

Promoting Coherence

On the occasion of the Austrian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, EADI and the Austrian EADI members ÖFSE (Austrian Foundation for Development Research), VIDC (Vienna Institute for Development and Co-operation) and KEF (Commission for Development Studies at the Austrian Academy of Sciences) organised an international conference on 31 March 2006 in Vienna on Policy Coherence for Development (PCD).

The European Commission has been preparing the PCD Work Programme 2006–2007 for adoption at the External Relations Council meeting on 11 April 2006, and the conference aimed to recall the importance of national and international efforts in this process on the one hand and to emphasise the role of development research on the other. Further, it was intended to bring together politicians, development administration staff, civil society representatives and the development research community from Europe and from the new Member States to discuss conditions, tools and ways to put coherence into practice.

More than 120 participants took part in the conference in Vienna.

Martin Jäggle, member of the board of the ÖFSE, and **Jean-Luc Maurer**, President of the EADI, gave a warm welcome to the participants and expressed their conviction that PCD is one of the most challenging issues in the recent international development debate.

Paul Hoebink, Centre for International Development Issues at the Radboud University of Nijmegen, opened the session with an introductory overview of different definitions of PCD and the legal basis of policy coherence in the EU. He mentioned different examples of (in-) coherence and presented a typology of coherence, before going on to analyse what causes incoherence. He closed his presentation with some recommendations on how civil society, governments and bureaucrats can support the implementation of coherence.

Alexanda Treziak-Duval, Co-ordinator of Policy Coherence for Development at the OECD, raised the question of whether

institutional mechanisms are the answer. She emphasised at the beginning the importance of a coherent development policy and mentioned, for example, that military expenditures exceed ODA effort 20-fold, that fishing subsidies cost at least 15-20 billion US\$, that tied aid cost poor countries 2-7 billion US\$ and that support given to agriculture is five

times higher than ODA. She stressed that aid is only one part of the answer and other policies must contribute to more coherence. Ms Treziak-Duval explained that the poorest countries rely on aid, while middle-income countries benefit from trade.

Discussing the obstacles of coherence, she presented different approaches and some examples of good practice in implementing policy frameworks for PCD. Providing an analytical framework, which the DAC published in its "Development Dimension Series", she raised a set of important questions addressed to governments concerning the management of policy and the capacity to deliver policy. She concluded that the analytical framework will help to build institutional instruments which can contribute to the PCD process.

Virginia Braunstein, DG Development of the European Commission, presented an overview of the EU's general position on PCD (GAERC Conclusions PCD 24 May 2005) and made some references to the Working Programme 2006-2007, which had been presented at the Councils meeting (GAERC) in April 2006.

Jan Klugkist, who is responsible for coherence activities within the Dutch Development Co-operation Ministry, spontaneously agreed to present some best practice examples. He provided different examples and approaches regarding what development administration has to look at and emphasised the importance of institutionalised dialogue in national policy and the coalition-building process between countries, ministries and civil society. He also mentioned various examples of where initiatives have succeeded (Cotton Club, Fish Club). Mr Klugkist also underlined the importance of a coherent policy in the recipient countries.

After lunch **Irene Freudenschuss-Reichl**, General Director of Austrian Development Co-operation at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, focussed on Austria's profile and achievements in PCD. Starting with the international framework, she described mechanisms which had been put in place in Austrian development co-operation so far. She referred to efforts in





the area of sustainable development and the relation between the economy and development, and described ministerial consultation processes which are aimed at strengthening PCD. Furthermore, she stressed the fact that participation in policy co-ordination at the country level (PRSPs, NIP, SWAPs) can also contribute to more PCD. Referring to the institutional level she underlined the fact that the founding of the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) is another important step in the process of implementing PCD. Ms Freudenschuss-Reichl pointed out that progress was made on PCD at the EU level at the GAERC in May 2005 and that Austria is striving to promote PCD as one of the important issues during the Austrian presidency.

Louka Katseli, Director of the Development Centre of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), referred to the results of the Centre's research and stressed very clearly that some of the most glaring examples of a lack of policy coherence occur at the intersection of aid and trade. Ms Katseli said that the traditional argument that aid was better than trade for raising welfare in developing countries did not hold the ground and emphasised that those countries which receive only aid are the "coherence orphans". She suggested that a mix of market access and aid spending would be more effective than either policy in isolation. She presented the mutual interaction between aid/trade, trade/migration and aid /migration and concluded by saying that there was a need for institutional arrangements within and between governments in order to promote more coherent policies.

During the plenary discussion at the end of the day, **Jean-Jaques Gabas** (GEMDEV) said that we had to bear in mind that the Chinese development assistance stands in contradiction to the PCD approach and that we had to face this reality when discussing the issue of coherence. **Johannes Trimmel** from the Austrian EU platform of NGOs called for institutional dialogue between governments and NGOs, as well within developing countries and donor countries to promote PCD with the support of civil society.

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Links

EU Policy Coherence - Concord und Evert Vermeer Foundation
<http://www.eucoherence.org/>

EU Policy Coherence - Concord and Evert Vermeer Foundation: Strategy Paper
<http://eu-coherence.wizard.pvda.nl/download.do/id/100141249/cd/true/>

The Millennium Development Goals - Europe Cares.... Policy Coherence for Development
http://ec.europa.eu/comm/development/body/communications/docs/MDGs_depliant_004.pdf#zoom=125

Commission Staff Working Paper: Policy Coherence for Development, Work Programme 2006-2007
http://doku.cac.at/coherence_work_programme_2006_07.doc

OECD Policy Brief: Policy Coherence: Vital for global development, July 2003
<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/1/50/8879954.pdf>

EU Mechanisms that Promote Policy Coherence for Development: A scoping Study, 2006. Evaluation Series of the European Union, Triple C Evaluation No 2

