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PRESS RELEASE

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7 out of 10 EU citizens say helping developing countries benefits them too

Tackling poverty in developing countries should be one of the main priorities of the European Union, according to 66% of EU citizens. Seven out of ten people (69%) believe that helping these countries is also good for the EU, benefiting its citizens. These are some key results from a Eurobarometer survey to be published today at the European Development Days in Brussels (26-27 November).

Despite the economic crisis, more EU citizens are now willing to pay more for groceries and products that support developing countries (48% of respondents, which represents an increase of 4 percentage points since 2012). 83% of respondents, meanwhile, think that it is important to help people in developing countries and 61% are of the opinion that aid should be increased.

European Commissioner for Development, Andris Piebalgs, commented: *"I am very encouraged to see that EU citizens support global solidarity and believe that together we can make a real difference in overcoming poverty. Big challenges lie ahead of us: ensuring that we achieve the Millennium Development Goals and make poverty a thing of the past. For the way forward we all need to work together - the global community should agree on an ambitious joint agenda for the eradication of poverty and sustainable development. Today's survey has a clear message: Europeans stand ready to play their role in this."*

EU citizens think that future development policy should focus on employment (44% of respondents), health (33%), economic growth (31%) and education (30%).

The Special Eurobarometer "EU Development Aid and the Millennium Development Goals" is to be presented by Commissioner Piebalgs at the **European Development Days** (EDDs). The event is bringing together Heads of State and Governments from Africa with EU institutions, EU ministers, representatives of UN institutions, civil society, academia and the private sector. Discussions are focusing on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the need for a strong European position to addressing global poverty and sustainable development after 2015. The event provides a unique opportunity for stakeholders, donors and key players in development to come together to contribute to the EU vision for development, post-2015.

Main EU trends

Personal commitment to development is growing. 48% of Europeans are willing to pay more for groceries and products that support developing countries, an increase of 4 percentage points since 2012. Large increases can be found in some countries that were hit hard by the economic crisis: Ireland (47%, +12), Latvia (27%, +8) and Spain (+7).

Contacts :

[Alexandre Polack](#) (+32 2 299 06 77)

[Maria Sanchez Aponte](#) (+32 2 298 10 35)

Support for development and aid remains high. 83% think that it is important to help people in developing countries, compared to 85% last year. In contrast, the number of people who are in favour of the EU increasing its aid remains stable, at 61%.

Young people feel particularly concerned by development issues and committed to resolving them. Young people in particular think that they can play a role as an individual in tackling poverty in developing countries. While 61% of 15-24 year-olds believe this, only 45% of people aged 55 and over take the same view.

53% of 15-24 year-olds are ready to pay more for products if this helps developing countries, compared with 45% of respondents aged 55 or above. Younger respondents are also more likely to think that tackling poverty in developing countries should be one of the main priorities both of the EU and of their national government.

The EDDs will give the floor to a number of youth ambassadors from all corners of the European Union and the world who will be invited to challenge the event's panellists with questions.

More results of the Special Eurobarometer

While most respondents (66%) think that tackling poverty in developing countries should be one of the main priorities of the European Union, only 48% think that it should be one of the main priorities of their own national government.

Only a small number of respondents (6%) have heard of or read about the MDGs and know what they are. When given a list of MDGs, Europeans believe that the most difficult ones to achieve over the next decade are eradicating poverty, achieving gender equality and stopping the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Around one respondent in ten (12%) correctly estimates the number of people in the world who live on less than \$1 a day (between 500 million and 1 billion).

For further information

The Special Eurobarometer, including country-specific fact sheets for all EU Member States can be found at:

http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb_special_419_400_en.htm#405

Website of the European Commissioner for Development, Andris Piebalgs:

http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/piebalgs/index_en.htm

Website of EuropeAid Development and Cooperation DG:

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/index_en.htm

Website of the European Development Days:

<http://eudevdays.eu/>