

# Tracking what counts

## A Trends Analysis of European Donor Support to Sexual & Reproductive Health and Rights & Family Planning

2022 / 2023

Countdown 2030 Europe is the 'go-to' cross-country sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) expert Consortium in Europe seeking to increase European SRHR funding in international cooperation and strengthen political support for sexual and reproductive freedom worldwide.

**T**he Consortium is made up of 15 leading European non-governmental organisations and is coordinated by IPPF European Network. To support these advocacy and accountability efforts, partners track since 2009 yearly policy and financial trends specifically for sexual and reproductive health and family planning (SRH/FP) in their respective countries, namely: Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom, in addition to the European Union institutions.

In 2021, the Consortium started assessing European donors' support to the broader SRHR agenda, allowing to further align this exercise with donors' vision.

This report presents the outcomes of the policy and financial tracking for the last available year (financial data for 2022, policy updates for 2023). To consult the full methodology used, please [read the full report](#) or visit our website [here](#).



Alexandra Koleva for IPPF x Fine Acts

# Policy trends and highlights

European donors continue to be vocal about the importance of SRH/FP and SRHR in international cooperation. **17 new SRHR related European policy documents** were endorsed by European countries, with different focus: from SRHR being prioritised in foreign, international cooperation or global health strategies and gender action plans, to policies focused on specific regions, particularly Africa.

## Where is the money going?

This overall level of support ensured access to modern contraceptive care for 20 million women and couples, at a minimum<sup>1</sup>, and avoided at least 7 million unintended pregnancies.

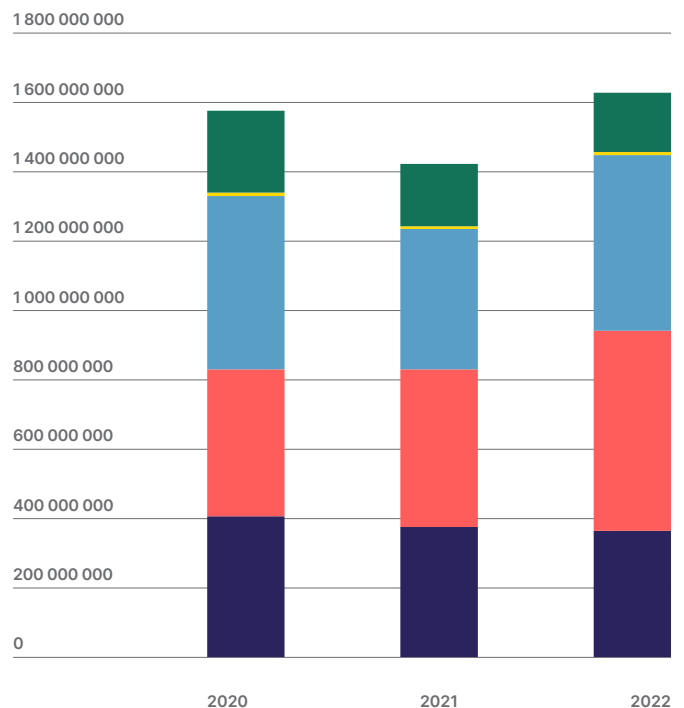
Data collected indicates that, in 2022, 14 European donors prioritised investments in SRH/FP within the overall SRHR and against other key components of such a broader agenda<sup>2</sup>. While **the level of funding for SRH/FP has significantly increased** (+14%, providing a total of **1.622 billion Euros**), **the level of funding to overall SRHR was kept at the same level as the previous year (2.889 billion Euros)**.

### Featured focus: European donors' funding to Comprehensive Sexuality Education

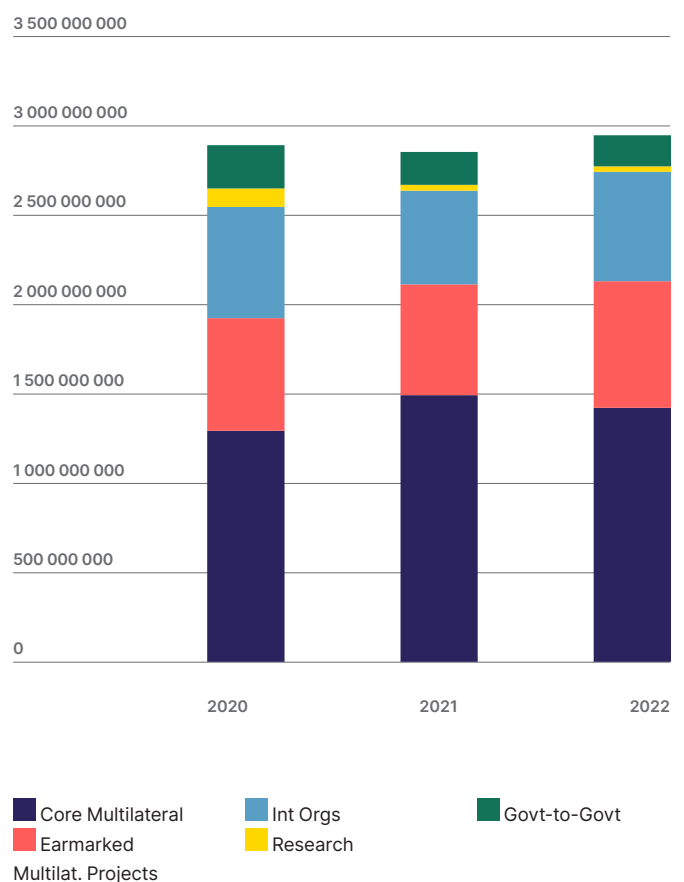
Funding from European donors has been playing a crucial role in ensuring young people in low and middle-income countries could access comprehensive sexuality education (CSE). In this sense, the report shows that all European donors provide support to specific CSE programmes or, at a minimum, promote initiatives that include education targeting SRH or SGBV prevention.

But European donors can and must increase funding for CSE, as well as do more to counter opposition on this topic, which is one of the most fiercely attacked by the anti-rights conservative movement within the broader SRHR agenda. Supporting CSE will lead to gender-equal societies in which everyone is safe from harm and treated with dignity.

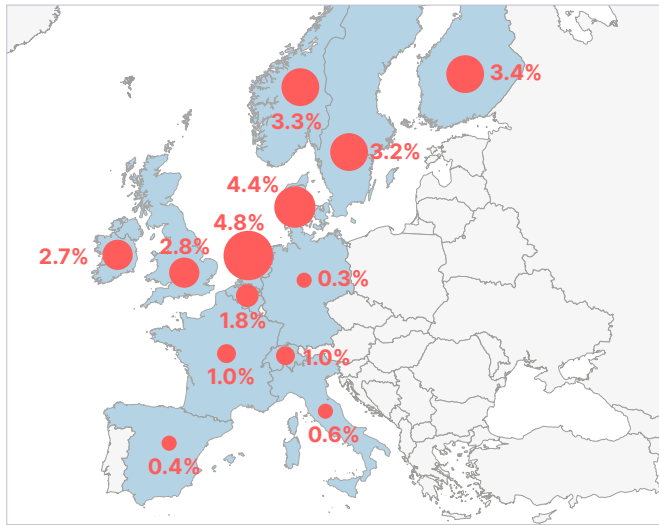
European donors' support to SRH/FP



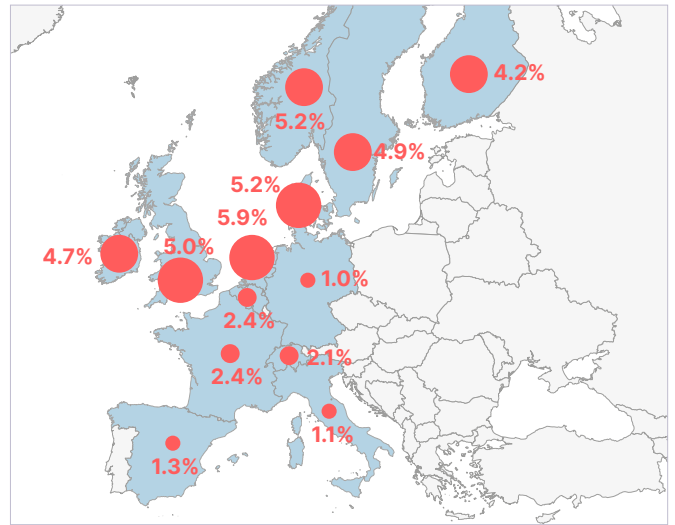
European donors' support to SRHR



SRH/FP as % of ODA



SRHR as % of ODA



However, there continues to be significant room to scale up the weight of both SRH/FP and SRHR as a share of countries' annual Official Development Assistance (ODA). In 2022, individual European donors allocated between 0.3 – 4.8% of their ODA to SRH/FP (against 0.3 – 5.7% in 2021) and between 1.0 – 5.9% of their ODA to SRHR (against 0.8 – 7.5% in the previous year). As a matter of comparison, in the same year, European donors allocated between 7 – 51% of their ODA to in-donor refugee costs<sup>3</sup>, a massive difference when looking at the share of support to sexual and reproductive care worldwide of those same donor governments.

With such in-donor expenses as part of their ODA, in 2022 some European donors paradoxically became the primary beneficiaries of their own Official Development Assistance. So, while the absolute increase of expenditure on SRH/FP in 2022, as well as the overall ODA rise, are all very welcome, it is also clear that support for sexual and reproductive care has not been prioritised enough, compared to other issues, and especially when looking at it as a share of ODA.

## A snapshot of the detailed trends analysis:

The vast majority of the European donors under review<sup>4</sup> either increased or maintained funding compared to the previous year.

The multilateral system remains the most used stream for European donors' support to both SRH/FP and SRHR, followed by international organisations & initiatives and government-to-government cooperation. European donors increased the use of the multilateral system to advance access to SRH/FP by 12%, most of which was observed in support to multilateral earmarked programmes, including, but not only, dedicated to the UNFPA Supplies Partnership and humanitarian efforts, while sustaining the overall SRHR funding through this stream.

European donors increased their funding towards UNFPA in 2022, respectively by 18% for SRH/FP and 19% for SRHR. This surge was mainly due to almost double overall contributions to UNFPA Supplies Partnerships by the donors under review. Even with this surge, core funding remained the largest type of contribution to the agency, representing almost half of total investments.

# Are European donors keeping up with their international commitments?



European donors have proven to be politically and financially committed to SRHR on several occasions, such as during the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the ground-breaking International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD+25), celebrated at the Nairobi Summit in 2019. Our report shows that most of European donors are on track to fulfil the financial commitments made in Nairobi, with a few setbacks over the past years.

But the multiple crises hitting the globe in these last years led to exacerbated needs and inequalities. The key question to be answered may be: were those commitments ambitious enough? Being presented with a new opportunity with the celebration of the 30th anniversary of ICPD in 2024, it is key for European governments to adopt an approach that looks at the long-term structural and systemic issues that contribute to the fulfilment of SRHR and to leave no one behind.

Existing data shows that European donors have the resources to step up international solidarity and place SRHR at its centre. When priorities are clear, increased investments follow. In the face of crises, it is fundamental to, not only sustain the current level of investment on sexual and reproductive care for all people around the world, but also to scale it up, so that investments in these issues receive the same attention as funding for other areas.

Going forward, the C2030E Consortium is, as always, committed to continue its role in calling for increased investments in this field, whilst ensuring accountability by tracking financial expenditures and the implementation of policy commitments towards advancing the SRHR agenda.

1. Based on the Guttmacher's Family Planning Investment Impact Calculator. This includes only some projects support by European donors and reported as FP, so the numbers would significantly increase if the broader SRHR agenda was also included.
2. Such as HIV/AIDS, prevention and integrated responses to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), comprehensive sexuality education (CSE), safe abortion, work with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex or Queer (LGBTIQ+) people or broader human rights-based, gender-responsive and intersectional approaches. Analysis of individual contributions confirms that European donors tend to invest in integrated approaches to SRHR, as advocated by C2030E.
3. According to OECD's preliminary data published in April 2023, the European donors considered in this analysis allocated the following shares of their ODA to in-donor refugee countries: Belgium 9.4%; Denmark 15.9%; Finland 25.4%; France 9.4%; Germany 12.8%; Ireland 51%; Italy 22.9%; the Netherlands 14.6%; Norway 9.4%; Spain 20.2%; Sweden 7%; Switzerland 28.2%; and the UK 28.9%.
4. 13 out of 14 for SRH/FP and 12 out of 14 for SRHR.



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