet to take decisions and resolve national differences in various policy areas. The European Council, made up of 27 Heads of State or government, meets at least twice a year to set objectives and fix priorities. Each Member State takes the Presidency in turn for a term of six months.

European Commission

The European Commission is the European Community's executive body. Led by 27 Commissioners, the European Commission initiates proposals of legislation and acts as guardian of the Treaties. The Commission is also a manager and executor of common policies and of international trade relationships. It is responsible for the management of European Union external assistance.

<http://ec.europa.eu>

European Court of Justice

The European Court of Justice provides the judicial safeguard necessary to ensure that the law is observed in the interpretation and application of the Treaties and all legislation based upon them.

<http://www.curia.europa.eu>

European Court of Auditors

The European Court of Auditors is responsible for checking that the European Union spends its money according to budgetary rules and regulations.

<http://www.eca.europa.eu>





European Investment Bank (EIB)

The European Investment Bank was created by the Treaty of Rome in 1958 as the long-term lending bank of the European Union. The task of the Bank is to contribute towards the integration, balanced development and economic and social cohesion of the EU Member States.

<http://www.eib.europa.eu>

Committee of the Regions (COR)

The Committee of the Regions is the political assembly which provides local and regional authorities with a voice at the heart of the European Union. It has to be consulted on matters concerning regional policy, the environment and education. It is composed of representatives of regional and local authorities.

<http://www.cor.europa.eu/>

European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)

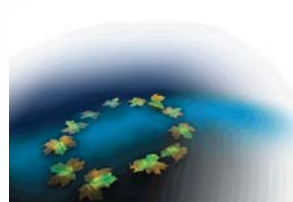
The European Economic and Social Committee represents the views and interests of organised civil society vis-à-vis the Commission, the Council and the European Parliament. The Committee has to be consulted on matters relating to economic and social policy; it may also issue opinions on its own initiative on other matters which it considers to be important.

<http://www.eesc.europa.eu>

European Central Bank (ECB)

The European Central Bank is the central bank for Europe Union's single currency, the Euro. The ECB's main task is to maintain the euro's purchasing power and price stability in the Euro area. The euro area comprises the 16 European Union countries that have introduced the Euro since 1999.

<http://www.ecb.eu>





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