

# [PRESS RELEASE]

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



## Study: EU surpasses US as top donor in population assistance



DSW and EPF remind European policy-makers of their commitments to Family Planning and Reproductive Health

**Brussels, 1 September 2009.** *The collective efforts of the European Union (EU) have made it the single greatest donor of population assistance worldwide, as a joint study of the German Foundation for World Population (DSW) and the European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development (EPF) shows. According to the Euromapping 2009 report, in 2006 the EU spent nearly US\$ 3 billion on population programmes and activities, increasing its aid by US\$ 600 million. The US decreased its aid by nearly the same amount. To meet international commitments to provide universal access to reproductive health by 2015, donors must triple their financial support for population activities over the next four years.*

At the Euromapping Press Conference, DSW Vice-Executive Director Karen Hoehn, welcomed this increasing trend in EU spending, but called on European governments to live up to their commitments to family planning and reproductive health made at the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD): "The financial crisis will impact developing countries most severely; sustaining European support for ODA and population assistance is therefore imperative". There are already worrying signs of dramatic cuts in official development assistance in 2009, noted Neil Datta, Secretary of EPF: "Given the leading position of the EU in the world, with 63% of the total ODA contributions, a failure to meet its targets will deliver a worrying message to the donor community in the run-up to 2015".

At the same time, the Euromapping report finds that EU spending towards the health sector on the whole has decreased. "There is a direct link between maternal mortality rates and the lack of well-functioning health systems," argued Susanne Weber-Mosdorf, Head of the EU office of the WHO, at the Euromapping press conference. "With this reduction, European donors save money at the very wrong end—and miss out on sustainable solutions".

Despite the positive efforts of other international actors, the EU's reduction marked a drop in global health spending, jeopardising international efforts to meet the Millennium Development Goals. With the Committee on Development of the European Parliament discussing the 2010 budget this week, MEP Ms. Sophie in't Veld called on her colleagues to live up to the commitments made on reproductive health and population issues: "We have to step up our political and financial support for the fifth Millennium Development Goal on maternal health," said Ms. in't Veld. "Let's not abandon those who are dying needlessly in childbirth every day, but show them our continuing support especially in times of crisis".

More information, graphic material and the Euromapping study report in English, French and German are available online at:

**<http://www.euroresources.org/euromapping>**

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The European Commission is the EU's executive body

The European Union is made up of 27 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders

**Note to the Editor:**

Euromapping is a joint study by DSW and EPF that scrutinises EU countries' development aid for population assistance and reproductive health (sexually transmitted infections such as HIV/AIDS, maternal death and disability, family planning, gender-based violence) commitments and disbursements. It "names and shames" good and bad performers, and includes specific recommendations to improve reproductive health and reduce poverty.

Interviews with the authors of the study will be gladly facilitated. Please contact:  
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The German Foundation for World Population (DSW) is an international development organisation. DSW helps young people in Africa and Asia to escape poverty by providing sexual and reproductive health information, services and supplies. In Germany and Europe it raises awareness about the close links between sustainable development, poverty, health, environmental protection and demographic trends.



The European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development (EPF) is a Brussels-based network that serves as a platform of cooperation and coordination for the 25 all-party groups in Parliaments throughout Europe that focus on improving sexual and reproductive health and rights at home and abroad through national and regional health and foreign aid budgets.

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