



DIASPORA CONSULTATION: SOUTHERN, CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

Executive summary

The [European Union Global Diaspora Facility](#) (EUDiF) organised the fourth and final event in its series of Diaspora Consultations on 26-27 March 2021. Representatives from 27 organisations based in seven Southern, Central and Eastern European countries participated in the event, representing a wide range of countries and regions of heritage from different parts of the world.¹

The main objectives of the consultation were to exchange on the opportunities and challenges linked to diaspora engagement for the development of countries of origin; to better grasp the profile and dynamics of diaspora organisations in Southern, Central and Eastern Europe; and to facilitate new connections between diaspora organisations.

Five main messages emerged from the consultation:



Sustainable sources of funding for diaspora should be made available. Quotas and/or specific opportunities for diaspora should be integrated in calls for projects and grant schemes.



Support for the development of inclusive and transparent diaspora networks is critical. There is a need to decrypt and share good practices in this respect.



Follow up on recommendations, continuity and sustainable dialogue should be ensured. Participants indicated that this was not the first time they were asked to identify recommendations. Efforts to follow up on diaspora recommendations are lacking, as well as sustainable multi-stakeholder dialogue and cooperation mechanisms with donors, implementing agencies and governments of countries of heritage and origin. Bilateral contacts are also critical and should be sought by all parties.



There is a need to analyse and promote the impact of diaspora actions and interventions, as well as to mainstream the contributions of diaspora as recognised partners in planning, designing and implementing co-development programmes (not only for core migration issues). The narrative on the added value of diaspora engagement should be further unpacked beyond general statements.

¹ Participants were selected based on the size of the diaspora community they represent and the fact that they implement development-related activities in their country or region of heritage.



An enabling environment for diaspora engagement in the country of destination is as important as an enabling environment in the country of heritage. Frameworks and programmes (in terms of integration, diversity and anti-discrimination) devised by host countries should be tailored to take into account that diasporas originate from diverse countries and regions, and sometimes from non-democratic contexts. In this respect, special attention should be paid to unlocking **youth diaspora potential** through dedicated programmes and measures.

During the event, participants developed recommendations. EUDiF will carry these recommendations through its dialogue, Capacity Development Lab (CDL) and Diaspora Professionals for Development (DP4D) mechanism. Drawing on all the diaspora consultations, a consolidated set of recommendations will be presented to authorities in countries of heritage and residence, as well as to the EU.

Recommendations

The participants generated the following recommendations:

- **Establish specific opportunities for diaspora organisations** within funds and calls for projects, in order to provide support that meets the specificities of diaspora organisations as actors of development and integration, and to acknowledge their ability to successfully build and implement projects;
- **Strengthen the sustainability of funding for diaspora organisations and make them financially autonomous**, by prioritising long-term funding programmes over short-term initiatives and one-off appeals;
- **Facilitate the professionalisation of diaspora organisations**, notably through capacity development activities in areas such as access to funding, communication and networking;
- **Support the development of inclusive and transparent diaspora networks**, drawing on an analysis of good practices in this area;
- **Strengthen opportunities for dialogue with governments of countries of residence and heritage**, particularly with **municipalities and local authorities**, in the countries of residence;
- **Analyse and widely promote the impact of diaspora actions**, including through a **well-articulated and positive narrative on migration and diaspora**;
- **Include the diaspora in the conceptualisation and planning of development actions** implemented by European governments and donors. In this sense, it is important to elevate **diaspora as co-development partners** and to **acknowledge their expertise and knowledge** beyond migration issues, including through the mapping of skills of diaspora individuals;
- **Support enabling environments for diaspora engagement in both countries of residence and heritage**, including by strengthening policies on inclusion, integration and respect for diversity in European countries of residence;
- **Create conditions that allow youth diaspora to engage and contribute**, for example by adapting the agendas of existing diaspora organisations to the needs of new generations and by designing engagement programmes that target youth diaspora.

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