

PRESS RELEASE

Riga, 9 January 2015

Our World, our dignity, our future: EU launches the European Year for Development 2015

As 2015 begins, so does the European Year for Development (EYD2015) – a year dedicated to raising awareness, engaging Europeans everywhere in the EU's development cooperation and sparking a debate around the motto 'Our world, our dignity, our future'. The EYD2015 was proposed by the European Commission and unanimously adopted by the European Parliament and Council. It is an opportunity to showcase the strong commitment of the EU and its Member States to eradicating poverty worldwide.

This year promises to be hugely significant for development, with a vast array of stakeholders involved in crucial decision-making in development, environmental and climate policies. 2015 is the target date for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the year in which the ongoing global post-2015 debate will converge into a single framework for poverty eradication and sustainable development at September's United Nations General Assembly. 2015 is also the year that a new international climate agreement will be decided, in Paris.

The EYD2015 will bring together young people, policy-makers, civil society, the private sector, academic institutions and individual stakeholders to focus on their common development aims. It is the first ever European Year to focus on external relations.

"The aim of the European Year for Development is to inform EU citizens about development cooperation by highlighting the results that the Union, acting together with Member States, has achieved as a global player", said Neven Mimica, EU International Cooperation and Development Commissioner.

"We need to raise awareness of the benefits of EU development cooperation for both sides: for beneficiaries but also for EU citizens. This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to put development in the world's spotlight and I hope that people from all over the EU will join us and get involved in the European Year."

The EYD 2015 has a packed calendar of events at EU, national, regional and local level – everyone can get involved. European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker will launch the EYD2015 at a high-level opening ceremony in Riga on 9 January.

This will be followed by an international event on gender issues on 2 March, a 20 km run in Brussels in May and special EU-wide creative competitions, e.g. the "Shining Stars of Europe" video contest.

Further highlights across the Member States include the 28 Kapuscinski lectures (one in each Member State), the appearance of EYD2015 at the EXPO2015 in Milan and the award of the Lorenzo Natali Prize for journalists.

The EYD2015 will feature a wide range of creative opportunities for involvement across the Member States, ranging from art and development projects to activities with schools and universities and large-scale sporting events. Each month of the year will be dedicated to a special theme: January's focus will be on Europe's position in the world, February's on education, March will cover gender issues and April will be the month of health.

our world
our dignity
our future



With events from high-level conferences to grass-roots activities, the EYD2015 is a real opportunity to further EU citizens' engagement with the topic of development aid and cooperation.

For more information on the event calendar of the European Year for Development 2015, please visit: <https://europa.eu/eyd2015/>

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