



# DECENTRALISED COOPERATION

## REPORT 2022

Official development assistance  
figures (2016 – 2020) and cases of  
direct cooperation by local and  
regional governments at the global  
level



GARAPENERAKO  
LANKIDETZAREN  
EUSKAL AGENTZIA  
AGENCIA VASCA DE  
COOPERACIÓN PARA  
EL DESARROLLO



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The assessments and opinions expressed in the report are the authors' sole responsibility and do not necessarily reflect the position of eLankidetza.

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# ACRONYMS

AACID	Andalusian Agency for International Development Cooperation
AECID	Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation
AECT	External Action of Territorial Collectivities
AESN	Seine-Normandy Water Agency
AIMF	International Association of French-speaking Mayors
AMVISA	Aguas Municipales de Vitoria-Gasteiz, S.A.
ANDA	National Administration of Aqueducts and Sewers (El Salvador)
AyA	Costa Rican Institute of Aqueducts and Sewers
CICD	Inter- Institutional Commission for Development Cooperation
CIMEQ	Medical and Surgical Research Centre of Cuba
CONFOCOS	Confederation of Cooperation and Solidarity Funds
CRS	Creditor Reporting System
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DAECT	Delegation for External Action of Territorial Communities
DDC	Decentralised Development Cooperation
DGPOLDES	Directorate General for Sustainable Development Policies of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation (Government of Spain)
DODA	Decentralised Official Development Assistance
ECADERT	Central American Strategy for Territorial Rural Development
EMT	Emergency Medical Teams
ERA	Environnement Recherche Action
EU	European Union
EXPE-CT	Certification Experience of Local Authorities
FELCODE	Extremadura Local Fund for Development Cooperation
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
JPP	JICA Partnership Programme
MAP	Country Partnership Frameworks
MODEAB	Sustainable management of projects in the water and sanitation sectors in the commune of Bangangté
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NGDO	Non-Governmental Development Organisation
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PACODE	Andalusian Development Cooperation Plan
PCDEA	Communal Development Plan for Water and Sanitation
PCD	Policy Coherence for Development
SABES	Basic Sanitation, Health Education and Alternative Energies in El Salvador
SAS	Andalusian Health Service
SIAAP	Interdepartmental Water Syndicate of the Paris Agglomeration
SICA	Central American Integration System
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
START	Spanish Technical Aid Response Team
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infections
TCO	Technical Cooperation Office
UCGL	United Cities and Local Governments
URA	Basque Water Agency
WHO	World Health Organisation

# PREFACE

In the field of international cooperation and solidarity, cooperation promoted by sub-state governments, the so-called decentralised cooperation, is largely unknown. It has never enjoyed sufficient attention or appreciation. Undoubtedly, its great diversity of approaches and interventions have not made it easy to monitor, study and catalogue.

But the reality is that decentralised cooperation as a whole presents a highly relevant and unique trajectory of several decades of commitment and dedication to improving the living conditions of individuals and peoples and to fight against poverty and inequality. Its journey and evolution is beginning to be recognised by international institutions, especially as a result of the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, due to the role that it grants to local and regional governments, together with civil society.

Despite the important existing publications and studies on the subject, mainly academic and focused on specific territories, this work aims to help fill a large gap in knowledge and comparative analysis.

The mathematician William Thomson Kelvin said that what is not measured cannot be improved, and what is not improved degrades. Therefore, as stated in the conclusions of this report, it is absolutely necessary that international cooperation organisations adequately collect, process, classify and disseminate information on cooperation and official development assistance from decentralised actors.

In any case, with this line of reports, eLankidetzta-Basque Agency for Development Cooperation seeks to contribute to the recognition and deployment of the enormous potential of decentralised cooperation. Beyond its sustained growth in budgetary terms, what is relevant is the high differential and innovative value of many of its actions and capacity to build alliances. In many cases, these initiatives are developed in collaboration with civil society organisations (NGDOs and local partner organisations), build solidarity networks, and mobilise different actors in the territory itself in an articulated manner. This publication includes a section of case studies of decentralised direct cooperation that briefly illustrate their differential value.

We are convinced that in decentralised cooperation the best is yet to come, yet to be built. We are confident in the enormous transformative power of cooperation and, as we formulated years ago in a meeting of Autonomous Communities, it is possible to contribute to changing the world through small steps.

We hope that this report will make a relevant contribution to the conversation and public debate on cooperation and solidarity; that it will contribute to the knowledge, dissemination and enhancement of its value; and that it will inspire and strengthen the work of decentralised cooperation agents. In this sense, the work done by our institutions and other allied entities is what gives meaning to this publication. In particular, PLATFORMA, the pan-European coalition of development cooperation cities and regions; the cooperation agencies and directorates of the Autonomous Communities; the cooperation and solidarity funds (grouped in the Confederation of Cooperation and Solidarity Funds), and especially our Euskal Fonda; the Provincial Councils of

Alava, Bizkaia and Gipuzkoa; the City Councils of Bilbao, San Sebastian and Vitoria-Gasteiz, among others; as well as the important role played by other civil society agents, especially the NGDO coordinators, and in our case, that of the Basque Country.

Paul Ortega Etcheverry  
Director of eLankidetza

# INTRODUCTION

This report has been commissioned by eLankidetza - Basque Agency for Development Cooperation, with the aim of contributing to the knowledge and assessment of decentralised cooperation. As will be seen below, decentralised cooperation, understood as the participation of sub-state governments in the international development cooperation system, has attracted increasing attention from international organisations and various analysts. However, there is no regular monitoring system for this form of cooperation. The aim of this report is precisely to fill this gap and to carry out a systematic analysis of official development aid that is promoted from the sub-state level of government in order to encourage reflection on its relevance and effectiveness.

The report is structured as follows: Section 1 defines the key concepts underpinning the work, including the very concept of decentralised cooperation and its different modalities or categories. After reviewing the main studies and debates on the issue, the report's objectives and methodological proposals are defined. On the one hand, a regular and systematic quantitative analysis of decentralised official development assistance (ODA) based on Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) statistics. On the other hand, a more qualitative analysis on categories and cases of decentralised cooperation to enhance the reflection on its effectiveness and relevance.

Section 2 presents the results of the quantitative analysis. It reports on the volume, importance and evolution of ODA, its financing agents and the weight of each of its categories, paying special attention to direct cooperation and, within this, technical cooperation. The same quantitative analysis is then applied country by country, highlighting the most important cooperation modalities in each country, as well as their sectoral and geographic orientation. Where data permit, the three actors with the largest volume of funds in each donor country are also profiled.

Section 3 contains seven case studies that delve into modalities of direct decentralised cooperation that can serve as organisational models and favour the development of this form of cooperation. After a final section recapitulating the conclusions of both analyses, two annexes with methodological details and additional data on 2020 DODA are added to the report.

1.

# ANALYSIS OF DECENTRALISED COOPERATION



## 1.1. Conceptualisation

In the European Union (EU), the term decentralised cooperation has been consolidated to refer to the participation of sub-state governments in international development cooperation, an area historically dominated by central governments. In its broadest sense, the term refers to the origin, means of implementation, or destination of cooperation. For example, the European Commission, in its communication "Local Authorities: Actors in Development", defines decentralised cooperation as "public and private aid provided by or through local authorities, their networks and other local actors" (EU, 2008). (EU, 2008)

In OECD, (2018, 2019) studies of decentralised cooperation also take a broad meaning of the term and explain how its meaning varies across Development Assistance Committee (DAC) member countries depending on the historical involvement of sub-state governments in their aid systems and their roles as funders, implementers or recipients of aid. For example, in countries where local and regional governments have historically had ODA budgets, such as Spain or Belgium, decentralised cooperation tends to be assimilated to ODA from regional or municipal budgets. In the United Nations, the term decentralised cooperation is less widespread, although there is increasing attention to the role of local governments in development and collaboration between them, regardless of the role of ODA in these relationships.

This report adds to the use of the term decentralised cooperation in a broad sense, although, responding to the interest of Spanish decentralised cooperation actors, it focuses on cooperation relations that meet three requirements:

1. involve resource contributions from Northern sub-state governments;
2. pursue development objectives in countries from the South or at the global level;
3. and are based on collaborative relationships that can generate mutual benefits, but are not conditioned by commercial and financial interests.

Moreover, the report focuses on sub-state government contributions counted as ODA and relies on its official database, managed by the OECD.

## 1.2. Studies and debates on decentralised cooperation

The first major study on decentralised cooperation dates back to 2005 and was entitled "Aid provided by local and state governments" (OCDE 2005)<sup>1</sup>. It quantified the phenomenon at between \$800 million and \$1.2 billion per year and limited it to three countries (Belgium, Germany and Spain), although nine other countries were identified with some practices of lesser budgetary importance.

At the same time, the aforementioned Communication from the European Commission (EU, 2008) highlighted the role of local authorities in development, both in aid recipient and donor countries. International cooperation at this level of government was related to local governance, decentralisation as a strategy to improve the provision of basic services, and the possibility of

<sup>1</sup> This OECD publication refers to federal countries and uses the term state to refer to the regional level of government. In contrast, in this document produced in Spain, the term state refers to the central level of government and the term sub-state is used to group the regional and local levels of government.

mobilising knowledge and financing from local governments in developed countries to their counterparts in developing countries.

At EU level, the Committee of the Regions has also historically defended region-to-region cooperation, with arguments based on the contribution of knowledge in public policies relevant to aid-recipient-countries. On a global scale, the United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) association, whose aim is "to be the united voice and global representation of democratic local self-government, promoting its values, objectives and interests, through cooperation between local and regional governments, and to the wider international community" (uclg.org, 2017), has taken the same stance.

However, these analyses on decentralised cooperation carried out in the early 2000s in the EU, the OECD and the UCLG went rather unnoticed, possibly due to the scant weight of this cooperation modality in overall ODA. Moreover, in countries such as Spain, where the importance of decentralised aid was much greater, the debates on decentralised cooperation were strongly influenced by the Aid Effectiveness Agenda and focused more on how to compensate for the fragmentation of decentralised cooperation than on taking advantage of its comparative advantages. (González Martín 2008; De la Fuente and Fernández 2009; Martínez and Sanahuja 2009, 2010).

Since 2015, doubts about the relevance and effectiveness of decentralised cooperation have been definitively dispelled. Following the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the United Nations promoted the idea of localising the sustainable development goals, understood as the adaptation of the global agenda to the characteristics and circumstances of each territory, establishing indicators and deploying means of implementation at the most appropriate level of government for each Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) and context. The localisation of SDG 11 on sustainable cities and communities or SDG 6 on clean water and sanitation require the participation or even leadership of local governments, but many other SDGs contain targets that, in a context of increasing urbanisation, also require the active involvement of municipal or regional governments, as was made clear at the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development that led to the New Urban Agenda (UN, 2017)

The new prominence of local governments in the Sustainable Development Agenda has also revalued their participation in international cooperation structures and networks, reinforcing the previous perspective of the OECD, the EU and the UCLG. The latter has relaunched its messages through a Task Force bringing together other thematic city networks (UCLG, 2015, 2017; Global Task Force, 2015, 2018, 2019, 2021). In particular, UCLG has emphasised knowledge transfer between local authorities in the context of rapid urbanisation in developing countries and their administrative decentralisation, in line with the New Urban Agenda.

In addition, there is a tendency to value the establishment of permanent cooperation structures for technical cooperation and, in particular, networks in which local and regional governments from the North and the South exchange knowledge on an equal and mutually beneficial basis. Moreover, these international networks are valued for their contribution to global governance by connecting the intergovernmental level with the local level, as is the case for UN climate change conferences. (Ortega, Pérez and Sanz, 2018).

In conclusion, a narrative on decentralised cooperation has been generalised and renewed based on the experience accumulated by sub-state governments in their areas of competence, their potential for technical cooperation, and the establishment of support networks for the 2030 Agenda. The OECD itself, which has made the diversity of decentralised cooperation visible, is committed to its more governmental varieties. This is expressed in its latest publication on the topic "Decentralised development cooperation: unlocking the potential of cities and regions" in which it practically equates decentralised cooperation with city-to-city, region-to-region cooperation. (OECD, 2019):

The 2030 Agenda is first and foremost a local agenda: almost 60% of the SDG targets can only be achieved if sub-state governments provide essential public services in health, education, emergency preparedness, water, energy, housing, etc. Most developing countries, unless central governments and the international community find ways to remedy the absolute lack of funding and knowledge faced by sub-state governments, will certainly not meet their 2030 Agenda commitments. This paper suggests that one source of funding and expertise available to these sub-state governments has remained largely untapped and should be reassessed: decentralised development cooperation (DDC), or development cooperation provided by sub-state governments in one country to sub-state governments in another country, has growing potential.

In countries such as Spain, where decentralised aid amounts to a third of total bilateral aid and is mostly channelled through NGOs or social organisations, these messages from international organisations have prompted a broad debate on the potential of decentralised cooperation and the review of its current approaches (Akhmouch, 2021; Alonso, 2021; Fernández de Losada, 2021; Unceta, 2021; Gutiérrez Goiria et al., 2022; Plataforma, 2022). In addition to the narrative of the localisation of the SDGs, alternative narratives are emerging, such as their proximity to citizens and civil society organisations (Pérez, 2020), their role as a catalyst for social justice (Monreal, 2020) or its contribution to the broadening and democratisation of the cooperation system (Martínez Martínez, 2019).

Finally, it is worth noting that academia has also paid some attention to aid from sub-state governments. The work done on defining and classifying decentralised cooperation goes back to 2003 (Haftack 2003) and is still being refined (Kania, 2021). In addition, both country-specific case studies, as well as more general studies with a quantitative approach (Reinsberg and Dellepiane, 2022); can be found in academic journals (Jain, 2005). These tend to adopt an international relations approach similar to paradiplomacy studies, in the sense that they seek to explain why sub-state governments move into the foreign policy domain of central governments. Also, within international relations, there is growing interest in the role of sub-state governments in global governance (Happaerts, 2012). However, these articles do not necessarily rely on ODA figures, nor do they connect with the international community's normative-theoretical debate on the added value of sub-state governments in development cooperation.

### 1.3. Proposal for quantitative analysis

Despite the growing interest of multilateral organisations in the international cooperation of sub-state governments, there is no official international source that produces regular and systematic reports on the subject. The OECD, which is responsible for the accounting and mutual evaluation of ODA, does not publish annual reports on ODA, as it does on other issues such as aid channelled

through civil society organisations<sup>2</sup>. Moreover, its databases do not distinguish between centralised and decentralised aid, although they do have a breakdown by activity that reports on the donor institution or agent.

This report aims to fill this gap by reviewing one by one the financing agents<sup>3</sup> listed by the OECD in its Creditor Reporting System (CRS) database of aid activities, classifying them as centralised or decentralised donors, and then focusing on the latter and analysing the volume, importance and priorities of their aid. In this way, the aim is to give regularity to specific analyses carried out by some research centres (Pérez, 2018; Gutiérrez, 2018) (Pérez, 2018; Gutiérrez Goiria et al., 2022) and the OECD itself (2018, 2019)<sup>4</sup>.

As a result of this exercise, explained in detail in the methodological annex, 54 agent codes referring to sub-state levels of government have been identified in eleven donor countries. Thirty-eight of these correspond to specific regional governments, such as the Basque or Flemish governments, while another sixteen are generic references such as "municipalities" or "provincial governments".



The practice of some donor countries of accounting for ODA in aggregate notes with generic references to their financing agents is undoubtedly a limitation to this study, as it does not allow for an in-depth analysis of the protagonists of decentralised cooperation. This practice is present in all countries to some extent, especially in the case of municipal donors, ODA modalities executed in their own territory, and countries with decentralisation percentages of around 1%.

As in most ODA studies, this report relies on several fields of the CRS database to characterise decentralised cooperation, such as the destination country (and associated geographical area), the sector, the channel or the type of aid. In this study, these fields have been combined and reordered to create categories that are relevant to decentralised cooperation, according to the experience of Spanish autonomous communities and municipalities.

Firstly, the different values of the 'type of aid' field have been combined to identify two main variants of decentralised aid. On the one hand, ODA par excellence, which involves an effective transfer of financial resources from developed to developing countries (international aid) and aid that is used in the donor agency's own territory (aid in the donor agency's own territory).

<sup>2</sup> Annual reports on aid to and through civil society which are based on the exploitation of the CRS fields channel and modality of cooperation. (OECD, 2020).

<sup>3</sup> The CRS has information on 610 agencies, of which 556 are classified as centralised and 54 as decentralised. [The tables used in the CRS analysis are annexed to the report in Excel.](#)

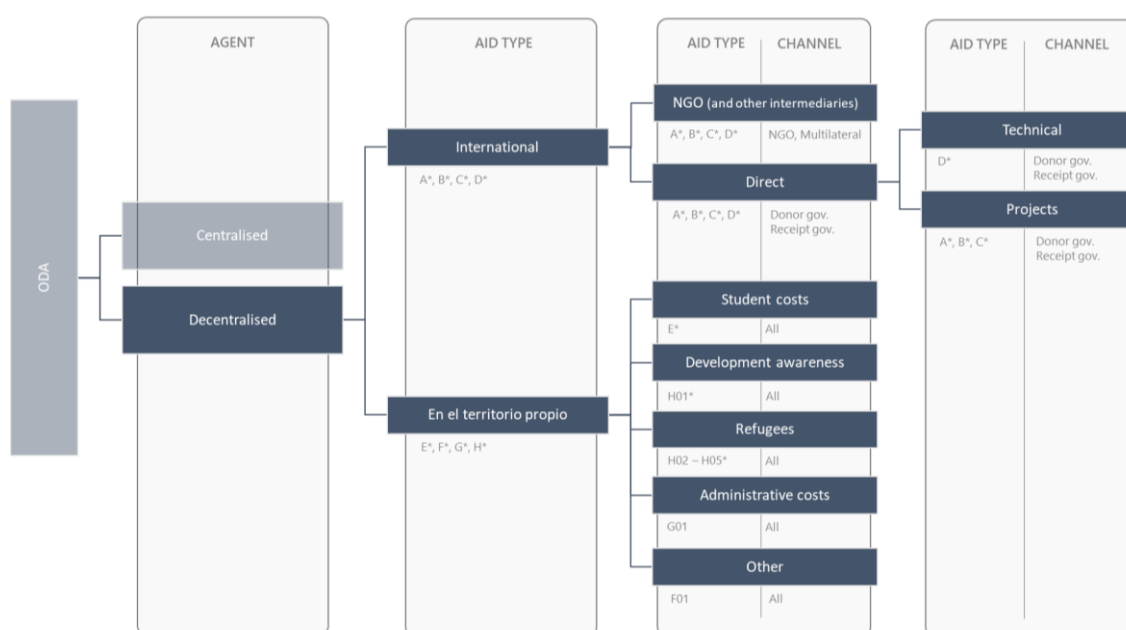
<sup>4</sup> It should be noted that there are databases that systematically present information on decentralised cooperation that does not have a state scope. This is the case for the Atlas of Decentralised Cooperation in France ([diplomatie.gouv.fr](http://diplomatie.gouv.fr), 2023) or the Basque Public Cooperation Portal in Euskadi ([hegoa.ehu.eus](http://hegoa.ehu.eus), 2023). Other sources of information on decentralised cooperation in Spain are the Info@OD database, which adds the origin of local cooperation funds to the DAC CRS database; the Oxfam Intermon report, the reality of aid; or the Coordinadora's annual reports, which focus on the fulfilment of the 0.7% commitment by local and regional governments ([realidadayuda.org](http://realidadayuda.org), 2023). ([realidadayuda.org](http://realidadayuda.org), 2023; [coordinadoraongd.org](http://coordinadoraongd.org), 2023; [infoaod.maec.es](http://infoaod.maec.es), 2023).

The same 'type of aid' field is then used to break down ODA on home territory into a number of items including imputed costs of students from developing countries, reception programmes for refugees during their first year of stay in the donor country, or global education activities following the likes of the Dublin Declaration. (GE, 2022) ODA on home territory also includes the administrative costs of the funding agents themselves.

International ODA, for its part, is broken down to create two other categories necessary for a useful analysis of decentralised cooperation actors: direct and indirect aid. Direct aid is understood as that which is implemented directly by the donor sub-state government or by an actor in the territory where the aid is destined, with which the donor government maintains a direct dialogue without the need for intermediaries. Indirect aid would be aid channelled through intermediaries. Taking into account the channels actually reported in DAC statistics, this indirect aid has been labelled in this report as aid through NGOs and other intermediaries<sup>5</sup>.

The following diagram shows this categorisation of DODA, while the methodological annex specifies the definition of each category based on their correspondence with the accounting structure of the OECD CRS.

Figure 1. ODA categorisation in this report <sup>i</sup>



<sup>i</sup> Equivalences with OECD CRS categories and codes are shown in grey.

Source: own elaboration.

<sup>5</sup> Kania (2021) has arrived at a similar classification based on interviews with representatives of the governments of Flanders, Wallonia, Scotland, Wales, Catalonia, Waden-Württemberg and Hamburg. Like the latter, Kania's classification distinguishes firstly between external (international) and domestic (on home territory) aid, but within international aid he includes a third type of international aid: delegated cooperation, which is somewhere between direct and indirect. Furthermore, Kania adds categories such as "mutual learning" or "exchange of good practices" that are very interesting for qualitative analysis, but lack a clear correspondence with the OECD's official accounting of aid and cannot be the object of a quantitative analysis such as the one addressed in this report.

## 1.4. Proposal for qualitative analysis

In addition to classifying ODA under the above categorisation, this report proposes a qualitative analysis of representative cases of the categories of greatest interest. In this edition, the report focuses on the cooperation modalities that best fit the international discourse on decentralised cooperation and its comparative advantage. This would be the direct cooperation modality, which includes both technical cooperation actions and projects implemented directly by sub-state governments in both the donor and recipient countries.

For this qualitative analysis, as explained in the methodological annex, the ODA database was used to identify the countries and funding agents where the greatest amount of direct decentralised cooperation activity has taken place. These amounts were broken down to micro-data level to identify the actions with the highest amounts or recurrence until a series of programmes and projects were identified that could serve as a model for knowledge-intensive direct decentralised cooperation. Documentary reviews and interviews with the heads of the institutions concerned were then carried out in order to investigate the administrative and operational design of each cooperation model and, in this way, up to seven models of direct cooperation were presented in section 3.

# 2.

## DECENTRALISED AID IN FIGURES

## 2.1. Importance and evolution of ODA

2020

**2.703** USD million

ODA by sub-state governments in 2020

**3,3%**

ODA from countries with decentralised systems

**2,0%**

Of total ODA of DAC countries

According to OECD data for the last five years available (2016-2020), decentralised cooperation has followed an upward trend. As can be seen in the graph below, its volume has grown year by year, reaching a peak of USD 2.703 billion in 2020, despite the impact of COVID-19 on international activity. Taking into account the 2005 OECD estimates, this 2020 amount indicates that decentralised cooperation has almost tripled in the last fifteen years.

Figure 2. Evolution of Decentralised ODA, 2016-2020



Source: own elaboration, based on OECD data

The amount recorded in 2020 is only 2% of global bilateral ODA<sup>6</sup>, but varies significantly from country to country. Only eleven states, nine of which are European and account for more than 90% of ODA, provide some form of decentralised development aid: Austria, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States. In these decentralised systems, the weight of ODA is 3.3%, with important differences between Spain, where the decentralisation of aid reaches 36%, and Japan, where small technical assistance expenditures of less than 1% are charged.

<sup>6</sup> According to CRS data, in 2020, total ODA in DAC countries was USD 135.5 billion, while ODA-DDA was USD 2.703 billion.



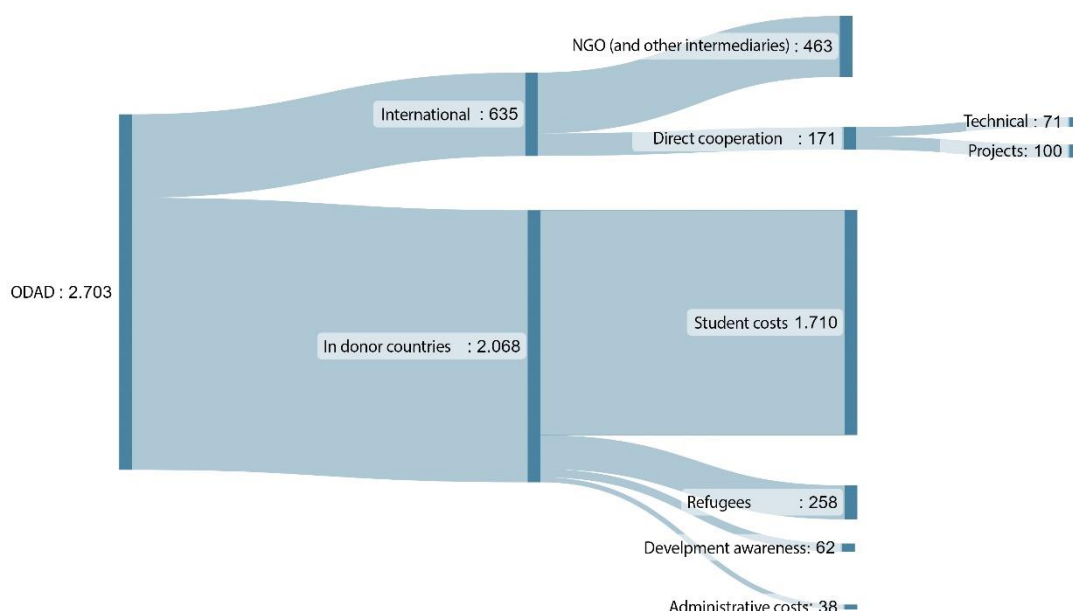
## 2.2. Categories of DODA

ODA implemented in 2020 is broken down in the graph below using the categories defined in section 1. The largest item of ODA is ODA on home territory, and within this, scholarships and allocations of other education costs linked to students from developing countries. The second largest item of ODA on home territory relates to the reception of refugees, while global education comes in third place, with a much smaller amount.

ODA in the country's own territory includes the administrative costs incurred by the donor agents themselves to manage their aid. These account for 1.4% of DODA, a much lower percentage than among centralised donors.

ODA effectively transferred to developing countries in 2020 consisted mostly of NGO projects and other intermediaries such as UN agencies. To a much lesser extent, ODA went to direct cooperation actions as detailed below.

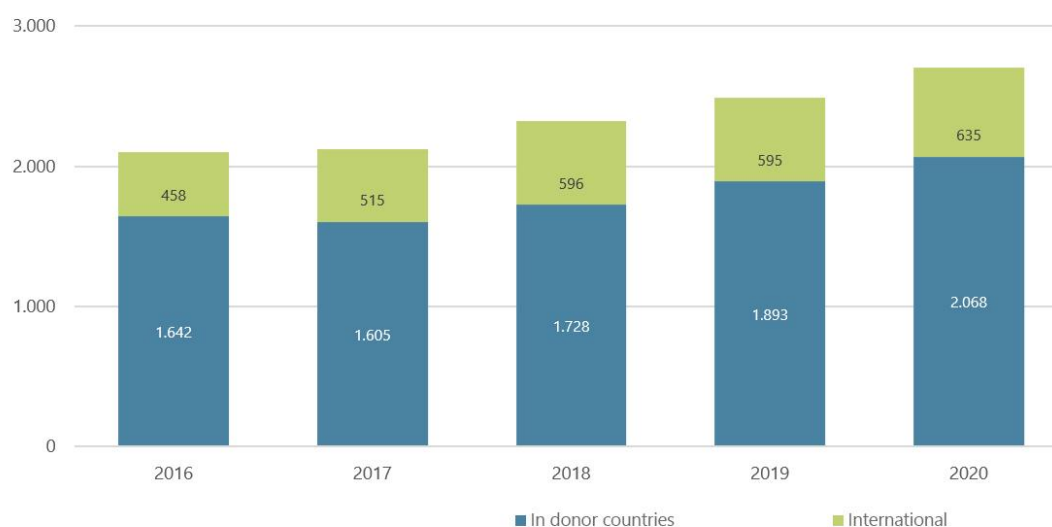
Figure 3. Distribution of ODA, year 2020 (USD million)



Source: own elaboration, based on OECD data

Firstly, the heavy weight of own-territory expenditure within DODA. Moreover, as shown in the following graph for the 2016-2020 period, this aid category maintains a growing trend in absolute terms and stands at around 75 per cent, a much higher percentage than in 2005, when the OECD put it at 50 per cent. As will be seen in the next section, these data are strongly influenced by the German Länder.

Figure 4. Evolution of Decentralised ODA, by category (M.USD)



Source: own elaboration, based on OECD data

Secondly, it is worth noting the low weight of direct cooperation in ODA. With 171 million dollars in 2020, direct decentralised cooperation accounted for only 27% of international ODA and 6.3% of total ODA. This figure contrasts sharply with the dominant discourse in the international community, according to which the added value of this cooperation lies in its knowledge of local policies relevant to the 2030 Agenda, as it is precisely the modalities of direct cooperation that allow donor governments to not only provide funds but also knowledge. In particular, technical assistance (provision of own staff and other expertise by local governments) stood at USD 71 million in 2020, less than 3% of total DODA.

## 2.2. Decentralised cooperation actors

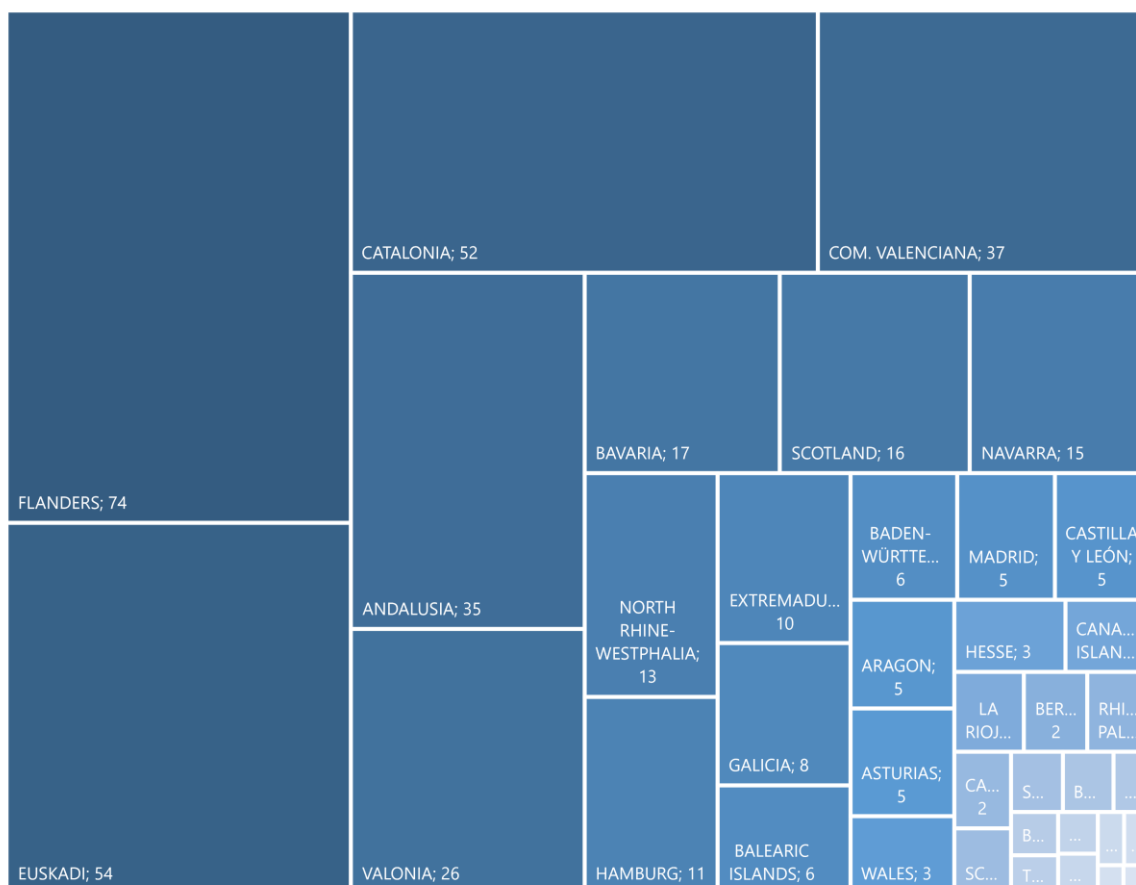
By its very nature, decentralised cooperation is a field open to a large number of funding actors, which cannot be fully captured through ODA statistics due to the limitations outlined in section

1. Despite these limitations, the OECD records aid actions<sup>7</sup> from thirty-eight correctly identified sub-state governments. These records show that, amidst the fragmentation of a decentralised system, some actors emerge with bilateral aid budgets larger than those of some central governments sitting on the OECD DAC<sup>8</sup>. These include Flanders, at the top of the ODA ranking, followed by the Basque Country, Catalonia, Valencia and Andalusia. Spanish autonomous communities top the ODA ranking.

<sup>7</sup> For the years 2016 to 2020, 70,649 decentralised cooperation actions have been registered, giving an average of 14,100 ODA actions per year. The average amount of each transaction is USD 0.16 million.

<sup>8</sup> Iceland (USD 46 million), Slovakia (USD 37 million) and Slovenia (USD 31 million).

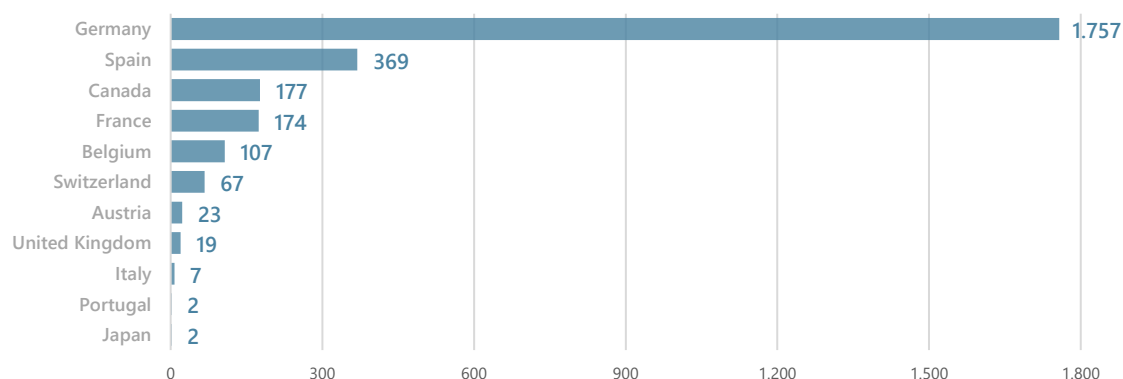
Figure 5. Decentralised cooperation agents and ODA disbursement, year 2020 (USD million)



Source: own elaboration, based on OECD data

Taking into account all ODA, including aid counted in generic terms at the state level, the main providers of ODA are the German Länder (USD 1,757 million<sup>9</sup> in 2020). They are followed by Spain's autonomous communities and local authorities (USD 369 million), Canadian provinces and French territorial authorities (over USD 170 million each).

Figure 6. Ranking of decentralised donors, ODA funds in USD million, 2020.

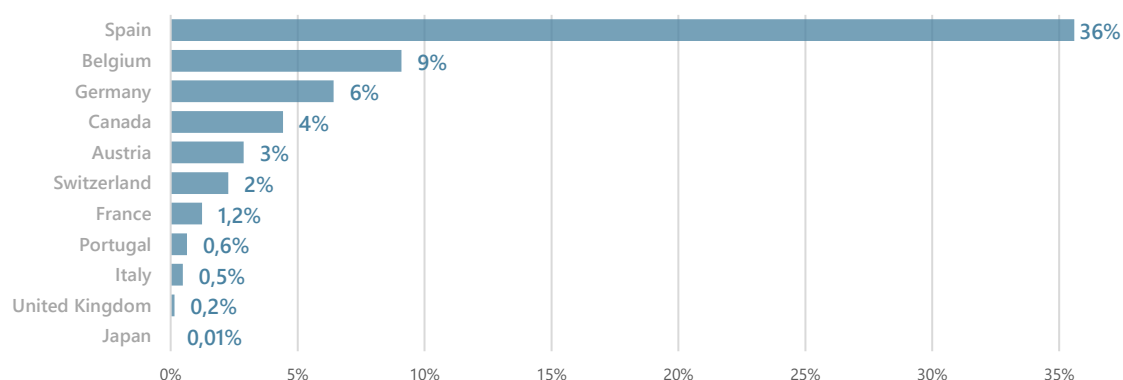


Source: own elaboration, based on OECD data

<sup>9</sup> Of the USD 1.757 billion that Germany has allocated to DODA in 2020, only USD 60.71 million has been allocated by clearly identified actors in the CRS. The rest (99%) of the aid is allocated to the generic actor "Federal states and local governments". For this reason, when excluding generic actors from the analysis, Germany's weight is lower.

If ODA is placed in relation to the total amount of bilateral ODA of each state, the ranking of donors changes considerably. Spain's autonomous communities and local authorities are the actors with the greatest weight in their state aid system (36% of bilateral ODA for the state as a whole), followed by the Belgian regions (9%) and the German Lander (6%).

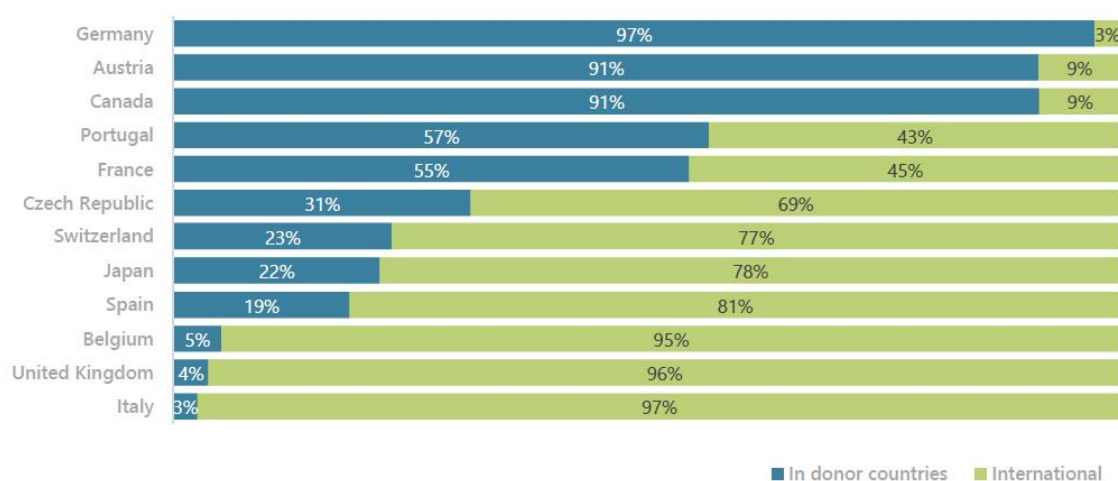
Figure 7. Decentralised donor ranking, ODA over bilateral ODA, 2020



Source: own elaboration, based on OECD data

Finally, another relevant ranking to understand decentralised cooperation is related to the distinction made in section 1 between international aid and aid implemented in the territory itself. As can be seen in the following graph, in countries such as Germany, Austria and Canada, ODA is mainly implemented on the ground, while in countries such as Italy, the United Kingdom, Belgium and Spain, ODA consists mainly of funding that is effectively transferred to developing countries.

Figure 8. Distribution of DODA categories by country, (average values, 2016-2020)



Source: own elaboration, based on OECD data

## 2.4. Decentralised cooperation profiles <sup>10</sup>

In this section, we take a closer look at ODA modalities through a survey of each of the OECD's decentralised donors based on ODA data from 2016-2020<sup>11</sup>. Donors are ranked according to their degree of decentralisation<sup>12</sup> in 2020, starting with Spain (36%) and ending with Japan (0.01%).

For each country, the volume of ODA is reported, in millions of dollars, and its weight in the country's bilateral ODA, as well as its evolution over the last five years. The average data for this period are broken down according to the modalities defined in this report and together with other variables covered in the OECD databases, such as the geographical or sectoral destination of aid.

The presentation of decentralised cooperation by state may seem contradictory and to some extent detracts from the visibility of its protagonists. However, it is a necessary exercise –given the lack of detail in many ODA items– and a practical one –as decentralised donors develop similar cooperation profiles within each state and according to their framework of competencies and historical trajectories–.

For countries for which there is sufficient information in the DAC database, a ranking of the top ten funding actors is also presented, showing a more detailed profile for the top three donors.

<sup>10</sup> The content of the fiches, as well as the criteria used, are explained in more detail in Annex I. Methodology

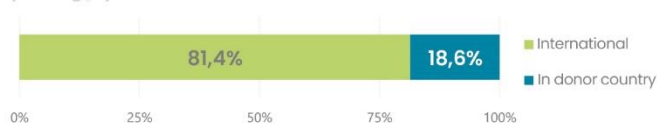
<sup>11</sup> Although it is part of other lists in this report, the Czech Republic is excluded from the presentation, as it did not allocate any items as ODA in 2020.

<sup>12</sup> Relative weight of ODA to bilateral ODA

## SPAIN

COUNTRY PROFILE  
2020**369** USD MillionIn Decentralised Official Development  
Assistance (DODA) in 2020**36%**of bilateral  
ODA

By category

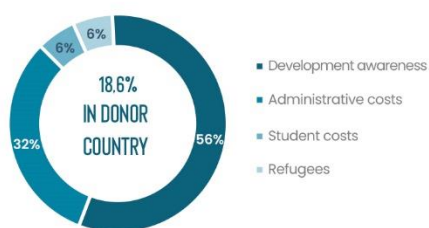


Evolution of DODA (USD million)



## AID, AT A GLANCE

CATEGORY

**11%**of total DODA  
Development awareness  
category "In donor country"**72%**of total DODA  
NGOs (and other intermediaries)  
category "International"

RECIPIENT

**34%**  
destined for  
America

**AMERICA**  
34%

Guatemala  
Peru  
El Salvador

**AFRICA**  
15%

Senegal  
Mozambique  
Mali

**MENA**  
10%

Morocco  
West Bank and  
Gaza Strip  
Lebanon

**ASIA AND PACIFIC**  
2%

India  
China  
Cambodia

**EUROPE**  
2%

**UNSPECIFIED**  
37%

SECTOR

**21%**allocated to Government and  
civil society  
Social services and infrastructures

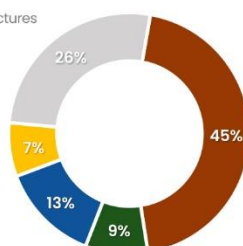
■ Social services and infrastructures

■ Productive sectors

■ Multisector

■ Humanitarian aid

■ Unspecified



18% EDUCATION

20% HEALTH

10% WATER AND SANITATION

47% GOVERNMENT AND CIVIL SOCIETY

4% OTHER

WHERE IT  
COMES FROM**66%**  
AUTONOMOUS  
REGIONS**31%**  
MUNICIPALITIES**3%**  
UNIVERSITIES

## MAIN AGENTS

	USD M	%
Euskadi	54	15%
Catalonia	52	14%
C.Valenciana	37	10%
Andalusia	35	10%
Navarra	15	4%
Extremadura	10	3%
Galicia	8	2%
Balearic Islands	6	2%
Madrid	5	1%
Castilla y León	5	1%

66% of Spain's DODA is provided by the Autonomous Communities (including ODA allocated by universities), while 29% is provided by local entities

## EUSKADI

## By category



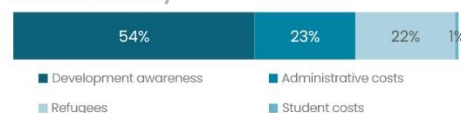
## category

## International



## category

## In donor country

**51%**

Destined for America  
The top recipients are Peru, Guatemala and Colombia

**50%**

Allocated to government and civil society

**90%**

Channelled via NGOs

**80%**

Implemented via projects

## CATALONIA

## By category



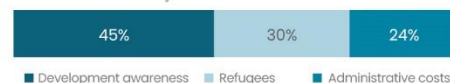
## category

## International



## category

## In donor country

**57%**

Destined for unidentified countries

Includes ISGlobal, development awareness and refugee aid.

**51%**

Allocated to government and civil society

**46%**

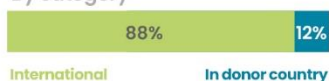
Channelled via donor government

**31%**

Implemented via expenditure on own territory

## C.VALENCIANA

## By category



## category

## International



## category

## In donor country

**54%**

Destined for America  
The top recipients are El Salvador, Bolivia and Peru.

**58%**

Allocated to government and civil society

**82%**

Channelled via NGOs

**87%**

Implemented via projects

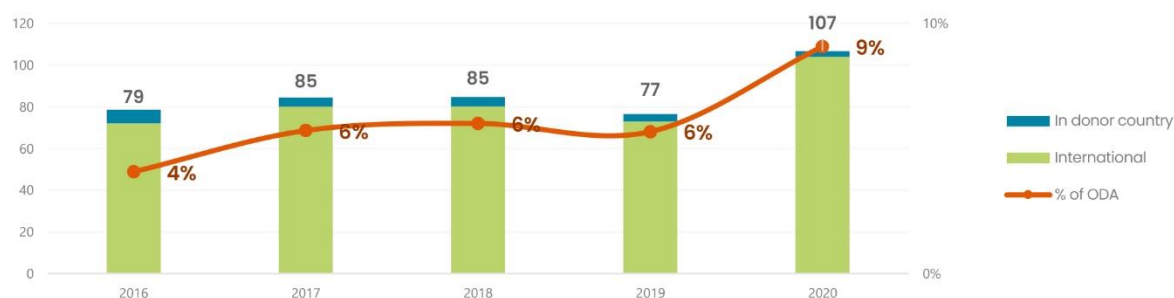
## BELGIUM

COUNTRY PROFILE  
2020**107** USD MillionIn Decentralised Official Development  
Assistance (DODA) in 2020**9%**of bilateral  
ODA

By category

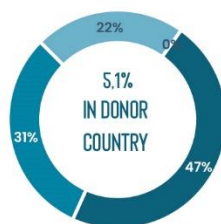


Evolution of DODA (USD million)



## AID, AT A GLANCE

CATEGORY

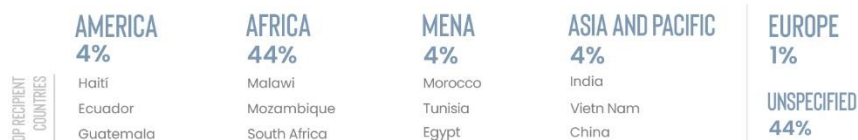
**2%**of total DODA  
Development awareness  
category "In donor country"**50%**of total DODA  
NGOs (and other intermediaries)  
category "International"

- Development awareness
- Administrative costs
- Student costs
- Refugees



- NGOs (and other intermediaries)
- Direct cooperation

RECIPIENT

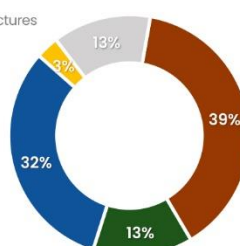
**44%**  
destined for  
Africa

SECTOR

**28%**  
allocated to Health

Social services and infrastructures

- Social services and infrastructures
- Productive sectors
- Multisector
- Humanitarian aid
- Unspecified



- 5% EDUCATION
- 77% HEALTH
- 3% WATER AND SANITATION
- 7% GOVERNMENT AND CIVIL SOCIETY
- 7% OTHER

WHERE IT  
COMES FROM**95%**  
REGIONS**5%**  
PROVINCES AND MUNICIPALITIES



## MAIN AGENTS

	USD M	%
Flanders	74	70%
Wallonia	26	24%
Brussels Region	1	1,2%

The Flemish region is the main actor in all decentralised cooperation. Ninety-five percent of Belgian decentralised ODA comes from regional governments, the remaining five percent from provinces and municipalities.

## FLANDERS

## By category



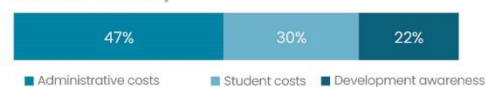
## category

## International



## category

## In donor country



## 51%

## Destined for Africa

The top recipients are Mozambique, South Africa and Malawi

## 45%

## Allocated to the health sector

## 49%

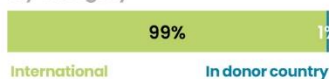
## Channelled via donor government

## 44%

## Implemented via projects

## WALLONIA

## By category



## category

## International



## category

## In donor country



## 55%

## Destined for Africa

The top recipients are D.R. Congo, Kenya and Benin

## 51%

## Allocated to multi-sector

## 61%

## Channelled via donor government

## 84%

## Implemented via projects

## BRUSSELS REGION

## By category



## category

## International



## category

## In donor country



## 55%

## Destined for Africa

The only recipient is D.R. Congo

## 26%

## Allocated to water and sanitation sector

## 87%

## Channelled via NGOs

## 80%

## Implemented via projects

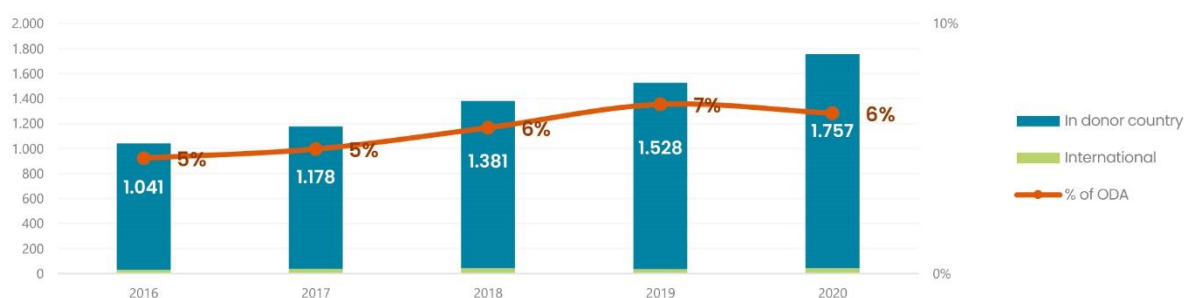
## GERMANY

COUNTRY PROFILE  
2020**1.757** USD MillionIn Decentralised Official Development  
Assistance (DODA) in 2020**6%**of bilateral  
ODA

By category

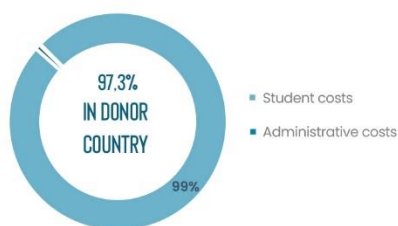


Evolution of DODA (USD million)



## AID, AT A GLANCE

CATEGORY

**96%**of total DODA  
Student costs  
category "In donor country"**2%**of total DODA  
Direct cooperation  
category "International"

RECIPIENT

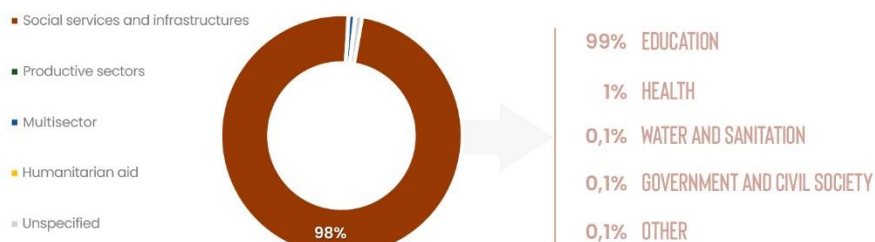
**46%**destined for  
Asia and Pacific

SECTOR

**97%**

allocated to Education

Social services and infrastructures

WHERE IT  
COMES FROM**99%**  
LÄNDER**1%**  
MUNICIPALITIES

## MAIN AGENTS

	USD M	%
Bavaria	17	0,94%
North Rhine-Westphalia	13	0,71%
Hamburg	11	0,63%
Baden-Württemberg	6	0,32%
Hesse	3	0,19%
Berlin	2	0,12%
Rhineland-Palatinate	2	0,12%
Schleswig-Holstein	2	0,09%
Saxony	1	0,07%
Lower Saxony	1	0,05%

96% of German decentralised aid has no further breakdown than the generic field "federal states and local governments" (USD 1.697 million in 2020).

## BAVARIA

## By category



## category

## International



## category

## In donor country

**52%**

Destined for Africa

The top recipients are South Africa, Ethiopia and Senegal

**79%**

Allocated to the education sector

**59%**

Channelled via donor government

**50%**

Implemented via projects

## NORTH RHINE-WESTPHALIA

## By category



## category

## International



## category

## In donor country

**14%**

Destined for Africa

The top recipients are Ghana, Togo and Nigeria

**51%**

Allocated to multi-sector

**84%**

Channelled via donor government

**43%**

Implemented via expenditure on own territory

## HAMBURG

## By category



## category

## International



## category

## In donor country

**2%**

Destined for Asia and Pacific

The top recipients are India, China and Viet Nam

**64%**

Allocated to health sector

**93%**

Channelled via donor government

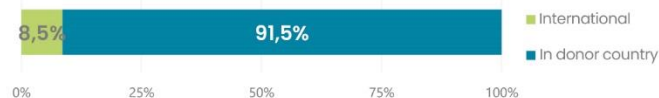
**88%**

Implemented via core contributions

## CANADA

COUNTRY PROFILE  
2020**177** USD MillionIn Decentralised Official Development  
Assistance (DODA) in 2020**4%**of bilateral  
ODA

By category

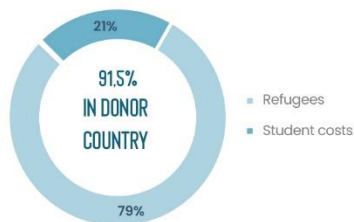


Evolution of DODA (USD million)



## AID, AT A GLANCE

CATEGORY

**72%**of total DODA  
Refugees  
category "In donor country"**8%**of total DODA  
NGOs (and other intermediaries)  
category "International"

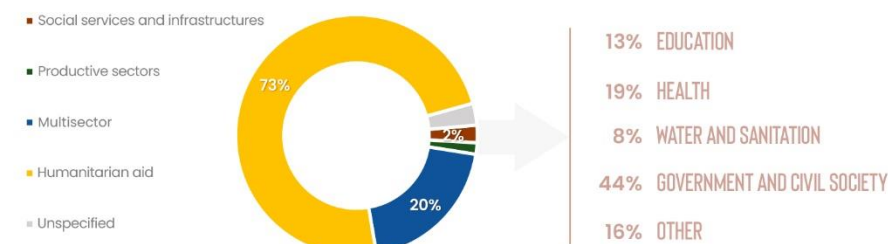
RECIPIENT

**15%**destined for  
Asia and Pacific

SECTOR

**73%**

allocated to Humanitarian aid



## MAIN AGENTS

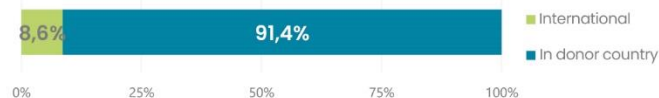
	USD M	%
Provincial Governments and municipalities	177	100%

DAC statistics do not provide further  
breakdown of agencies for this donor.

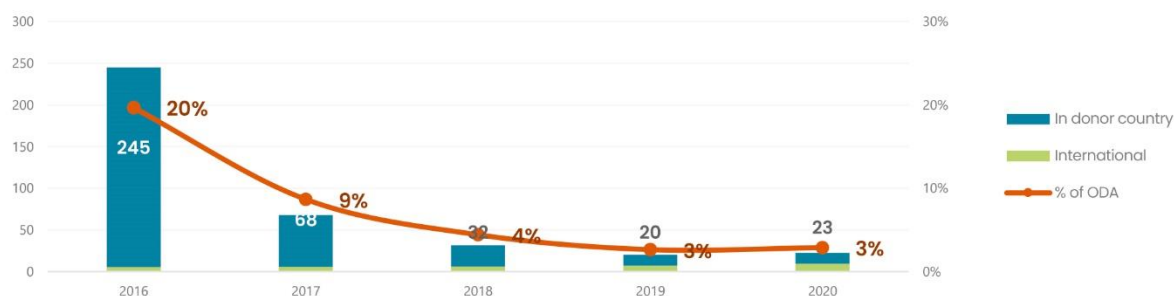
## AUSTRIA

COUNTRY PROFILE  
2020**23** USD MillionIn Decentralised Official Development  
Assistance (DODA) in 2020**3%**of bilateral  
ODA

By category

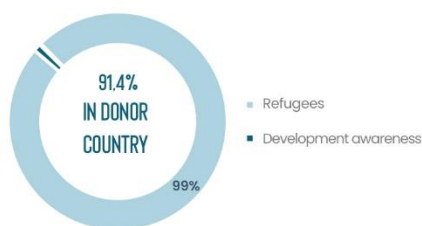


Evolution of DODA (USD million)



## AID, AT A GLANCE

CATEGORY

**90%**of total DODA  
Refugees  
category "In donor country"**7%**of total DODA  
NGOs (and other intermediaries)  
category "International"

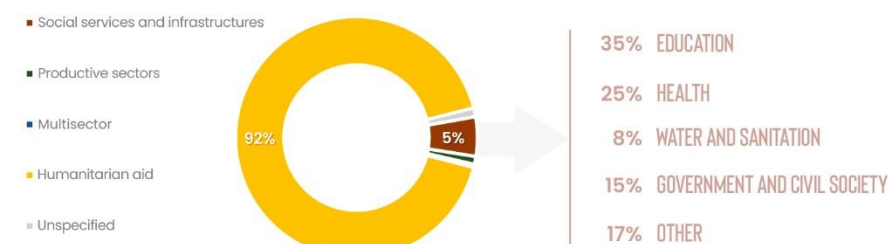
RECIPIENT

**3%**destined for  
Africa

SECTOR

**92%**

allocated to Humanitarian aid



## MAIN AGENTS

	USD M	%
Provincial governments, local communities	23	100%

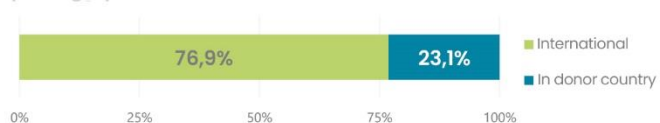
DAC statistics do not provide further  
breakdown of agencies for this donor.



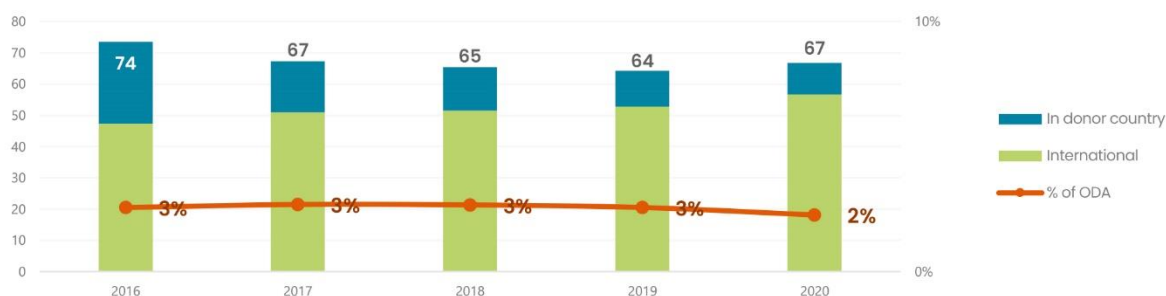
## SWITZERLAND

COUNTRY PROFILE  
2020**67** USD MillionIn Decentralised Official Development  
Assistance (DODA) in 2020**2%**of bilateral  
ODA

By category

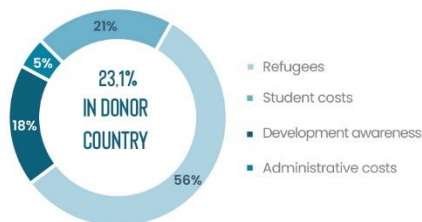


Evolution of DODA (USD million)



## AID, AT A GLANCE

CATEGORY

**13%**of total DODA  
Refugees  
category "In donor country"**73%**of total DODA  
NGOs (and other intermediaries)  
category "International"

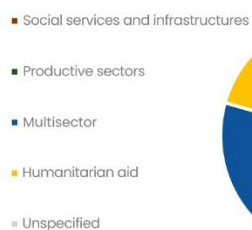
RECIPIENT

**30%**  
destined for  
Africa

SECTOR

**13%**  
allocated to Education

Social services and infrastructures



## MAIN AGENTS

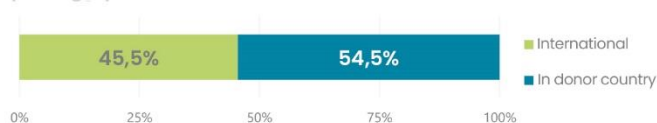
	USD M	%
Cantons and municipalities	67	100%

DAC statistics do not provide further  
breakdown of agencies for this donor.

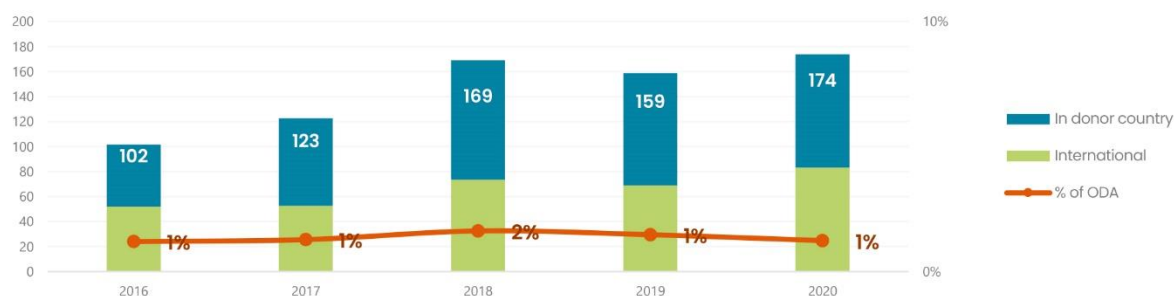
## FRANCE

COUNTRY PROFILE  
2020**174** USD MillionIn Decentralised Official Development  
Assistance (DODA) in 2020**1,2%**of bilateral  
ODA

By category

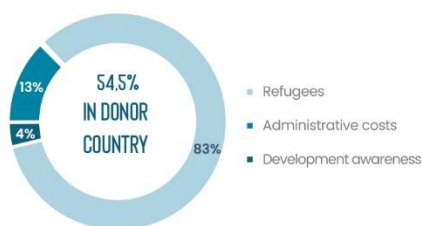


Evolution of DODA (USD million)



## AID, AT A GLANCE

CATEGORY

**45%**of total DODA  
Refugees  
category "In donor country"**23%**of total DODA  
Direct cooperation  
category "International"

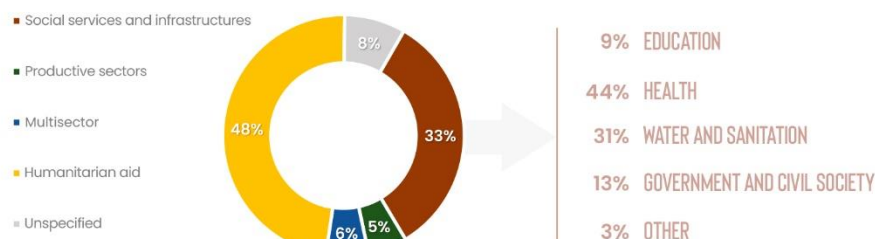
RECIPIENT

**34%**destined for  
Africa

SECTOR

**48%**

allocated to Humanitarian aid



## MAIN AGENTS

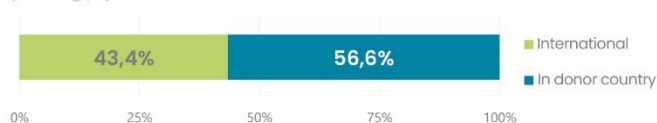
	USD M	%
French Ministry of Foreign Affairs	139	80%
Interdepartmental	34	20%

DAC statistics do not provide further  
breakdown of agencies for this donor.

## PORTUGAL

COUNTRY PROFILE  
2020**2** USD MillionIn Decentralised Official Development  
Assistance (DODA) in 2020**0,6%**of bilateral  
ODA

By category

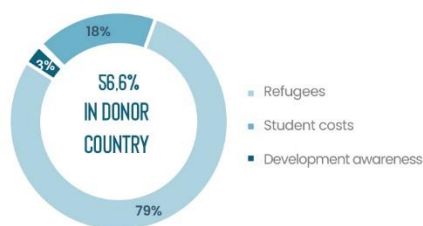


Evolution of DODA (USD million)



## AID, AT A GLANCE

CATEGORY

**44%**of total DODA  
Refugees  
category "In donor country"**28%**of total DODA  
Direct cooperation  
category "International"

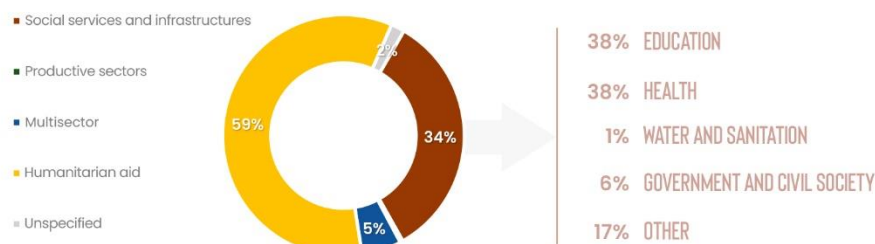
RECIPIENT

**52%**destined for  
Africa

SECTOR

**59%**

allocated to Humanitarian aid



## MAIN AGENTS

	USD M	%
Municipalities	2	100%

DAC statistics do not provide further  
breakdown of agencies for this donor.



## ITALY

COUNTRY PROFILE  
2020**7** USD MillionIn Decentralised Official Development  
Assistance (DODA) in 2020**0,5%**of bilateral  
ODA

By category



Evolution of DODA (USD million)



## AID, AT A GLANCE

CATEGORY

**3%**of total DODA  
Development awareness  
category "In donor country"**80%**of total DODA  
NGOs (and other intermediaries)  
category "International"

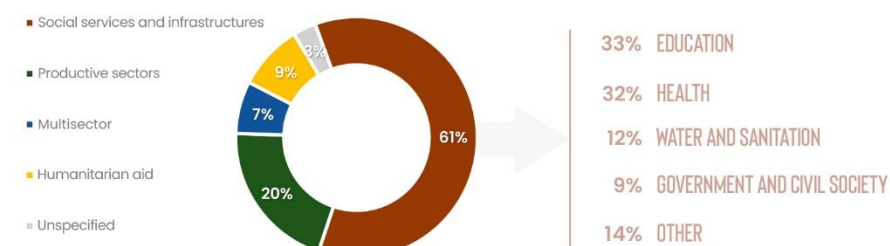
RECIPIENT

**46%**  
destined for  
Africa

SECTOR

**20%**  
allocated to Education

Social services and infrastructures



## MAIN AGENTS

	USD M	%
Local administration	7	100%

DAC statistics do not provide further  
breakdown of agencies for this donor.

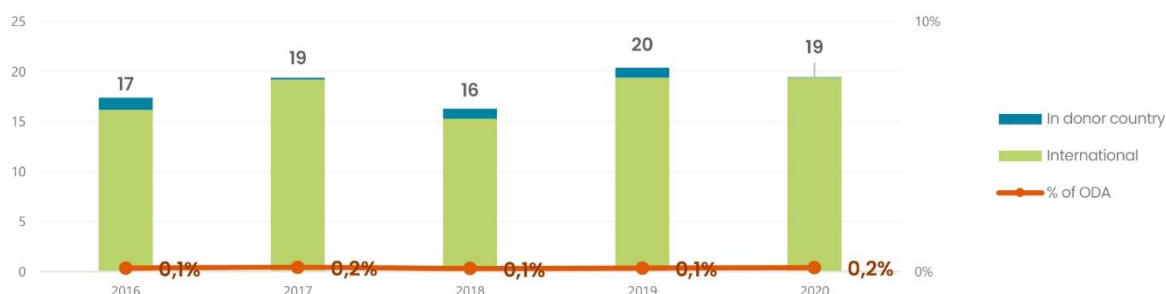
## UNITED KINGDOM

COUNTRY PROFILE  
2020**19** USD MillionIn Decentralised Official Development  
Assistance (DODA) in 2020**0,2%**of bilateral  
ODA

By category

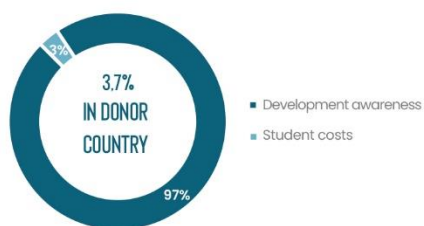


Evolution of DODA (USD million)



## AID, AT A GLANCE

CATEGORY

**3,6%**of total DODA  
Development awareness  
category "In donor country"**74%**of total DODA  
NGOs (and other intermediaries)  
category "International"

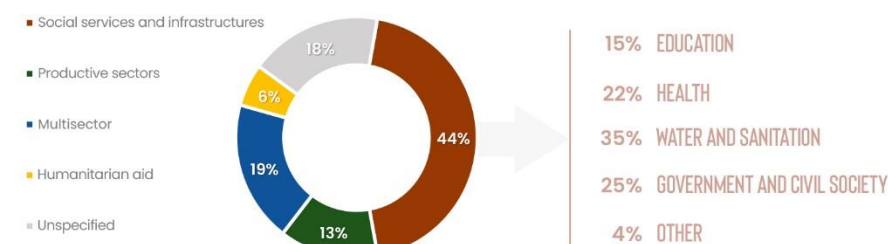
RECIPIENT

**72%**destined for  
Africa

SECTOR

**14%**allocated to Water and  
sanitation

Social services and infrastructures



## MAIN AGENTS

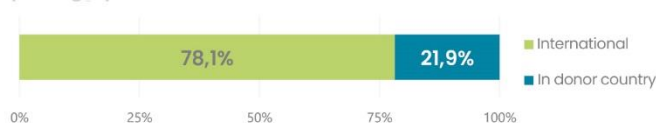
	USD M	%
Scottish Government	16	83%
Welsh Assembly Government	3	17%

DAC statistics do not provide further  
breakdown of agencies for this donor.

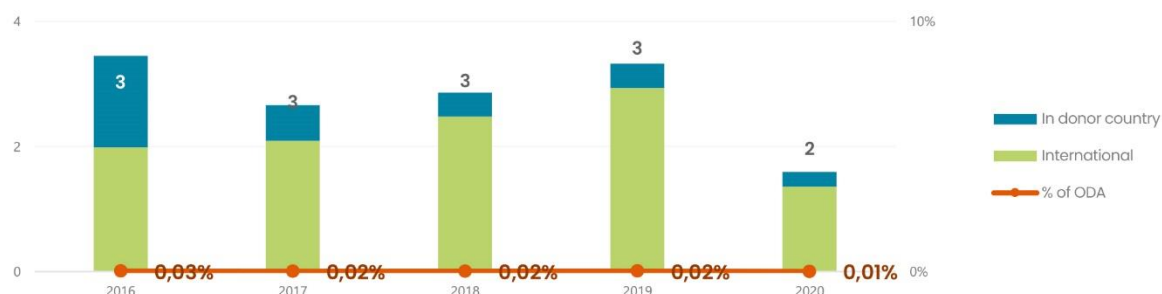
## JAPAN

COUNTRY PROFILE  
2020**2** USD MillionIn Decentralised Official Development  
Assistance (DODA) in 2020**0,01%**of bilateral  
ODA

By category

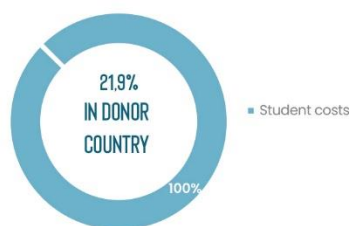


Evolution of DODA (USD million)

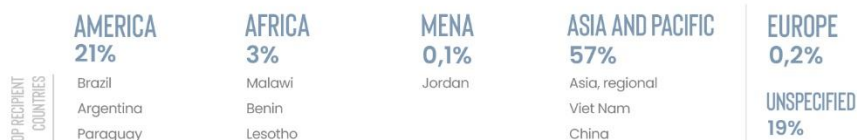


## AID, AT A GLANCE

CATEGORY

**22%**of total DODA  
Student costs  
category "In donor country"**42%**of total DODA  
NGOs (and other intermediaries)  
category "International"

RECIPIENT

**57%**destined for  
Asia and Pacific

SECTOR

**30%**

allocated to Education

Social services and infrastructures

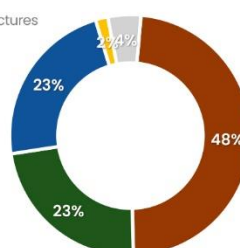
Social services and infrastructures

Productive sectors

Multisector

Humanitarian aid

Unspecified



64% EDUCATION

10% HEALTH

17% WATER AND SANITATION

5% GOVERNMENT AND CIVIL SOCIETY

4% OTHER

## MAIN AGENTS

	USD M	%
Prefectures	1	64%
Ordinance-designed Cities	1	36%

DAC statistics do not provide further  
breakdown of agencies for this donor.

# 3.

## DIRECT DECENTRALISED COOPERATION

## CASE STUDIES

## CASE 1

# Technical assistance from French municipalities

French municipalities deploy a relatively large amount of technical cooperation thanks to the strategic and organisational infrastructure provided by the French Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs

## Key facts

- France allocates USD 35 million per year to direct decentralised cooperation.
- Seventy-one per cent, or \$24 million, is technical cooperation, making it the leading provider of decentralised technical cooperation.
- The main sector for its technical cooperation is water (20% of funds) and the main region is Africa (47%).
- Annual funding for such technical assistance in the water sector has doubled between 2016 and 2020, from USD 3 million to USD 6 million per year.
- Currently, 4,762 French territorial authorities carry out cooperation actions with 3,031 partners in 138 countries.

## Context

Decentralised cooperation is assimilated in France to the External Action of Territorial Collectivities (AECT), which is directed and supported by the Delegation for the External Action of Territorial Collectivities (DAECT), under the Influence Diplomacy Directorate of the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs. The DAECT advises, supports, promotes and co-finances the actions of the EGTC and coordinates the National Commission for Decentralised Cooperation.

Created in 1992, the National Commission for Decentralised Cooperation is the forum for dialogue between French local authorities and the Ministry, and also brings together national associations representing local authorities and the main State administrations. It meets twice a year to set common objectives and priority sectors.

Decentralised cooperation in France is closely linked to the water sector. This is due to the possibility for French municipalities and six large agencies in France to allocate 1% of their water and sanitation levies to international cooperation.

## Direct cooperation model

The AECT brings together French and Southern authorities to carry out cooperation projects in all areas of local public action. Local authorities can be linked by a twinning agreement, a cooperation agreement, or by simply collaborating on a project, without a formal document to frame this collaboration.

The Ministry provides French local authorities with a number of tools and resources to engage with foreign local authorities. The most important of these are calls for projects, partnership grants and the EXPE-CT certification (experience of local authorities). In addition, an operational guide to decentralised cooperation and an *Atlas of decentralised cooperation*, including a system for matching requests and offers of technical assistance, are made available to local authorities.

### Preservation of water resources in Bangangté (Cameroon)

The main objective of the programme, called "Sustainable management of projects in the water and sanitation sectors in the commune of Bangangté (MODEAB)", is for local authorities to improve the provision of local public services to the population, and to empower the population to take up the challenges of the water resource that is becoming increasingly scarce due to climate change. In this project, the project promoter, in charge of defining the project's objective, timetable and budget, is the municipality of Bangangté. The funds come from the International Association of French-speaking Mayors (AIMF); and the Veolia Foundation, the Interdepartmental Water Syndicate of the Paris Agglomeration (SIAAP) and the Seine-Normandie Water Agency (AESN) are technical and financial partners. A local NGO, Environnement Recherche Action (ERA)-Cameroon, is in charge of citizen facilitation.

### Support for the elaboration of a Community Water and Sanitation Development Plan in Bingo (Burkina Faso).

The project, launched in 2017, involves a partnership between the French town of Luchon and the municipality of Bingo in Burkina Faso, which aims to develop a study for the Communal Development Plan for Water and Sanitation (PCDEA). This programmatic tool made it possible to build an investment and monitoring programme for the city's governance in terms of access to drinking water and sanitation, and thus, supported the 2017-2020 Municipal Development Plan. The project also included a component of development education actions for the youth of Luchon and Bingo through cultural exchanges and actions, for which exchanges were carried out with the elected officials and citizens of Bingo and the elected officials and citizens of Luchon, in the form of cross missions.

### FURTHER INFORMATION

[Action extérieure des collectivités territoriales \(AECT\)](#) | [Operational Guide to Decentralised Cooperation](#) | [Atlas français de la coopération décentralisée](#)

## CASE 2

## Direct cooperation of the Flemish Government with African Governments

Flanders develops its own foreign policy along five dimensions, including development cooperation. Flemish cooperation is based on the establishment of a limited number of agreements with partner countries and a sectoral specialisation that allows strategic concentration and the establishment of relations with governmental entities on-site

### Key facts

- Flanders had the largest ODA budget in the world in 2020.
- Of this budget, 51% is recorded as direct cooperation and 6% is channelled directly through the governments of the recipient countries.
- The main recipients of direct cooperation are Mozambique (12%) and South Africa (9%).

### Context

Flanders has important competencies in external action, including diplomatic action, trade promotion, cultural, tourism and scientific relations, development cooperation, and the defence of human rights, peace and security in the world. Flemish cooperation is managed by the Flemish Chancellery and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as is all its external action.

In development cooperation, the Flanders region's investment has remained stable since 2015. Its thematic focus is health, sustainable agriculture and the fight against climate change, and its geographical focus is Southern Africa.

Flanders concludes agreements with a limited number of partner countries on which it concentrates its ODA and in which it carries out a needs analysis to identify a limited number of sectors of specialisation. This is translated into a multi-annual cooperation plan for each country. The Flemish approach to cooperation was highly rated in the 2018 OECD survey for this thematic and geographic specialisation.

### Direct cooperation model

The Flemish decentralised cooperation approach is paradoxically based on direct dialogue with the central government of the recipient country. This is possible thanks to the geographical and sectoral concentration approach and the diplomatic work that results in the signing of framework agreements with the recipient governments. These agreements provide for two main types of aid: direct and indirect cooperation.

The Flemish cooperation partner countries are Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa and Morocco. For each country, a different thematic approach is applied, based on a weighted analysis of the greatest needs and challenges. In the case of Malawi, the focus is on agriculture and food security. Cooperation with Mozambique revolves around the subject of health. For South Africa, and - since 2022 - Morocco, the focus is on climate change adaptation, job creation and the green economy.

Flemish sectoral priorities are determined in planning missions for each multi-annual strategy, which are facilitated by the host country's own central government. This allows Flanders to establish links with government entities on the ground, which can be at any state, regional or local level. These links, in turn, favour the exchange of experiences and capacity building.

### Sexual health in Mozambique

The cooperation between the Government of Flanders and the International Centre for Reproductive Health in Mozambique aims to improve the sexual and reproductive health and rights of adolescents (boys and girls aged 10-18). It focuses on reducing adolescent pregnancies, unsafe abortions, new HIV and STI infections, as well as gender-based violence. The management and implementation of this project is the responsibility of the International Centre for Reproductive Health in Mozambique, which works closely with the government at all levels (national, provincial, district, service delivery), in particular with the health and education sectors.

### Agriculture and food security in Mzimba (Malawi)

Flanders cooperates with the Mzimba Agricultural Office, the territorial delegation of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security of Malawi, with the objective of improving its operations, functions and service delivery in agricultural production and marketing. The Mzimba Agricultural Office was the implementer of the project, with the financial support of the Government of Flanders and its involvement in pre-studies, monitoring and evaluation of results.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

[Flanders Chancellery & Foreign Office](#) | [Flanders Development Cooperation](#) | [ODA project database](#) | [Flanders Policy Framework](#)



## CASE 3

# Mobilisation of the Generalitat Valenciana's health personnel

The Generalitat Valenciana manages one of the largest ODA budgets in the world. Like all Spanish autonomous communities, most of this budget is channelled through NGDOs, but since 2018 it has been promoting direct technical cooperation through a system of permits for its own health personnel.

## Key facts

- According to the OECD DAC, the ODA of the Generalitat Valenciana amounted to 36 million dollars in 2020.
- Between 80% and 95% of its ODA is channelled through NGDOs.
- Since 2018, a budget allocation of up to one million euros per year for the temporary mobilisation of its health personnel in development and humanitarian aid actions is provided for by decree.
- More than 100 such permits are granted each year to medical, nursing, technical, auxiliary and specialised staff in other health-related fields, such as social intervention.
- Its accounting impact has ranged from \$100,000 to \$400,000 in 2018-20.

## Context

The Generalitat Valenciana is one of the main actors in decentralised cooperation in terms of volume of funds, with more than 94 million dollars disbursed between 2016 and 2020. Most of these funds are earmarked for projects implemented by NGOs.

Health is one of the main areas of cooperation in the Valencian Community, where NGOs in the sector such as Médecins Sans Frontières, Médecins du Monde and the Vicente Ferrer Foundation are present. In these organisations, as in other NGDOs, volunteering plays a very important role, which is recognised by Spanish legislation, inviting administrations to encourage public employees to adapt or reduce their working hours to carry out voluntary activities.

The Valencian Community is also collaborating with the Spanish Technical Aid Response Team (START) project, which enables the mobilisation of health and logistics personnel in response to natural disasters. START is part of the Emergency Medical Teams (EMT) initiative of the World Health Organisation (WHO), which aims to standardise the response to natural disasters by international medical teams in order to ensure an optimum level of quality of care for the affected populations.

## Direct cooperation model

In this context, and following consultations with NGOs in the health sector and the College of Doctors of Valencia, the Generalitat Valenciana launched in 2018 a leave system to facilitate the collaboration of its health staff in humanitarian and development projects. This leave can be granted to medical, nursing, technical, auxiliary and specialised staff in other health-related fields, as well as social intervention. They can be applied for by statutory staff, civil servants or employees, and temporary staff who have been in their post for at least one year.

The duration of this leave ranges from one week to three months, with the possibility of extending it up to six months. The regulation also provides for up to 70% of full pay in the first month and 50% in the second and third months. Another novelty introduced by the decree is the guarantee that leave time for cooperation projects is considered active service, with all the features that this implies: reservation of the post and time calculation for seniority, professional career, and merits purposes. For all of this, a budget allocation of one million euros per year was foreseen for the payment of salaries and staff replacements.

It should be noted that this type of technical assistance is also present in Catalan and Aragonese cooperation, according to the DAC, although with a smaller budget and less regulatory development. In the Basque Country, a mission of health personnel to Peru was promoted in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has given rise to a broader and ongoing programme to strengthen the capacities of health personnel and improve the quality of care at the reference hospital in Guinea Bissau. In addition, it is known that actions of this type are taking place in other administrations and public policies without being recorded as ODA, due to their small amount and the complexity of their calculation. From the point of view of planning, monitoring and evaluation of development cooperation, it is positive for this technical assistance to be recorded in the accounts and provided with a regulatory and strategic framework.

### FURTHER INFORMATION

[Generalitat Valenciana Decree regulating international health permits.](#) | [Press release of the Generalitat Valenciana \(2018\)](#) | [Guinea Bissau-Euskadi Global Health Cooperation Programme](#)

## CASE 4

# Spanish local government cooperation and solidarity funds

The cooperation and solidarity funds are partnerships through which local governments and other actors in the same region of Spain provide themselves with a common infrastructure for international cooperation. Among other functions, the funds allow municipalities to establish direct technical assistance relations with their counterparts in developing countries.

## Key facts

- Spanish municipalities are responsible for approximately 10% of the country's bilateral ODA.
- Part of this assistance is managed through 9 cooperation funds.
- With 70 staff in fourteen offices, the funds provide international cooperation services to 1,149 town councils and local authorities in seven autonomous communities.
- Its aggregate annual budget amounts to 15 million euros.
- Over the past 20 years, nearly 1,000 specialists have provided 360 international technical assistance missions through the funds.

## Context

In 1986, in a context of great social mobilisation against poverty and in favour of allocating 0.7% of GNI to ODA, the Fons Català de Cooperació al Desenvolupament (Catalan Development Cooperation Fund) was created with the aim of joining efforts in municipal cooperation, especially in Central America and the Caribbean. The Fons Català was followed by Euskal Fondoa - Association of Cooperating Basque Local Entities (1988), Fons Valencià (1992), Fons Mallorquí de Solidaritat i Cooperació (1993), Fons Menorquí de Cooperació (1993), Fondo Galego de Cooperacion e Solidariedade (1997), Fons Pitiús de Cooperació (1999), Fondo Andaluz de Municipios para la Solidaridad Internacional (2000) and Fondo Extremeño Local de Cooperación al Desarrollo (2002).

In addition to boosting municipal cooperation, the Funds have proven to be an effective response to the management challenges that ODA brings to small institutions where it is not possible to create units dedicated exclusively to international cooperation. Today, the funds have specialised teams in their nine headquarters and five field offices: Ecuador, Morocco, Mauritania, Central America and Senegal.

Finally, the funds have articulated a bottom-up structure for the coordination and representation of Spanish municipalities in the field of development cooperation. This structure was significantly reinforced in 1995, with the constitution of the Confederation of Cooperation and Solidarity Funds (CONFOCOS). The Confederation of Funds organises state meetings of local governments and development cooperation and participates in other spaces for dialogue and coordination at the international level. It has agreements with the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID) and the Directorate General for Sustainable Development Policies

(DGPOLDES) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation, and is expected to be represented in the Higher Council for Cooperation for Sustainable Development and Global Solidarity established in the 2022 cooperation law.

## Direct cooperation model

The municipal funds manage calls for projects for NGOs, promote city-to-city cooperation projects and facilitate the provision of technical assistance by specialised personnel. This last activity goes practically unnoticed in ODA statistics, but it is a constant in the trajectory of all funds and a model for direct cooperation. According to CONFOCOS data, in the last 20 years, specialised personnel (almost 1,000 people) have been mobilised in 360 technical assistance missions in some 100 municipalities in 21 countries. Taking advantage of the management, coordination and representation structure, the funds channel requests for advice from municipalities in Latin America and Africa and, through different systems, identify and mobilise the appropriate technical staff in partner municipalities as described in the following examples.

### Specialists in Cooperation

Formerly called Working Holidays, this is a call for applications through which the Galician Fund publishes requests for technical assistance from the municipalities it collaborates with, specifying the scope and objectives of the assistance and the technical profile required. In fourteen editions, it has created 46 technical assistance projects in tourism, architecture, social work, equality, employment, finance, libraries or information technology in Nicaragua, Cuba, Peru, Mozambique and Cape Verde.

### Municipal technical cooperation database

The Fons Català de Cooperació invites municipal staff to register and describe their technical profile in a database to identify technical assistance when requested by municipalities in the South. To encourage registration in the database, the Fund has published the guide *Six Keys to Understanding Municipal Technical Cooperation*, in which it defends this form of cooperation because of the added value it brings to municipalities, its effects on capacity-building in the South, and the professional development of the staff from the cooperating municipality.

### Expert Volunteer Programme

The Extremadura Local Fund for Development Cooperation (FELCODE) has been promoting the Expert Volunteers Programme for 16 years, which enables assistance and the exchange of knowledge and experiences between the local world of Extremadura and Latin America. This programme is coordinated by the Municipalities, Associations and Provincial Councils of Cáceres and Badajoz, and has the collaboration of various local partner institutions and entities. Its objectives are to contribute to strengthening the local world in countries where FELCODE has been working, and to bring Extremaduran technical staff closer to the world of international development cooperation. From the beginning of the programme until 2022, a total of 282 people working in the local sphere in Extremadura have lent their knowledge, technical support and commitment to the municipalities of the countries in the South.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

[CONFOCOS](#) | [Specialists in cooperating](#) | [Six keys to understanding municipal technical](#) | [Expert Volunteer Programme](#)

## CASE 5

## Andalusian direct cooperation

The Andalusian Agency for International Development Cooperation (AACID) has developed its own model of direct cooperation in the Spanish regional context through a Collaboration Agreement with the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID), which allows the use of AECID's network of Technical Cooperation Offices.

### Key facts

- Andalusia is the Spanish autonomous community that carries out the most direct cooperation in absolute and relative terms. Specifically, in the 2016-2020 period, of the 203 million dollars it dedicated to cooperation, more than 39 million were for direct cooperation (19%).
- The main thematic areas of Andalusian direct cooperation in 2016-2020 were public policies and territorial administrative management (deconcentration and decentralisation), territorial rural development and strengthening of sub-national governments, and sustainable land use and urban planning.
- The main recipient countries of Andalusian direct cooperation in 2016-2020 were Morocco, Senegal, Mozambique, the Central American Integration System, El Salvador and Honduras.

### Context

The Third Andalusian Development Cooperation Plan (2020-2023) (PACODE) is committed to the application of an implementation methodology based on multi-actor and multi-level partnerships. In this sense, the AACID, despite being one of the actors with the largest budget in Spanish and global decentralised cooperation, has always made explicit its intention to align itself with state cooperation and, in particular, with its master plans and Country Partnership Frameworks (MAP). Within these plans, it seeks its niche of specialisation.

The PACODE also emphasises policy coherence for development (PCD) in the the 2030 Agenda framework and its promotion through the Cooperation Commission. In this Commission, the Regional Government of Andalusia identifies focal points in each of its management centres and establishes dialogues for PCD and for the mainstreaming of development cooperation. The PACODE also refers to the localisation of the SDGs and highlights the Andalusian regional experience and the development of key sectors for the 2030 Agenda such as health, education, environment and social policies.

### AECID - AACID Collaboration

In this context, the Regional Government of Andalusia has developed a model of direct cooperation based on collaboration with the AECID and the facilitation of technical cooperation from the different departments of the Regional Government. This collaboration is formalised in an Agreement with the AECID signed in 1997 and renewed in 2021, according to which the AECID cedes space in its Technical Cooperation Offices (OTC) to AACID staff. This way, AACID staff can

establish direct cooperation relations with the administrations of the priority countries of Andalusian cooperation, within the MAP. On occasion, these projects go hand in hand with other specific AECID actions and allow for a distribution of work consistent with the respective experiences of central and regional governments, thus developing joint AECID-AACID formulations, which generates a greater impact.

In addition, AECID intervenes as a collaborating entity of the Andalusian Regional Government for the financial execution of AACID's direct cooperation grants without altering their calculation as Andalusia's ODA. Through the use of AECID current accounts in the recipient country dedicated to other public administrations, AACID makes use of the financial-administrative infrastructure of Spanish Cooperation and its TCOs to channel aid and carry out financial monitoring.

Similarly, the AACID plays a facilitating role in the technical cooperation of other departments of the Andalusian Regional Government, which over time have established their own cooperation relations autonomously or under the umbrella of other agencies such as the AECID. Among the Andalusian departments that have been involved in direct cooperation, those of Agriculture, Development and Housing, Environment, Finance, the Andalusian Energy Agency, the Andalusian Institute of Public Administration, the Andalusian Institute of Statistics and Cartography, the Andalusian Women's Institute and the Andalusian School of Public Health stand out.

Some concrete examples of this cooperation model are given below.

### **Start-up of the transplant system in Cuba**

Andalusia, through the Andalusian Health Service (SAS) supports the Government of Cuba in the creation and implementation of the Transplant Unit in Cuba, promoting not only the transfer of knowledge, but also the generation of joint care units between the Reina Sofia Hospital in Cordoba and the Virgen del Rocio Hospital in Seville, with the CIMEQ in Cuba.

### **Health sector reform in El Salvador**

Within this reform prioritised in the MAP and supported by AECID at the ministerial level, AACID financed a programme for the deconcentration of health services in the territory and mobilised the technical assistance of the Andalusian School of Public Health.

### **Localisation of SDG**

In the regions of Maputo and Cabo Delgado in Mozambique, AACID carries out direct cooperation in the field of decentralisation for territorial development and localisation of the SDGs.

### **Central American Integration System (SICA)**

Within the framework of SICA, AACID is supporting the Central American Strategy for Territorial Rural Development (ECADERT) aimed at promoting rural development and the construction of a social institutionality that promotes and facilitates the reduction of inequalities, inclusion and the sustainable development model.

## **FURTHER INFORMATION**

[AACID](#) | [PACODE](#) | [AACID-AECID Agreement](#)

## CASE 6

## Technical cooperation from Japanese prefectures and cities

Japanese prefectures and cities focus their development cooperation on numerous but small technical assistance actions that touch on a wide range of issues related to urban policies and rural development. This technical assistance is part of strategies to boost the international activity of cities and regions and is increasingly supported by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), which seeks to "make international cooperation a part of Japanese culture".

### Key facts

- City-to-city and region-to-region technical cooperation is the main destination of Japanese ODA (36%).
- 56% of Japan's decentralised technical cooperation takes place in neighbouring Asia-Pacific countries.
- 50% is dedicated to urban policies: urban development and management, water and sanitation, waste, disaster prevention, and decentralisation.

### Context

Decentralised cooperation occupies a smaller share of Japan's overall cooperation, historically described as bureaucratic, centralised, and dominated by large infrastructure projects. Nevertheless, Japanese cities and prefectures have established stable technical cooperation relations with their counterparts in the South as part of broader external relations policies. These policies include technical exchanges with cities in the North or trade and tourism promotion activities. In addition to direct technical cooperation, Japanese ODA also finances NGO projects and scholarships in Japan.

Although Japanese decentralised cooperation emerged in the cities autonomously and without any relation to central government cooperation, in the mid-2010s, synergies were established between the two. At that time, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was committed to bringing official cooperation closer to citizens and JICA was mandated to establish alliances with NGOs, universities, business associations and local governments. Currently, Japanese decentralised cooperation is supported by JICA as part of its collaboration strategy with civil society, whose motto is "Making international cooperation a part of Japanese culture". This strategy also includes JICA's support for Japanese NGOs, volunteer programmes and development education.

Its main programme in this area, the "JICA Partnership Programme (JPP)", finances actions by companies, NGOs, universities and local governments that meet three conditions: they are based

on the offer of technical cooperation by Japanese actors, they improve the income and livelihoods of people in developing countries, and they promote citizen participation and awareness in Japan.

## Direct cooperation model

Direct decentralised cooperation in Japan consists of a large number of small training and advisory activities offered by Japanese cities and prefectures to their counterparts in developing countries. The areas of technical cooperation are always local policies, for which Japanese institutions' own staff are mobilised. Cities tend to provide technical assistance in urban planning, water and sanitation, disaster prevention, or waste management, while some prefectures are also involved in agriculture, fisheries, or rural development. Assistance is also included in cross-cutting issues such as administrative decentralisation, and in areas of shared competencies, such as education or health.

Much of this technical assistance is managed entirely by the cities and prefectures in conjunction with other international exchanges, although local governments can initiate or deepen their technical cooperation relations with the support of the JICA state agency and its field offices. On the one hand, the JPP has a sub-programme for local governments that offers financial and management support for cooperation proposals, with the dual objective of addressing local development challenges in partner countries and revitalising Japan's own regions through international exchanges. In addition, JICA offers cities and prefectures services to strengthen their development cooperation capacities, which include the secondment of JICA staff to local governments for the coordination of cooperation plans, assistance in the design of their own projects, or the development of global human resources.

### Yokohama, water and sanitation technical cooperation

The water infrastructure and environmental planning offices of the city of Yokohama, together with the association of water companies, regularly provide technical assistance to the local governments of Hanoi or Hue in Vietnam, Lahore in Pakistan, or Lilongwe in Malawi, as well as engineering training for young professionals in Africa. Some of these actions are carried out with their own resources, others with the support of JICA, and all of them are part of a public-private partnership for the internationalisation of the city of Yokohama and its companies in the water sector.

### Takikawa's support for agricultural development in Uvurkhangai, Mongolia

Takikawa City, through its international exchange association, and hand in hand with JICA, has brought technical assistance from its agricultural enterprises to Uvurkhangai Province, with the aim of improving productivity and income in onion cultivation activities and the onion value chain.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

[JICA Report 2021](#) | [JPP Programme](#) | [Yokohama, water and sanitation technical cooperation](#)



## CASE 7

## Central America - Basque Country inter-institutional cooperation in water and sanitation

AKUAL is a development cooperation programme for water and sanitation where ODA funds from three levels of government (autonomous, regional and municipal) come together and where technical cooperation relations are established between institutions in the water sector in El Salvador, Costa Rica and the Basque Country.

### Key facts

- With an average budget of 56 million in 2016-2020, Basque autonomous cooperation was the most important of the world's decentralised cooperation in that period, according to the DAC.
- The budgets of the Basque provincial councils and provincial capitals also stand out among local donors to Spanish cooperation.
- Direct cooperation in the Basque Country accounts for less than 3% of DODA funds.

### Context

eLankidetza - Basque Agency for Development Cooperation is one of the most important actors in global decentralised cooperation. The aid budgets of Basque provincial councils and town councils also stand out in the context of local cooperation in Spain as a whole. Basque administrations at regional, provincial and municipal level are coordinated in the Inter-Institutional Commission for Development Cooperation (CICD).

Most of the Basque administrations' cooperation budgets are channelled through NGDOs. Direct cooperation has not developed to the same extent and its funding is residual in ODA statistics. However, some municipal entities such as Aguas Municipales de Vitoria-Gasteiz, S.A. (AMVISA) do have a long history of technical cooperation. Moreover, Euskal Fondoa - Association of Cooperating Basque Local Bodies has acted as a facilitator of direct cooperation relations, as explained in previous sections in areas such as Central America, where it has a delegation.

### Direct cooperation model

Based on previous experiences of technical cooperation and with the support of the Euskal Fondoa delegation in Central America, in 2016, the CICD began a process of consultation and formulation with the aim of drawing up an inter-institutional cooperation programme in the water and sanitation sector (AKUAL) with a relevant component of technical cooperation between public entities in the Basque Country, Costa Rica and El Salvador. The existence of a Basque Government

agreement to annually allocate 5% of the proceeds from the water canon to cooperation initiatives contributed to this initiative. The water tax, managed by the Basque Water Agency (URA), aims to guarantee environmental sustainability over time, promoting behavioural change and encouraging desirable and efficient conduct for water use.

AKUAL addresses both the construction of infrastructures and the institutional strengthening of two Central American water agents: the National Administration of Aqueducts and Sewers (ANDA) of El Salvador and the Costa Rican Institute of Aqueducts and Sewers (AyA). To this end, the Basque actors provide, in addition to ODA, technical assistance from URA, as well as from the public companies Aguas Municipales de Vitoria-Gasteiz, S.A. (AMVISA), the Consorcio de Aguas Bilbao-Bizkaia, and the Consorcio de Aguas de Gipuzkoa.

Thus, the AKUAL programme, with its first edition 2018-2021, has become a model for developing decentralised direct cooperation on the basis of inter-institutional coordination, joint dialogue with counterparts in the South and the mobility of technical capacities and the accumulated experience of Basque cooperation in water and sanitation. After completing the first phase of AKUAL, the programme was systematised and a second edition was identified for the period 2021-2024.

The main components of the programme are as follows:

### **Infrastructure construction**

In the infrastructure construction component, ANDA is responsible for the construction of infrastructure to guarantee the human right to water and sanitation for the population of the Salvadoran municipalities of Anamorós and Yucuaiquín, in the first edition, and Jocoro in the second, by building sustainable facilities.

### **Institutional strengthening through technical cooperation**

During the first edition, technical cooperation was carried out to strengthen the technical, operational and administrative-financial management capacities of ANDA and AyA. Exchanges of experiences were carried out between the management and technical staff of water entities in the Basque Country, El Salvador and Costa Rica, in line with the institutional strengthening component of the programme. In the second edition, in addition to continuing to deepen this line with ANDA and AyA, its scope was extended to the Central American and Dominican Republic Drinking Water and Sanitation Forum.

### **Inter-institutional coordination**

Euskal Fondoa coordinates and manages the Programme, administering the financial resources and monitoring implementation from its offices in Central America and the Basque Country, complemented by the dynamic role of inter-institutional collaboration played by eLankidetzeta - Basque Agency for Development Cooperation. The field work is carried out with the support of the Asociación Saneamiento Básico, Educación Sanitaria y Energías Alternativas (SABES) in El Salvador. The systematisation of the first edition concluded that AKUAL has served to join economic and technical efforts between cooperation and water actors.

## **FURTHER INFORMATION**

[AKUAL](#) | [Inter-Agency Commission for Development Cooperation \(CICD\)](#)

# CONCLUSIONS

From the previous sections, a number of conclusions on decentralised cooperation and its analysis can be drawn:

- The **term decentralised cooperation refers** to various forms of sub-state government involvement in international cooperation that vary according to the role of sub-state governments as funders, channelers or recipients of development aid, among other factors. This report focuses on decentralised cooperation that involves disbursement of ODA by a sub-state government or decentralised official development assistance (ODA).
- Since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, there has been a renewed and widespread narrative on the relevance of decentralised cooperation related to the **localisation of the SDGs**. According to this narrative, the added value that sub-state governments bring to international cooperation lies in their accumulated experience in their areas of competence and their potential for technical cooperation and networking with their counterparts in developing countries.
- Despite the growing interest of multilateral cooperation organisations in sub-state governments and the publication of comprehensive studies on the subject, these have not become institutionalised and there is no official international source that produces **systematic and regular reports** on decentralised cooperation. It is therefore pertinent to exploit OECD databases with more detailed information on ODA in order to reclassify aid activities on the basis of the centralised or decentralised character of the donor and to generate annual reports. It is also relevant to **reclassify** aid types and channels to provide a relevant categorisation for **decentralised actors**, with categories such as direct cooperation, technical cooperation, cooperation through NGOs or global education.
- The analysis of ODA 2020 with a decentralised perspective, added to previous years' analyses, indicates that **decentralised cooperation continues to grow** and has even tripled since 2005.
- It confirms findings from previous studies, such as the existence of a limited number of countries with decentralised cooperation systems (11), with **highly variable decentralisation percentages** (between 0.01% in Japan and 36% in Spain).
- In countries with greater aid decentralisation, funding agents are found at the regional level of government with aid budgets larger than those of some OECD/DAC member states. These are the **Flemish, Basque, Catalan, Valencian and Andalusian governments**.
- Another well-known aspect of decentralised cooperation, confirmed by the analysis of 2020 aid, is its high imputation as ODA of expenditures made on **home territory**. This practice affects more than 90% of ODA from Austria, Canada and Germany and raises the percentage of overall ODA implemented on home territory to 75%.
- The remaining 25% of ODA is international aid effectively transferred to developing countries, which is mostly channelled through **NGDOs** and very rarely directly. Within direct cooperation, cooperation explicitly declared as technical assistance does not reach 3% of

ODA, which contrasts sharply with the aforementioned discourse on the localisation of the SDGs and the added value of sub-state donors as knowledge providers.

- Despite their limited budgetary weight, direct cooperation relationships with technical content exist in several countries. This report has elaborated **seven case studies** in Belgium, France, Japan, and Spain, which fit the dominant narrative on decentralised cooperation.
- The **Flemish government** is a relatively important actor in direct cooperation, thanks to its concentration on a very limited number of countries, whose central governments it signs international agreements with, on the basis of its competencies in external action, and negotiates multi-annual ODA plans. Within the framework of these formal and stable relations, it generates links with all types of development actors, including public administrations, although not necessarily sub-state, and identifies specific opportunities for technical cooperation.
- **France's territorial collectivities** make a country that is typically known for its centralism, the most active in decentralised technical cooperation. This is explained by the fact that its Ministry of Foreign Affairs designs and manages the system that facilitates the provision of international technical assistance in local policies by local administrations.
- In **Japan, cities and prefectures** undertake similar technical assistance on their own initiative and within broader city internationalisation policies. However, in recent years, the central government has actively promoted this involvement by providing co-financing, technical assistance from JICA and its field offices, and a strategic vision on the integration of international co-operation into Japanese culture.
- In Spain, different models of technical cooperation are emerging. The **Andalusian model** based on the infrastructure of the state cooperation agency AECID; the **municipal funds** model, with a structure of offices at headquarters and in the field and various programmes for managing offers and demands for technical assistance; and the **Basque inter-institutional programme** for water and sanitation, where geographical and sectoral concentration favours the concurrence of different levels of government (autonomous, provincial and municipal) and institutions in the water sector. Lastly, a **leave** system has been set up **for the Valencian Regional Government's health personnel**, which promotes and formalises a practice that is prevalent in other governments and areas of government.
- Generally, decentralised cooperation models require an **infrastructure** that connects public administrations in the North and South and that is foreign to sub-state governments concentrated in their territory. In practice, there are various ways of building this infrastructure, and most depend, to some extent, on central government collaboration. The case of the Spanish municipalities' cooperation funds is perhaps the most notable exception to this dependence, as the necessary infrastructure has been created and is governed in a decentralised manner.

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# METHODOLOGY

## DODA

This report consolidates decentralised official development assistance (ODA) actions understood as ODA activities financed from sub-state budgets. It is calculated on the basis of aid activities recorded in the Creditor Reporting System (CRS) database managed by the OECD's Directorate-General for Development, fed by all OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) countries and accessible to the public via the internet. The CRS invites donor governments to report on the implementation of their aid on an activity-by-activity basis, providing information on 92 aspects of over 200,000 ODA-financed actions each year. The report analyses data for the last five years available (2016-2020), with a greater emphasis on 2020 data.

To identify ODA, the agency name field of the CRS has been used, which provides information on the administration responsible for granting the aid within each country. The DAC itself offers a series of master tables<sup>13</sup> in which the different agencies are classified into six categories, including local governments. Despite the existence of the "local governments" field, this category, which could be an approximation to the categorisation between centralised and decentralised, has a series of gaps that prevent a homogeneous classification of the agents. Therefore, to solve this problem, the agency name field, which informs about the administration that grants aid within each country, has been revised and, with the support of the internet, all the agencies listed by the OECD have been classified as centralised or decentralised cooperation, so that the necessary filters can be applied for the report.

In some cases, the agency name field is maintained as a breakdown of the "decentralised cooperation" category that allows for a sub-state government, usually at the regional level. For cities, this is more difficult, as there is a tendency to group their grants under generic terms. In the case of Spain, for example, the aid provided by the 17 autonomous communities is duly differentiated, while that of local authorities is grouped under the abbreviation MUNIC.

## Categories of DODA

The categorisation of ODA in this report is based on the CRS field "type of aid", which allows for the identification of two main variants of decentralised aid. On the one hand, ODA par excellence, which involves an effective transfer of financial resources from developed to developing countries (international aid) and aid that is used in the donor agency's own territory (aid in the donor agency's own territory)<sup>14</sup>.

<sup>13</sup> [List of CRS codes](#)

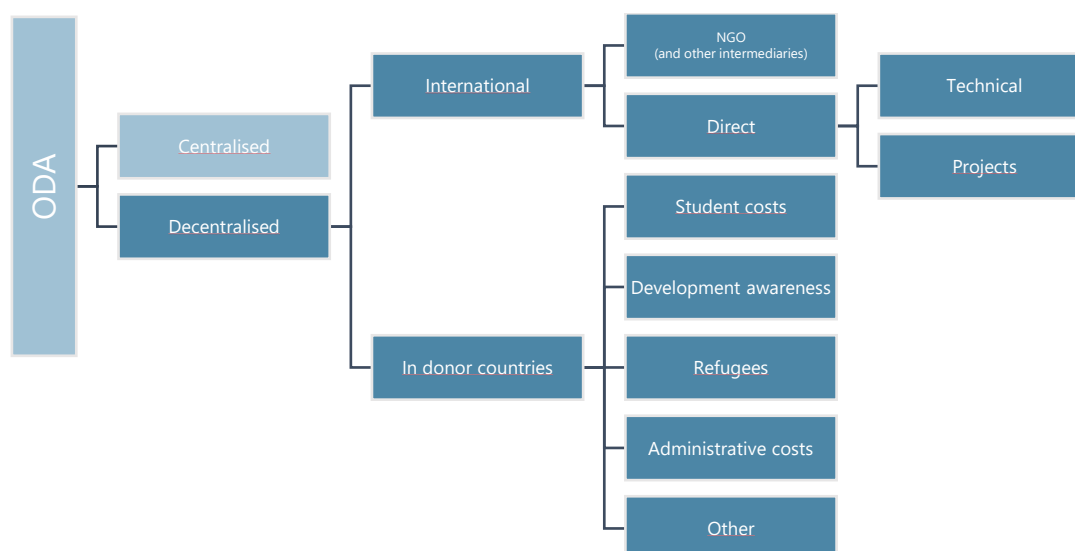
<sup>14</sup> The first major study on decentralised aid (OECD 2005) quantified the phenomenon at figures between USD 800 million and USD 1.2 billion per year and identified its main chapter as the cost of students reported as ODA in the German Länder, with a weight of 50% of the total. The rest of decentralised aid reported a wide variety of uses, including cultural cooperation and small development projects.

Category	CODE	AID_type
<b>International</b>	<b>A*</b>	Budget support
	<b>B*</b>	Core contributions and pooled programmes and funds
	<b>C*</b>	Project-type interventions
	<b>D*</b>	Experts and other technical assistance
<b>In donor countries</b>	<b>E*</b>	Scholarships and student costs in donor countries
	<b>F*</b>	Debt relief
	<b>G*</b>	Administrative costs not included elsewhere
	<b>H*</b>	Other in-donor expenditures (included Refugees in donor countries)

In turn, these broad categories are differentiated into subcategories, based on the combination of the fields "type of aid" and "channel", thus allowing ODA to be broken down into concepts relevant to decentralised cooperation, which are presented in the following table.

Category	Subcategory	Aid type	Channel
International	NGO (and other int)	A*,B*,C*, D*	NGO, Multilateral
	Direct cooperatoin	A*,B*,C*, D*	Donor government, Receipt government
	• Technical	D*	Donor government, Receipt government
	• Projects	A*,B*,C*	Donor government, Receipt government
In donor countries	Student costs	E*	All
	Refugees	H02 - H05	All
	Development awareness	H01	All
	Administrative costs	G01	All
	Other	F01	All

As shown in the main section, the summary ODA breakdowns proposed in the report are as follows:



As in most ODA studies, this report relies on fields from the CRS database to characterise decentralised cooperation. These fields are country and geographical area of destination, sector

and channel. For this report, a series of groupings have been made in these fields in order to facilitate the understanding of the data.

AREA (grouping)	Geographical área (DAC)
<b>Africa</b>	Africa
	South of Sahara
<b>America</b>	America
	Caribbean & Central America
	South America
<b>Asia and Pacific</b>	Asia
	Far East Asia
	Oceania
	South & Central Asia
<b>Europe</b>	Europe
<b>MENA</b>	Middle East
	North of Sahara
<b>Unspecified</b>	Regional and Unspecified



Along with the report, the master tables used for this type of grouping are attached in Excel to facilitate the analysis of the CRS data.

## Decentralised cooperation profiles

In order to study ODA in greater depth, decentralised cooperation profiles have been established by country or state. This decision is justified by the lack of detail in many ODA items that are allocated to generic actors such as "municipalities" or "federal states", and because decentralised donors tend to develop similar cooperation profiles within each state, depending on their framework of competencies and historical trajectories.

The study of each country has been synthesised in a country fact sheet. The ordering criterion for the presentation of the country fact sheet is the percentage that decentralised ODA represents of the country's total bilateral ODA or the degree of decentralisation. These sheets synthesise a series of sections and key data which are defined below:

- **Initial section:** shows the total ODA, in millions of dollars, allocated by sub-state governments in 2020, the percentage it represents of the country's bilateral ODA and the distribution by type of modality (international ODA or in-country).
- **Evolution of ODA:** graph showing the evolution of ODA in the 5 years of analysis of the report, in millions of dollars, as a % of bilateral ODA and the distribution by modality.
- **What aid looks like section:** this section breaks down each country's aid by different axes of analysis, with data for 2020. For each heading, the main value (in percentage) of the axis of analysis is shown in the grey shaded area. The different sections that serve to characterise each country's aid are detailed below:

- **Modality:** highlights the category in which the greatest amount aid is allocated within each modality (international and domestic), out of the country's total ODA. Below are two graphs that break down each of the modalities into the different categories explained in previous sections.
- **Recipient:** highlights which region receives the most ODA. For each of the regions, the percentage allocated is shown below. Additionally, the top 3 recipient countries in the Americas, Africa, MENA and Asia-Pacific regions are indicated.
- **Sector:** highlights which sector receives the most ODA. Next, ODA by sector is detailed in a graph showing the distribution by macro-sector. Finally, the "Social services and infrastructure" sector is broken down into its different sectors (Education, Health, Water and Sanitation, Government and Civil Society, Others).
- **Agents section:** for each country, the 10 main decentralised cooperation agents that have allocated ODA are shown, indicating the amount in millions of dollars and as a percentage (in respect to that country's total ODA) for 2020. In addition, in those countries where the agency field is more detailed (Spain, Belgium, Germany), the country fact sheet is expanded with a second page detailing some data on the **3 main agents** to characterise the ODA of these organisations.

## Cases of direct decentralised cooperation

To find examples of direct cooperation with technical content, we first identified the five countries most active in direct technical cooperation in the last five years. Next, CRS micro-data on both technical cooperation and direct cooperation projects were analysed to identify activities that stood out for their budget or recurrence. For example, in the case of Spain, recurrent references to funds were identified in the "Channel reported name" field within entries attributed to municipalities and some communities and under types of aid and channels that correspond to the direct cooperation category. In total, 11 funds were found<sup>15</sup> from 10 Spanish Autonomous Communities that have channelled a total of \$23 million between 2016 and 2020 with 69% of direct cooperation. Within the operations related to municipal funds, the AKUAL programme was detected as a special case of inter-institutional collaboration presented as a different model. In Spain, a strong weight of direct cooperation was also detected in Andalusian aid in several sectors, as well as an amount of technical assistance in the health sector through the Valencian Community's own personnel. Both cases served to identify two other models.

In the case of Japan and France, a large number of smaller notes related to municipal technical assistance were identified in a large number of sectors and countries. Both cases were studied together and resulted in two models of municipal technical assistance with state coverage. In Belgium, with only three decentralised cooperation actors, Brussels, Wallonia and Flanders, the Flemish case was chosen because of its larger volume of total ODA and direct aid.

Finally, it should be noted that during the analysis of the micro-data for several countries, many entries related to the university channel and the higher education sector were detected. Some of

<sup>15</sup> Although there are 9 funds in Spain according to CONFOCOS, other funds such as Cantabria Coopera or the Navarra Federation of Municipalities and Councils (FNMC) and its Navarra Local Cooperation Fund came up in the search for funds in the CRS microdata.

these entries raised doubts about their correct imputation as international aid or cross-border aid. Moreover, the public administration character of some of the research centres involved was also unclear. It was therefore decided to exclude from the analysis these grants which would better fit into a specific study on decentralised cooperation in research and higher education. This decision resulted in the exclusion of Germany from the case studies.

In order to document the case studies, the following have been reviewed: a previous case study (Jain, 2005) seven websites of the institutions analysed (Yokohama.lg.jp, 2020; confederaciondefondos.org, 2022; diploma (Yokohama.lg.jp, 2020; confederaciondefondos.org, 2022; diplomatie.gouv.fr, 2022; elankidetza.euskadi.eus, 2022b, 2022a; fdfa.be, 2022a; juntadeandalucia.es, 2022) and seven websites of the programmes selected as models of direct co-operation (felcode.org, no date; gva.es, 2018; Yokohama.lg.jp, 2020; akual.org, 2022; fdfa.be, 2022b; fondogalego.gal, 2022; vitoria-gasteiz.org, 2022) as well as eight legal and strategic frameworks (DOGV, 2018; Fons Catalá, 2018; Government of Flanders, 2019, 2021; DAECT, 2020; AACID, 2021; JICA, 2021; AACID, 2022).

In addition, staff from the institutions involved were interviewed: Jordi Garrell, director general of the Confederation of Cooperation and Solidarity Funds (CONFOCOS); Nikolay Murashkin, associate researcher at the Ogata Institute of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA); Amandine Sabourin, policy officer at the European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM); Marlène Simeone, director of the PLATFORMA secretariat; Lourdes Sanchís, deputy director of development cooperation at the Generalitat de Valencia; Olga Pozo Teba, Head of the Latin America Unit of the Andalusian Agency for International Development Cooperation; Raúl Muñoz Jiménez, Coordinator of the Central America Unit of the Andalusian Agency for International Development Cooperation; Maite Garmendia Eguinoa, Cooperation Technician at eLankidetza - Basque Agency for Development Cooperation; and Noemí de la Fuente Pereda, Head of Strategic Coordination at eLankidetza - Basque Agency for Development Cooperation.

## ANNEX II.

## DODA DATA, 2020

Agent	Country	(1)		(2)		(3)		(2+3)		(1+2+3)		(4)		(5)		(6)		(7)		(4+5+6+7) In donor countries		TOTAL DODA
		M USD	%	M USD	%	M USD	%	M USD	%	M USD	%	M USD	%	M USD	%	M USD	%	M USD	%	M USD	%	
Identified:		238,06		27,37		84,09		111,47		349,53		4,34		8,98		43,64		18,70		75,66		425,19
Flanders	Belgium	33,83	45%	6,37	9%	31,91	43%	38,27	51%	72,10	97%	0,70	1%	0,00	0%	0,52	1%	1,09	1%	2,31	3%	74,41
Euskadi	Spain	40,75	76%	0,02	0%	2,22	4%	2,25	4%	43,00	80%	0,08	0%	2,43	5%	5,87	11%	2,46	5%	10,83	20%	53,83
Catalonia	Spain	19,71	38%	6,80	13%	4,01	8%	10,81	21%	30,52	59%	0,00	0%	6,44	12%	9,54	18%	5,18	10%	21,16	41%	51,68
C. Valenciana	Spain	27,38	75%	0,16	0%	4,48	12%	4,64	13%	32,02	88%	0,09	0%	0,00	0%	4,46	12%	0,00	0%	4,55	12%	36,57
Andalusia	Spain	21,77	62%	0,00	0%	6,09	17%	6,09	17%	27,87	79%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	2,84	8%	4,38	12%	7,22	21%	35,09
Wallonia	Belgium	9,97	38%	2,83	11%	13,09	50%	15,93	61%	25,90	99%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,18	1%	0,00	0%	0,18	1%	26,08
Bavaria	Germany	6,49	39%	6,97	42%	1,89	11%	8,86	54%	15,35	93%	0,73	4%	0,00	0%	0,29	2%	0,14	1%	1,16	7%	16,50
Scotland	United Kingdom	13,06	81%	0,00	0%	2,93	18%	2,93	18%	15,99	100%	0,05	0%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,05	0%	16,04
Navarre	Spain	13,84	92%	0,00	0%	0,11	1%	0,11	1%	13,96	93%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,90	6%	0,23	2%	1,13	7%	15,08
North Rhineland-Westphalia	Germany	0,78	6%	0,82	7%	4,32	34%	5,14	41%	5,91	47%	0,23	2%	0,00	0%	5,34	43%	1,09	9%	6,65	53%	12,57
Hamburg	Germany	0,30	3%	0,00	0%	9,76	88%	9,76	88%	10,06	91%	0,47	4%	0,00	0%	0,50	5%	0,00	0%	0,97	9%	11,03
Extremadura	Spain	6,60	69%	0,00	0%	0,06	1%	0,06	1%	6,66	70%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	1,43	15%	1,42	15%	2,85	30%	9,51
Galicia	Spain	5,77	73%	0,11	1%	0,50	6%	0,62	8%	6,38	80%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,80	10%	0,77	10%	1,57	20%	7,95
Balearic Islands	Spain	4,46	74%	0,00	0%	0,70	12%	0,70	12%	5,16	85%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,90	15%	0,00	0%	0,90	15%	6,06
Baden-Württemberg	Germany	0,72	13%	0,45	8%	1,32	23%	1,77	31%	2,49	44%	0,55	10%	0,00	0%	2,66	47%	0,00	0%	3,21	56%	5,71
Madrid	Spain	4,42	85%	0,00	0%	0,06	1%	0,06	1%	4,49	86%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,16	3%	0,56	11%	0,72	14%	5,20

Agent	Country	(1)		(2)		(3)		(2+3)		(1+2+3)		(4)		(5)		(6)		(7)		(4+5+6+7) In donor countries		TOTAL DODA
		NGO		AT		Project		Direct		International		Students		Refugees		DevAw		Admin.cost				
		M USD	%	M USD	%	M USD	%	M USD	%	M USD	%	M USD	%	M USD	%	M USD	%	M USD	%	M USD	%	
Castilla y León	Spain	4,39	88%	0,00	0%	0,06	1%	0,06	1%	4,45	89%	0,02	0%	0,00	0%	0,27	5%	0,25	5%	0,55	11%	5,00
Aragón	Spain	4,25	89%	0,06	1%	0,12	2%	0,18	4%	4,43	93%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,33	7%	0,00	0%	0,33	7%	4,76
Asturias	Spain	4,26	91%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	4,26	91%	0,00	0%	0,11	2%	0,33	7%	0,00	0%	0,45	9%	4,71
Gales	United Kingdom	3,39	100%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	3,39	100%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	3,39
Hesse	Germany	0,44	13%	2,11	62%	0,00	0%	2,11	62%	2,54	75%	0,34	10%	0,00	0%	0,50	15%	0,00	0%	0,84	25%	3,38
Canarias	Spain	2,46	98%	0,00	0%	0,05	2%	0,05	2%	2,52	100%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	2,52
La Rioja	Spain	1,67	71%	0,00	0%	0,11	5%	0,11	5%	1,79	76%	0,04	2%	0,00	0%	0,50	21%	0,02	1%	0,56	24%	2,34
Berlín	Germany	0,27	13%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,27	13%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	1,86	87%	0,00	0%	1,86	87%	2,13
Renania - Palatinado	Germany	1,51	73%	0,02	1%	0,00	0%	0,02	1%	1,53	74%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,08	4%	0,45	22%	0,53	26%	2,05
Cantabria	Spain	1,62	88%	0,00	0%	0,06	3%	0,06	3%	1,67	91%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,16	9%	0,00	0%	0,16	9%	1,83
Schleswig-Holstein	Germany	0,37	24%	0,04	2%	0,00	0%	0,04	3%	0,41	26%	0,06	4%	0,00	0%	1,03	66%	0,06	4%	1,15	74%	1,56
Sajonia	Germany	1,00	76%	0,22	17%	0,05	3%	0,26	20%	1,26	96%	0,05	4%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,05	4%	1,31
Región de Bruselas	Belgium	0,86	67%	0,00	0%	0,17	13%	0,17	13%	1,03	80%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,26	20%	0,00	0%	0,26	20%	1,29
Baja Sajonia	Germany	0,08	9%	0,25	28%	0,00	0%	0,25	28%	0,33	38%	0,18	20%	0,00	0%	0,07	8%	0,30	34%	0,55	62%	0,88
Bremen	Germany	0,21	24%	0,08	10%	0,00	0%	0,08	10%	0,29	34%	0,11	13%	0,00	0%	0,46	53%	0,00	0%	0,57	66%	0,86
Turingia	Germany	0,05	7%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,05	7%	0,57	75%	0,00	0%	0,14	18%	0,00	0%	0,70	93%	0,76
Brandeburgo	Germany	0,32	47%	0,04	6%	0,00	0%	0,04	6%	0,37	53%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,33	47%	0,00	0%	0,33	47%	0,69
Mecklenburg-Pomerania occidental	Germany	0,05	8%	0,02	3%	0,00	0%	0,02	3%	0,07	11%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,60	89%	0,00	0%	0,60	89%	0,66
Castilla-La Mancha	Spain	0,29	49%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,29	49%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,30	51%	0,30	51%	0,59
Murcia	Spain	0,36	67%	0,00	0%	0,02	3%	0,02	3%	0,38	71%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,16	29%	0,00	0%	0,16	29%	0,54
Sajonia - Anhalt	Germany	0,04	14%	0,00	1%	0,00	0%	0,00	1%	0,05	15%	0,07	23%	0,00	0%	0,19	62%	0,00	0%	0,26	85%	0,31
SARRE	Germany	0,30	100%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,30	100%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,30
Not identified		225,28		43,91		15,87		59,78		285,06		1.705,60		249,29		18,69		19,14		1.992,73		2.277,79

Agent	Country	(1)		(2)		(3)		(2+3)		(1+2+3)		(4)		(5)		(6)		(7)		(4+5+6+7) In donor countries		TOTAL DODA
		NGO M USD	%	AT M USD	%	Project M USD	%	Direct M USD	%	International M USD	%	Students M USD	%	Refugees M USD	%	DevAw M USD	%	Admin.cost M USD	%	M USD	%	
German Länder	Germany	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	1.696,70	100%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	1.696,70	100%	1.696,70
Canadian provinces	Canada	18,69	11%	0,63	0%	0,21	0%	0,83	0%	19,52	11%	1,00	1%	155,46	88%	0,37	0%	0,37	0%	157,19	89%	176,71
French MAE	France	36,26	26%	12,81	9%	4,75	3%	17,57	13%	53,83	39%	0,40	0%	77,47	56%	2,83	2%	4,92	4%	85,62	61%	139,44
Spanish municipalities	Spain	94,58	83%	0,15	0%	3,03	3%	3,18	3%	97,76	85%	0,06	0%	0,61	1%	11,18	10%	4,80	4%	16,65	15%	114,41
Swiss Cantons	Switzerland	54,97	82%	0,15	0%	1,61	2%	1,76	3%	56,72	85%	3,86	6%	2,81	4%	2,66	4%	0,79	1%	10,11	15%	66,84
Interdepartmental	France	0,55	2%	28,92	84%	0,00	0%	28,92	84%	29,46	86%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	4,95	14%	4,95	14%	34,41
Austrian Provinces	Austria	8,55	38%	0,00	0%	0,79	4%	0,79	4%	9,34	41%	0,06	0%	12,34	55%	0,69	3%	0,14	1%	13,23	59%	22,57
Public universities in Spain	Spain	0,07	1%	1,13	10%	2,81	25%	3,93	35%	4,00	36%	3,07	28%	0,07	1%	0,80	7%	3,17	29%	7,12	64%	11,12
Provinces of Italy	Italy	5,65	78%	0,00	0%	1,47	20%	1,47	20%	7,12	98%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,15	2%	0,00	0%	0,15	2%	7,27
Municipalities in Belgium	Belgium	5,09	100%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	5,09	100%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	5,09
Prefectures of Japan	Japan	0,49	48%	0,00	0%	0,29	28%	0,29	29%	0,78	77%	0,24	23%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,24	23%	1,02
Municipalities of Portugal	Portugal	0,05	3%	0,00	0%	0,80	49%	0,80	49%	0,85	53%	0,21	13%	0,54	33%	0,02	1%	0,01	0%	0,77	47%	1,62
Municipalities of Japan	Japan	0,34	59%	0,12	21%	0,11	20%	0,24	41%	0,58	100%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,00	0%	0,58
TOTAL		463,34		71,28		99,96		171,25		634,59		1.709,93		258,27		62,33		37,85		2.068,38		2.702,97







**GARAPENERAKO  
LANKIDETZAREN  
EUSKAL AGENTZIA**

AGENCIA VASCA DE  
COOPERACIÓN PARA  
EL DESARROLLO