



JOINT CALL

Ensuring that the Global Europe Regulation strengthens the EU's ability to address fragility

The European Union (EU) stands at a pivotal moment as it is shaping the future financing of its external action under the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF). At a time when fragility is affecting an increasing share of the world's population - particularly those already living in poverty - the EU's global engagement is not optional; it is indispensable. That engagement must remain anchored in the EU's legal commitments and core values to promote peace, reduce poverty and alleviate human suffering - in line with the Treaty of the EU and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Building on the [2025 joint call](#) and the three networks' specific recommendations, CONCORD, EPLO and VOICE call on the EU to ensure that the future external action instrument - Global Europe (GE) - strengthens its commitment to addressing fragility and its impacts. The GE Regulation, currently under discussion in the Council and the European Parliament, and its implementation must reflect the reality of overlapping crises, rising humanitarian needs and increasing geopolitical pressure on development policy. It must uphold Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development, ensure transparent and accountable governance, and allocate sufficient resources for Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and fragile contexts.

Addressing fragility effectively requires moving beyond short-term approaches and allocating continuous resources in conflict prevention, inclusive governance, social protection systems, anticipatory action, climate resilience, and equitable access to essential services. A strengthened GE instrument should therefore operationalise the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) nexus in a way that reinforces - rather than dilutes - long-term sustainable development objectives, while ensuring robust support for principled humanitarian action and sustained peacebuilding efforts.

The Global Europe Regulation should therefore:

1) Make fragility a cross-cutting priority of Global Europe

Fragility must be defined clearly and embedded at the heart of the GE architecture. The Regulation should reference the OECD-DAC definition of fragility, and recognise it as a multidimensional phenomenon encompassing the economic, environmental, human, political, security and societal dimensions.

To operationalise this commitment, GE should:

- Establish fragility as a cross-cutting priority across all pillars and regions, avoiding uneven treatment or the diversion of Official Development Assistance away from fragile contexts.
- Retain and strengthen the level of ambition of the current NDICI-GE Regulation regarding fragility, ensuring that funding is prioritised where needs are greatest, particularly for countries in situations of high and extreme fragility and conflict.
- Include a spending target of 0.20% of Gross National Income to Least Developed Countries (LDCs), as LDCs and high and extreme fragility share a significant overlap.
- Apply a people-centred approach and mainstream climate and gender across the instrument to strengthen resilience, promote inclusion, and ensure that EU external action is both effective and principled.
- Explicitly include both highly and extremely fragile contexts in the differentiated approach.
- Make conflict sensitivity and regularly updated conflict analysis mandatory for all actions, by reintroducing the conflict sensitivity requirement in the general principles article of the GE Regulation, and ensure this is supported by adequate human resources at headquarters and EU Delegation level.
- Systematically integrate anticipatory action, early warning systems, and preparedness mechanisms, ensuring they connect humanitarian and development components and prevent further exacerbation of needs.
- Reinforce inter-service coherence, including structured consultation between DG INTPA, DG MENA, DG ECHO and the Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI) when programming and adjusting actions in fragile and conflict-affected settings, ensuring the links between preventive actions, crisis response and longer-term resilience-building.
- Strengthen language and practice on building community resilience and locally led actions, recognising local actors as central partners in prevention, response, and recovery.

This approach aligns with the EU's commitments to the HDP nexus and to principled, conflict-sensitive engagement

2) Ensure flexibility is meaningfully used to support needs-based and predictable engagement

While flexibility can be key in fragile settings, this needs to be balanced with proper safeguards and criteria to avoid the risks of politicisation, unpredictability, and disengagement from fragile contexts.

To ensure transparency, accountability, and balanced flexibility, GE should:

- Introduce clear criteria on how the cushion should be used. Funding under this budget line should guarantee the EU's capacity to respond effectively to disasters and conflicts outside Europe.
- Ensure that decommitted funds remain within the same budget line and region, preserving their original sustainable development objectives rather than allowing absorption into horizontal flexibility instruments.
- Enable timely programme adjustments based on regularly updated conflict analysis and early warning systems.
- Strengthen oversight, including enhanced scrutiny by the European Parliament, and meaningful participation and structured dialogue with civil society organisations (CSOs).
- Maintain the presence of EU Delegations and ensure that the Team Europe approach reinforces the EU's overall action on fragility with initiatives that are transparent, coherent with EU policies, and accessible to partners.
- Systematically identify, within action plans, a range of implementing partners and delivery modalities, including NGOs, capable of operating where direct financial support to national authorities must be suspended.

3) Guarantee that programmable and non-programmable actions integrate fragility

Programmable funding remains the backbone of sustained EU engagement in partner countries, including in fragile contexts. To ensure a good balance between programmable and non-programmable actions and to keep sustainable development, peace and poverty reduction at the core of the EU's external action in the next MFF, 80% of the GE Instrument's geographic and global pillars should be allocated to predictable programmable actions. The remaining 20% of non-programmable funding under the geographic and global pillars should cover humanitarian aid, response to unforeseen conflicts and crises, as well as positive opportunities to build community resilience and peace. Competitiveness should not be eligible for non-programmable funding.

Within programmable actions, the GE Regulation should:

- Rebalance geographic objectives so peacebuilding, preparedness, and community resilience are strengthened and not subordinated to growth and competitiveness, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, where fragility and conflicts are most concentrated.
- Maintain grants as the primary modality - in particular in highly and extremely fragile contexts - given their role in promoting risk-sharing, localisation, and access.
- Strengthen transparency, accountability, and meaningful involvement of CSOs and local actors in policy dialogue, programming, monitoring, and adaptation.
- Ensure that geographic programming units and EU Delegations are adequately reinforced with relevant staff and expertise on peacebuilding and the HDP nexus.

Within non-programmable actions, the Regulation should:

- Safeguard funding for humanitarian action, peacebuilding and HDP nexus.
- Exclude competitiveness actions from non-programmable funding.
- Secure the proposed EUR 25 billion at current prices as the minimum for humanitarian aid within the budget allocation article, ensuring it is fully protected within non-programmable funding. Humanitarian assistance must remain needs-based and principled.
- Ensure resilience actions under non-programmable funding are strictly used for HDP-nexus purposes.

The next MFF offers a strategic opportunity to strengthen the EU's credibility worldwide. Embedding fragility across the GE architecture, structuring flexibility responsibly, protecting programmable geographic engagement, safeguarding humanitarian action and investing in peace are not technical adjustments but political choices. At a time of deepening crises worldwide, the EU must reaffirm its commitment to addressing the root causes of poverty, including conflict and climate change, supporting community resilience, and ensuring that resources reach those most in need.

We stand ready to engage with EU institutions and Member States to deliver a coherent, and accountable external financing instrument for 2028-2034.

Tanya Cox
Director, CONCORD



Sonya Reines-Djivanides
Executive Director, EPLO



Maria Groenewald
Director, VOICE

