

Global Europe Instrument

EU long-term budget: Infosheet

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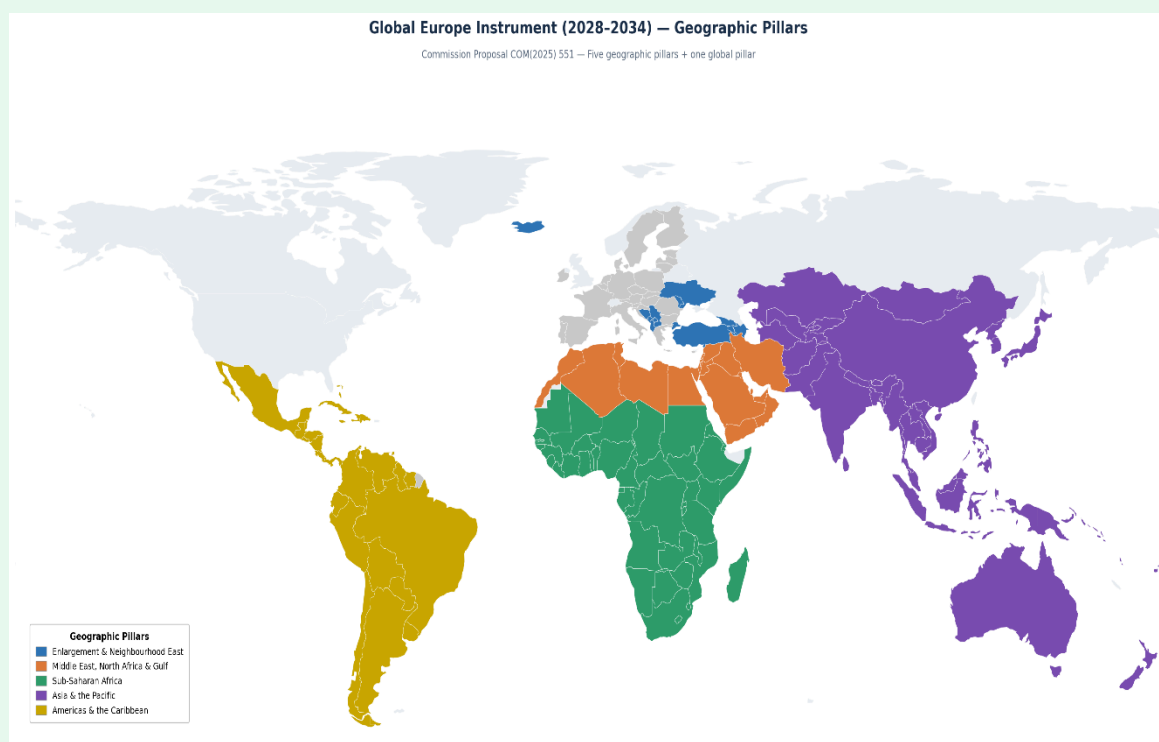
Funding for the EU's external action

What is the Global Europe Instrument?

The European Commission presented the proposal for the European Union's (EU) new long-term budget (2028-2034), aiming for a simpler, more flexible budget. To achieve this, one key change has been merging existing programmes into broader, more coherent ones. The Global Europe Instrument is one of them, and merges current funding programmes into one, including: Global Europe (NDICI); the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA), the Humanitarian Aid Programme, the Ukraine Facility, the Reform and Growth Facility for the Western Balkans, and the Reform and Growth Facility for Moldova.

The GlobalEU Instrument aims to support a wide range of external action policies, including enlargement, neighbourhood policy, international partnerships, and humanitarian aid. It focuses on **five geographic regions and one global pillar**:

1. Enlargement and Neighbourhood East;
2. Middle East, North Africa and the Gulf;
3. The Americas and the Caribbean;
4. Asia and the Pacific;
5. Sub-Saharan Africa;
6. Global pillar – this is where funding for human rights, democracy and civil society now sits, having lost its own standalone programmes.



The European Commission's proposal consists of funding:

- Pre-accession assistance, which covers most of the EU's external action financing.
- A toolbox to prepare EU candidate countries and potential candidates for EU accession, including performance-based reform plans for enlargement and Eastern Neighbourhood partners.
- A dedicated Ukraine Reserve of up to €100 billion, delivered through the Europe pillar, but financed from outside the EU budget ceilings, to support Ukraine's accession path and reconstruction.
- Almost all binding spending targets have been removed from the Instrument, in favour of flexibility. The only quantitative target left is that at least 90% of spending must qualify as official development assistance, and the Commission has proposed being able to change even that by a delegated act.¹

Why does it matter?

The EU provides funding and support to countries that want to join the EU, to neighbouring regions, to countries in crisis, and to partners across the globe. Until now, all of this was managed through different smaller funds and programmes, each with its own rules. That made things complicated, slow, and sometimes inefficient.

The Global Europe Instrument brings all this together under one roof. That means the EU can respond faster when a crisis hits, plan more strategically for the long-term, and make sure money goes where it is needed most.

This also matters for EU enlargement. Montenegro is working towards closing its accession negotiations, Albania has begun closing chapters, and negotiations with Ukraine and Moldova are advancing. The EU is preparing for its first enlargement since 2013. Preparing candidate countries for membership takes time, resources, and support. For the first time, this support is fully integrated into the EU's broader external action budget, giving it more weight and more funding than before.

EU context

The world today looks very different from just a few years ago. Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine has brought war back to Europe's doorstep, while tensions between major global powers are reshaping international trade and alliances. At the same time, the EU is facing challenges from within: growing distrust in institutions, the rise of disinformation, and concerns about the health of democracy in some member states.

The Global Europe Instrument is the EU's answer: a single, flexible tool that allows the EU to act quickly and unitedly wherever it is needed most. Whether that means supporting Ukraine's reconstruction, helping candidate countries reform their institutions, responding to humanitarian crises in Africa or the Middle East, or building lasting partnerships in Asia and the Americas.

¹ <https://ecdpm.org/work/companion-guide-global-europe-instrument-proposal>

What does this mean for you?

For organisations:

- Civil society organisations, NGOs, and development actors can apply for funding across all five geographic regions as there is no longer a need to navigate multiple separate instruments.
- Organisations working on democracy, human rights, press freedom and civil society internationally will find that these no longer have dedicated thematic programmes of their own. They are now funded through the geographic pillars and the global pillar, without ring-fenced amounts, which is why several Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) and NGO networks are pushing for stronger guarantees in the final text.
- Organisations in EU candidate countries (i.e. Ukraine, Moldova, or Western Balkan countries) may benefit from pre-accession support embedded within a much larger funding envelope.
- A new suspension clause would allow the Commission to withhold support from partner countries that fail to readmit their own nationals. Humanitarian assistance is explicitly protected from any such suspension.²

For citizens:

- The EU's ability to respond to humanitarian crises such as floods, conflicts, food shortages, is protected and strengthened by the dedicated humanitarian aid component of the Instrument.
- Citizens in countries aspiring to join the EU will see continued support for reforms that bring their governments and institutions closer to EU standards.
- EU citizens benefit indirectly too via a more stable neighbourhood, stronger global partnerships, and a more effective foreign policy.

What happens next?

The Global Europe Instrument is currently a proposal. It still needs to be negotiated and agreed upon by the Council of the EU (representing EU Member State governments) and the European Parliament.

Where things stand:

- **July 2025** – The European Commission presents its proposal.
- **June 2026** – The Council of the EU agreed on a partial negotiating position. It is "partial" because the money for the programmes – including the Global Europe Instrument – is excluded, and figures for now are being settled in the wider budget negotiation. The Council's text gives Member States a stronger hand in steering the negotiation of the Instrument, including a role in approving assessments of partners' reform plans, and adds a "European preference" in procurement in strategic sectors such as energy, digital and critical infrastructure.
- **June 2026** – EU leaders discussed the first set of figures. The Council Presidency's proposal looks to cut the funding allocated in the Instrument, while the European Parliament is asking for a top-up.

²

<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2026/06/16/mff-2028-2034-co-uncil-agrees-partial-mandate-on-global-europe/>

- **October 2026** – The European Parliament is expected to adopt its own negotiating position, prepared jointly by the Foreign Affairs (AFET) and Development (DEVE) committees.
- **End of 2026** – The target date for an overall agreement on the EU's long-term budget.

Decisions still to be taken will shape:

- How much funding goes to each region, and whether the indicative amounts become binding;
- Whether dedicated support for democracy, human rights and civil society is protected, or left to compete for funds within broader envelopes;
- How far migration cooperation can be used as a condition for support;
- How the EU balances long-term commitments to partners with the flexibility to respond to new crises;
- The level of support for Ukraine's reconstruction and its path towards EU membership.

Want to learn more?

- [European Commission – EU budget 2028–2034](#) – the official proposal package and factsheets
- [Council of the EU – The EU's long-term budget 2028–2034](#) – tracks the Council's positions as they are agreed
- [European Parliament's Legislative Train on Global Europe](#) – follow the latest progress in negotiations
- [EU Funding & Tenders Portal](#) – for project applications
- Your [EUROPE DIRECT](#) centre
- [ECDPM's MFF dossier](#) – continuously updated analysis, including the [companion guide to the Global Europe Instrument](#)
- [ECDPM: Global Europe – a geopolitical instrument in need of strong development safeguards](#) (July 2026) – what is at stake now that both co-legislators have moved
- [ODI analysis: what the GEI reveals about EU geopolitical priorities](#)
- [European Movement Ireland – Global Europe: key updates](#) – a running timeline of the file

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