

The Coherence of EU Policies: Perspectives from the North and the South

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Background and Objectives of the Commissioned Study

Policy Coherence is a relatively new concept in political science as well as in the formulation and implementation policy itself. In recent years policy coherence in development cooperation gained new importance due to the Doha round of trade negotiations, in which developed countries policies not only in trade but as well in agriculture stood under accusation.

The objective of this report is to identify, and exemplify EU policies that are incoherent with EC's development policy objectives, and to suggest ways of addressing this. The study also seeks to provide a framework for analysis for Country Strategy Papers, to identify potential incoherence amongst various development policy objectives.

Research framework:

'Policy coherence' is defined as 'the non-occurrence of policies or the results of policies that are contrary to the objectives of a given policy'. Three types of coherence are analysed:

- Internal coherence within the European development cooperation itself.
- Internal coherence between the European development policies and other external European policies.
- External coherence between the European development policies and other EU policies.

Methodology:

- Analysis of treaties, policy documents and guidelines on the basis of text and discourse analysis. The analysis was supplemented with interviews with staff of the Commission and the European Council, members of the European Parliament and some NGO umbrellas.
- Analysis of the 'coherence paragraphs' of all the Country Strategy Papers.
- A case study of Morocco and Senegal to develop a framework for coherence assessment.

Research Findings

- The study shows that one of the important causes for incoherence is that the interests of important groups or consumers are at stake and that these have a heavier weight in the formulation and implementation of policies than the interests of producers in developing countries.
- EU regional programmes have a wide range of goals and objectives which create internal incoherences or incoherences within development cooperation itself. This is holds particularly for incoherence between the broad socio-economic development goals and objectives and the poverty focus of the programme.

In cooperation with



- The reduction of poverty is one of the important goals and objectives of European Development cooperation which could be conflicting and cause incoherence. The EU still lacks the instruments for poverty screening on the activities which it finances under its aid-programmes.
- In general, the section on policy coherence in the present generation of Country Strategy Papers (CSP) is rather short, superficial and limited to identifying, at best, certain incoherencies in EU policies. The study finds that even in the few CSPs in which there is attention to External coherence issues, no urgency or follow-up is indicated.
- **Morocco:** External coherence is particularly problematic in the Moroccan case, especially in the areas of migration, market access and fisheries sector. The European policies vis-à-vis Southern Mediterranean countries have not been very coherent, with priority given to its member states' interests.
- **Senegal:** The case study identifies both internal and external incoherence in the areas of fisheries and migration issues. The Senegalese case emphasises 'calendar incoherence' (long time delays) and problems with dumping of agricultural produce. The research highlights the problems Senegalese producers encounter due to the import surges of agricultural products from Europe.

Main Conclusions

- To get a deeper type of analysis of EU's policy coherence with regard to development cooperation, the development of an 'alarm-system' or 'indicator-system' to monitor policy coherence is required.
- Directorate General for External Affairs and the Directorate General Development should have a framework that identifies potential and actual coherence issues and proposes questions and methodologies to analyse these issues.
- Staff of General for External Affairs and the Directorate General Development and the Delegations should be trained to work with such a framework. It is suggested that the workshops for the training should be offered on a regional basis.

For further information on this research project, please visit:

EC-PREP website: www.ec-prep.org

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EC-PREP is supported by the UK Department for International Development (DFID). In 2001, DFID, in collaboration with the European Commission, launched the European Community's Poverty Reduction Effectiveness Programme (EC-PREP). The main objective of this research initiative is to produce findings and policy recommendations that support and contribute to improving the European Community's effectiveness in attaining poverty reduction targets via its external assistance programmes. The programme has funded 13 Research Projects and 10 Commissioned Studies, which relate to one or more of the six focal areas of EC's development policy. More information about the research funded by EC-PREP can be found on www.ec-prep.org.