

## #YOUTH2030

### Generation 2030 makes a stand at UN Youth Forum

They have been described both as self-absorbed and altruistic; consumeristic and environmentally conscious; apathetic and socially engaged. The current youth generation, often referred to as Generation Y or Millennials, seems to evade a single definition or label, but one thing is certain – they are building a future that will be radically different than anything we have seen before.

At the end of January, young activists and leaders from every corner of the world will descend on New York for the annual Youth Forum of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). Here, they will meet ministers and high-level officials of governments, UN agencies and other international organizations. The key difference is, at this Forum, it is the youth who does the talking.

The Forum started in the year 2012 as a primary platform to give young people a say on global problems discussed by the United Nations. This year, ministers and other officials will hear the concerns, hopes and ideas of hundreds of young participants from around the world.

For the current generation of youth – the largest ever, at around 1.8 billion people – stepping into adulthood is proving anything but easy. Already, there are an estimated 71 million unemployed young people in the world. A further 161 million find themselves in situations of moderate or extreme poverty despite having a job.

Add to that mounting global problems, such as climate change, growing inequalities or the challenges of new technologies, and the prospect of growing up can seem daunting for many a young person. Yet, the youth activists, inventors, leaders and visionaries that so often grab the public attention these days are anything but intimidated.

Elon Musk who started two multi-million dollar businesses before the age of 30, Malala Yousafzai who became the youngest Nobel Prize laureate at just 17, or the 19-year-old Syrian refugee Yusra Mardini who saved the lives of 20 people during a dangerous sea crossing to Greece and went on to compete in the Rio Olympics are just a few examples of the energy, passion and relentless optimism of today's young generation.

Today's youth are not waiting for the old, business-as-usual models to gradually change. Instead they are using disruptive new technologies, global social networks and innovative solutions to build a new reality. From sharing economy, to cryptocurrencies, to clean energy networks paid for by cashless transfers, youth are already setting the tone of our future – and they are just getting started.

Young people will need all the innovation and energy they can muster because the challenge they face is an enormous one. The Sustainable Development Goals – a 15-year plan to create a prosperous world for everyone on a clean planet – is the most ambitious development agenda humanity has ever considered, let alone implemented.

The youth have already proven that they have the skills, knowledge and willpower to become the generation that ends poverty, halts climate change and creates a more just world for everyone. But to achieve all that by 2030 they need to have a meaningful part in the decision-making process. The UN Youth Forum is their chance to do just that.

The UN ECOSOC Youth Forum 2018 will take place in New York, 30-31 January. For more information go to: <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/ecosoc-youth-forum>

Join the conversation on social media using: #Youth2030

For a first-hand experience of the Forum, follow the Youth Forum SDG Media Zone: <http://sdgmediazone.org/>

## HIGHLIGHTS



### Ending poverty for inclusive, resilient and sustainable societies

Eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development resolves to free the human race from the tyranny of poverty and to heal and secure our planet. The upcoming 56th session of the Commission for Social Development will discuss strategies to achieve that overarching Global Goal by 2030.

“The Commission for Social Development represents an excellent opportunity for key stakeholders to engage in a substantive dialogue on policy options to eradicate poverty to achieve sustainable development for all,” said Nikulás Hannigan, Chair of the Commission’s 56th Session.

“The Commission, as a multi-stakeholder platform, will facilitate the exchange of policies and strategies that have proven to be effective in reducing poverty, including through

ensuring policy coherence and enhanced coordination across sectors in line with the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).”

This year’s Commission will feature four high-level panel discussions on: strategies for eradicating poverty; innovation and interconnectivity for social development; the Madrid Plan of Action on Ageing and mainstreaming of disability in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

“Delegations are encouraged to come prepared to interact, propose new and innovative ideas, and share their experiences,” said Mr. Hannigan. To prepare civil society participants for the Commission, the [NGO Committee on Social Development](#) will host a Civil Society Forum on 2 February 2018, under the theme of “Social Protection, Including Floors”.

The Commission will also see over 50 side events, organized by organizations accredited to the UN Economic and Social Council and by UN Permanent Missions with the support of UN DESA’s Division for Social Policy and Development (DSPD). The variety of topics covered by these events reflects the multi-dimensional, complex nature of poverty. The subjects will include everything from social responsibility, social enterprises, families, digital skills for older persons, farmers of the future to the role of sport as a catalyst for sustainable development.

Ending poverty in all its forms, including extreme poverty, will require structural transformation, creating adequate and decent jobs, ensuring food security and nutrition, securing peace and forging stronger partnerships.

This year, the Commission aims to ensure that the international community develops coherent and integrated strategies for promoting social inclusion, full participation, progressive realization of universal social protection and health coverage for all, in particular for people living in poverty and other vulnerable groups.

For more information: [56th Session of the Commission for Social Development \(CSocD56\)](#)

## HIGHLIGHTS



### New UN DESA report finds numbers of migrants continue to rise

There are now an estimated 258 million people living in a country other than their country of birth — an increase of 49% since 2000 — according to new figures released by UN DESA on 18 December 2017, on International Migrants Day. *The International Migration Report 2017 (Highlights)*, a biennial publication of the department, states that 3.4% of the

world’s inhabitants today are international migrants. This reflects a modest increase from a value of 2.8% in 2000. By contrast, the number of migrants as a fraction of the population residing in high-income countries rose from 9.6% in 2000 to 14% in 2017.

The report reviews the latest migration trends, assesses the demographic contribution of migration, examines the status of ratification of relevant conventions and summarizes recent developments on migration at the United Nations. The data presented in the report are based on national statistics, obtained from population censuses as well as population registers and nationally representative surveys.

International migration is a critical concern for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. On 19 September 2016, the General Assembly adopted the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, in which UN Member States agreed to implement well-managed migration policies. They also committed to sharing more equitably the burden and responsibility for hosting and supporting the world's refugees, protecting the human rights of all migrants, and countering xenophobia and intolerance directed towards migrants. An international conference on migration will be convened in late 2018 for the purpose of adopting a Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.

“Reliable data and evidence are critical to combat misperceptions about migration and to inform migration policies”, observed Mr. Liu Zhenmin, UN DESA's Under-Secretary-General. “These new estimates of numbers of international migrants around the world will provide an important baseline for Member States as they begin their negotiations on the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.”

The report shows that international migration makes an important contribution to population growth in many parts of the world and even reverses population decline in some countries or areas. Between 2000 and 2015, migration contributed 42% of the population growth in Northern America and 31% in Oceania. In Europe, the size of the total population would have declined during the period 2000-2015 in the absence of migration.

In 2017, around three quarters (74%) of all international migrants were of working age, or between 20 and 64 years of age, compared to 57% of the global population. Because international migrants comprise a larger proportion of working-age persons compared to the overall population, a net inflow of migrants lowers the dependency ratio, that is, the number of children and older persons compared to those of working age.

In Africa, Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean, the net impact of migration on population growth is negative in most countries but typically small compared to other population changes. In some small developing countries, however, the negative impact of outmigration on the size of the population can be substantial, especially among adults of working age.

## Trends in international migration

In 2017, high-income countries hosted 64%, or nearly 165 million, of the total number of international migrants worldwide. Moreover, most of the growth in the global population of international migrants has been caused by movements toward high-income countries, which host 64 million of the 85 million migrants added since 2000.

The number of international migrants includes 26 million refugees or asylum seekers, or about 10% of the total. Although a majority of the world's international migrants live in high-income countries, low- and middle-income countries host nearly 22 million, or 84%, of all refugees and asylum seekers.

There has been a global increase in the median age of migrants, from 38.0 years in 2000 to 39.2 years in 2017. However, in some regions, such as Asia, Oceania and especially Latin America and the Caribbean, the median age of migrants has decreased by about three years.

In 2017, 48.4% of international migrants were women. Female migrants outnumber males in all regions except Africa and Asia; in some countries of Asia, male migrants outnumber females by about three to one.

In 2017, two thirds of all international migrants were living in just twenty countries, and half of all international migrants were residing in just ten countries. The largest number of international migrants (49.8 million, or 19% of the global total) reside in the United States. Saudi Arabia, Germany and the Russian Federation host the second, third and fourth largest numbers of migrants worldwide (around 12 million each), followed by the United Kingdom (nearly 9 million).

## Destination and origin of international migrants

More than six of every ten international migrants reside in Asia or Europe (80 and 78 million, respectively). Northern America hosts the third largest number (58 million), followed by Africa (25 million), Latin America and the Caribbean (9.5 million) and Oceania (8.4 million).

These migration patterns are consistent with the growth seen during the period 2000 – 2017, when Asia added some 30 million migrants, followed by Europe, which added 22 million, Northern America, 17 million, and Africa, 10 million.

In most countries of Europe, Northern America and Oceania, international migrants comprised more than 10% of the total population in 2017.

In 2017, Asia and Europe were the regions of origin for the largest numbers of international migrants — 106 million and 61 million, respectively. Latin America and the Caribbean followed with 38 million and Africa with 36 million.

Between 2000 and 2017, Africa experienced the largest relative increase in the number of international migrants who had originated in that region (+68%), followed by Asia (+62%), Latin America and the Caribbean (+52%) and Oceania (+51%).

India has the largest number of persons born in the country who are now living outside its borders. The number of Indian-born persons residing abroad numbered 17 million in 2017, ahead of the number of Mexican-born persons living outside Mexico (13 million). The Russian Federation, China, Bangladesh, Syrian Arab Republic and Pakistan and Ukraine also have large migrant populations living abroad, ranging from 6 to 11 million each.

For more information: [The International Migration Report 2017 \(Highlights\)](#)

## GET INVOLVED



## Walking the talk on the global goals

“We want everyone to Be the Change!” says Ariel Alexovich, Associate Public Information Officer in the Sustainable Development Section in the UN Department of Public Information, as she describes a new UN initiative intended to make sure we all ‘walk the talk’ when it comes to the Sustainable Development Goals. With UN DESA Voice, Ms. Alexovich shares how the initiative took off among UN staff members and what some of the next steps entail, as the initiative expands its reach with possible partners including schools, universities and businesses.

## What is the “Be the Change” initiative all about?

“Be the Change started as a one-week challenge for New York-based UN staff members to live more sustainably at home and at work. As UN staff, we ask everyone to work together toward things like good health and responsible consumption, so we want to make sure we’re taking action ourselves. This programme helps colleagues better “walk the talk” on the Sustainable Development Goals and brings the goals we promote in our work lives into our daily lives.”

## What has the response been like so far, and what’s next for the initiative?

“It’s been great! During the Be the Change pilot week in June, we had more than 400 staff members sign up for our daily emails, and dozens joined our events, which included a speaker panel about local transportation, a tour of the UN Food Garden and an East River shoreline clean-up. We brought back the Be the Change initiative in November for a winter coat drive on Giving Tuesday. We’re proud to say we filled five giant hampers with donations for less-fortunate New Yorkers.

And this is just the beginning of what the Be the Change initiative can achieve. Based on our 2017 successes and lessons learned, we’ve created a Be the Change toolkit so UN duty stations around the world can host their own one-day or weeklong challenges.”

## Why should people take this challenge?

“Whether or not you’re a UN staff member, we’re all responsible for building happy and healthy communities. Living sustainably leads to better personal health, greater prosperity in our neighborhoods and a healthier environment. And small things DO add up. Many things can be done around the home and office that don’t take much effort but make a positive impact.”

## What is your hope for the initiative going forward?

“We want everyone to Be the Change! Now that we have a toolkit ready, we hope to see the programme replicated at other duty stations around the world. Beyond that, we want to work with partners outside the UN to hold their own Be the Change challenges. We think there’s a great opportunity to get schools, universities and businesses involved. And, of course, we’ll hold the second Be the Change Week here at UN Headquarters next June, plus offer more one-day events and volunteer opportunities throughout the year.”

For more information:

[Be the Change website](#)

[Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#)



## Facebook Live: Responding to online questions on the global economy

Have we shaken off the latest financial crises? What's in store for the global economy over the coming years? These were some of the questions that Dawn Holland, co-author of UN DESA's flagship publication the World Economic Situation and Prospects 2018, responded to as the department went live via Facebook on 11 December 2017,

following the official report launch that same day.

UN DESA's Communications team had a few questions lined up on the latest economic forecast. But this was also an opportunity for the online community to share their questions with Ms. Holland on the latest global trends and what this means for them and their communities.

**The latest report says that in 2017 we have had the highest growth since 2011. Does this mean that we have finally shaken off the financial crises?**

"We're forecasting the strongest growth in several years and this is partly a reflection of the fact that we have shaken off some of the overhanging fragilities from the global financial crises. For example, the undercapitalized banking systems have been largely resolved. The extreme fiscal austerity measures that have been in place in several countries have now been eased. So, with these pressures easing, we do see the world moving towards a somewhat more steady and stable growth rate going forward."

**What does this stronger economy mean for people across the globe?**

"Strong economic growth is something policymakers aim for so that they can raise the living standards among the population. We are moving out of the crises mode of policy-making, towards longer term issues such as creating a more environmentally stable growth, reducing inequality, promoting investments in key long-term areas and developing resilience to climate change."

**Is the strengthened economy evenly spread or are some regions still lagging?**

"The improvement in the global economy is widespread and we're seeing two thirds of the world's economies growing faster this year than they did last year. However, looking at GDP in per capita terms, we see several regions that continue to lag behind the rest of the world. In particular, in some parts of Africa and South America, the per capita actually declined quite sharply in 2016. This means that rather than improving living standards, they're actually taking a step back and deteriorating the standard of living."

**Looking through the lens of sustainable development, what does this strengthened growth mean for the environment and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development?**

"There are close links between economic growth and many of the sustainable development goals. Many of the goals like eradicating poverty, creating jobs, they require

a stronger economic growth, so on that front it is a very welcome development. However, stronger growth brings with it higher levels of production, which brings with it higher levels of energy use, and higher levels of emissions. This year we have seen the level of global related emissions rise for the first time in three years. This is of great concern because we have this target of aiming to reach peak levels of emissions by 2020, which means we really need to see the delinking of economic growth and environmental damage happen now. We need to accelerate progress to more sustainable and cleaner energy use for developed countries and developing countries worldwide.”

As many people from different corners of the world tuned in to follow the live broadcast, they also shared their questions. Rommel Bhengra wanted to learn more about the latest prognosis for India, while Martin Bilbao la Vieja was curious to learn more about the process of preparing the report. Other viewers asked about the belt and road initiative and its impact on the global economy, while others wanted information on the latest economic forecast for Afghanistan. To learn what Dawn Holland responded, watch the broadcast [here](#).

For more information:

[World Economic Situation and Prospects 2018](#)

[Facebook Live on the latest global economy trends](#)

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT



## The 2017 International Day of Persons with Disabilities

This year's International Day of Persons with Disabilities was celebrated on 3 December 2017 under the theme "Transformation towards sustainable and resilient society for all". Resilience is central to achieving sustainable development. The 2030 Agenda's promise to leave no one behind is a commitment to build the capacities of those who face marginalization and

exclusion. This will help to reduce their vulnerability to economic, social and environmental shocks.

In recent years, the international community has achieved notable progress in advancing the rights of the world's one billion persons with disabilities. Disability is recognized as a cross-cutting issue in the 2030 Agenda, the New Urban Agenda and the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction.

Despite these advances, persons with disabilities all too often remain excluded from the design, planning and implementation of policies and programmes that have an impact on their lives. They frequently face discrimination in labour markets and in access to education and other services.

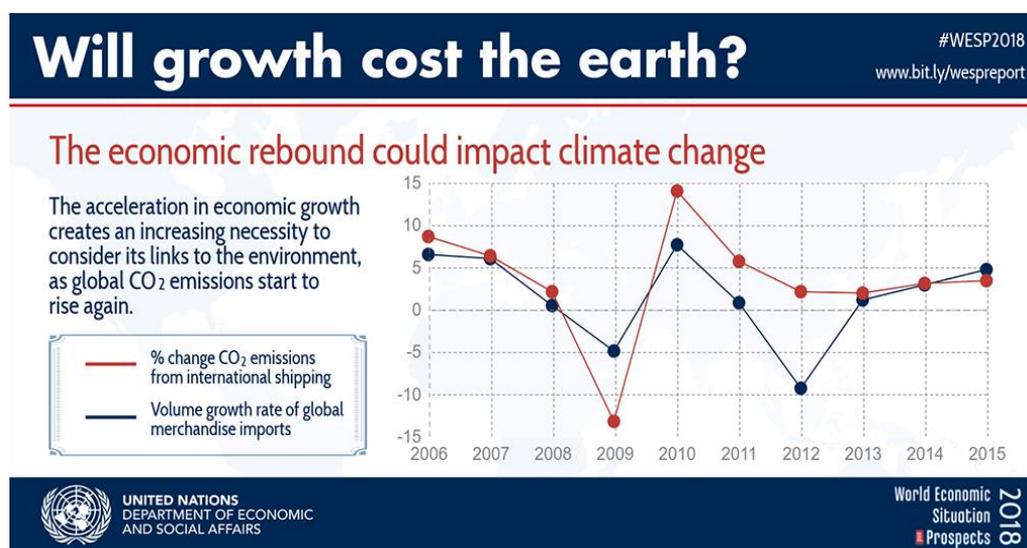
“Persons with disabilities must be included and participate in the crafting of development plans and policies,” said the President of the UN General Assembly, Miroslav Lajčák at the opening of the International Day commemoration on 1 December 2017 in New York. “We must reflect their concerns and situation from start to finish, ensuring that they are both accessible and enabling.”

The path towards inclusive, accessible, usable facilities, technologies, infrastructure, services and products must be ensured by, for and with persons with disabilities.

For more information: [International Day of Persons with Disabilities](#)

MORE FROM UNDESA

## Boost in global economy offers opportunities to tackle deep rooted development issues



An upturn in the global economy—now growing by about 3 per cent—paves the way to reorient policy towards longer-term issues such as addressing climate change, tackling existing inequalities and removing institutional obstacles to development, according to the United Nations World Economic Situation and Prospects (WESP) 2018, launched on 11 December in New York.

“The World Economic Situation and Prospects 2018 demonstrates that current macroeconomic conditions offer policy-makers greater scope to address some of the deep-rooted issues that continue to hamper progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals,” stated UN Secretary-General António Guterres in the Foreword.

According to the report, in 2017, world economic growth has reached 3 per cent—the highest growth since 2011—as crisis-related fragilities and the adverse effects of other recent shocks subside. The improvement is widespread, with roughly two-thirds of countries worldwide experiencing stronger growth in 2017 than in the previous year. Global growth is expected to remain steady at 3.0 per cent in 2018 and 2019.

Launching the report, UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs Liu Zhenmin noted: “While the upturn in global growth is a welcome sign of a healthier economy, it is important to remember that this may come at an environmental cost. This calls for stronger efforts to delink economic growth and environmental degradation—as also emphasized by the UN Climate Change Conference in Bonn last month.”

The recent pickup in global growth, the report states, stems predominantly from firmer growth in several developed economies, although East and South Asia remain the world

most dynamic regions. In 2017, East and South Asia accounted for nearly half of global growth, with China alone contributing about one-third. The end of recessions in Argentina, Brazil, Nigeria and the Russian Federation also contributed to the rise in the rate of global growth between 2016 and 2017. The upturn has been supported by a rebound in world trade and an improvement in investment conditions. The challenge is to channel this into a sustained acceleration in productive investment to support medium-term prospects.

Despite the improved short-term outlook, the global economy continues to face risks—including changes in trade policy, a sudden deterioration in global financial conditions and rising geopolitical tensions.

The world economy also faces longer-term challenges. The report highlights four areas where the improved macroeconomic situation opens the way for policy to address these challenges: increasing economic diversification, reducing inequality, supporting long-term investment and tackling institutional deficiencies. The report notes that reorienting policy to address these challenges can generate stronger investment and productivity, higher job creation and more sustainable medium-term economic growth.

## Inclusive Growth

The recent improvements in economic conditions, however, have been unevenly distributed across countries and regions. Negligible growth in per capita income is expected in several parts of Africa, Western Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean in 2017–2019. The impacted regions combined are home to 275 million people living in extreme poverty, underscoring the urgent need to foster an environment that will both accelerate medium-term growth prospects and tackle poverty through policies that address inequalities in income and opportunity.

The report found that very few least developed countries (LDCs) are expected to reach the Sustainable Development Goal target for GDP growth of “at least 7 per cent” in the near term (SDG 8.1). Advances towards sustainable development in this group of countries continue to be hindered by institutional deficiencies, inadequate basic infrastructure, high levels of exposure to natural disasters, as well as challenges to security and political instability. In addition to mobilizing the financial resources to meet the investment needs in the LDCs, policies must also focus on conflict prevention and removing barriers that continue to hinder more rapid progress.

## Environmental sustainability

Preliminary estimates suggest that the level of global energy-related CO<sub>2</sub> emissions increased in 2017 after remaining flat for three consecutive years. The frequency of weather-related shocks continues to increase, also highlighting the urgent need to build resilience against climate change and prioritize environmental protection. Policies that target international shipping and aviation emissions—which do not fall under the purview of the Paris Agreement—need to be strengthened, as emissions from these sectors continue to grow faster than those from road transport.

## Addressing financial challenges

Many developing economies and economies in transition remain vulnerable to spikes in risk aversion, sudden capital withdrawal and an abrupt tightening of global liquidity conditions, while rising debt poses global financial challenges. The report suggests that a new financial framework for sustainable finance should be created in alignment with the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda that would shift the focus from short term profit to long term value creation. Regulatory policies for the financial system, well-coordinated with monetary, fiscal and foreign exchange policies, should support this framework, by promoting a stable global financial environment.

About the report: The World Economic Situation and Prospects report is the UN’s flagship publication on expected trends in the global economy. WESP is produced annually by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) in collaboration with the UN

Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the five UN regional commissions and the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO).

For more information: [World Economic Situation and Prospects 2018](#)

## First international forum on migration statistics to kick off



UN DESA, represented by the Statistics Division and the Population Division, OECD and IOM are organizing the first ever International Forum on Migration Statistics on 15 and 16 January 2018, in Paris, France. The event brings together all producers, analysts and users of migration statistics, creating a community of interest centred around migration measurement issues. It is expected that 300 participants will gather for the Forum, which will be supported by partner organizations, including Eurostat, ILO, UNECE, UNHCR, UNODC and the World Bank.

The Forum is organised to review best practices in collecting, compiling and disseminating statistics on international migration to fulfil policy needs and is organised around the following five themes: (i) migration measurement, (ii) innovation and synthesis of data sources, (iii) understanding migration through data, (iv) capacity building, and (v) cooperation and data governance.

The sessions on the last two themes will directly address the gaps and needs for capacity building and international cooperation, which could be extremely useful in considering the future directions of capacity building activities by the international community in the area of statistics.

The Forum will be attended by people from a wide range of disciplines – such as political science, economics, demography, development, geospatial science, sociology, statistics, and information technology – that can contribute to improve global understanding of the migration phenomenon.

The Forum directly contributes to enhance national capacities for improving the availability and quality data on international migration. It aims at providing statisticians and migration data experts with advanced knowledge and understanding of global and regional policy needs for migration statistics through speeches delivered by eminent persons who leads the discussion on migration at the global level. The Forum will also enhance the exchange of information, promote mutual learning and facilitate cooperation among data experts and other stakeholders.

For more Information: [International Forum on Migration Statistics 2018](#)

## 2017/2018 DCF Survey supports developing countries to assess how effectively their development cooperation works for them



In uncertain yet uplifting times, with the transformative ambition of the global sustainable development agenda, there is heightened demand for reality-based and results-focused discussion on development cooperation.

In December, UN-DESA launched the 5th Development Cooperation Forum Global Accountability Survey. Since 2008, these biennial surveys have provided evidence on the state of play in development cooperation on the ground.

The DCF Survey supports developing countries to structure their assessment of how effectively their development cooperation works, and why, by focusing on key enablers.

National policies that clarify a country's priorities, commitments and activities in development cooperation, complemented by measurable targets, including for partners, help identify outcomes and impact. Tracking of progress and mutual learning is further advanced by platforms engaging the different stakeholders in meaningful discussions. These enablers work in tandem with others, like information systems that document a country's development cooperation in a timely and accurate way.

Ministries of Planning and Finance from developing country governments are invited to participate in the Survey, and to consult with line ministries, domestic stakeholders and external partners in preparing their responses.

Beyond the "effectiveness agenda", the DCF Survey covers key issues in the SDG era, such as supporting integrated approaches, addressing inequalities and mobilizing the private sector.

Through the Survey, the realities and concerns of developing countries are tangibly brought into the decision making of the United Nations and other platforms. The confidential responses feed into key processes, including the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development and ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development.

Survey findings will inform the 2018 Development Cooperation Forum to take place at UN Headquarters in New York on 21-22 May. Convened by ECOSOC, the DCF is the principal platform for global policy dialogue on international development cooperation, open to all Member States and engaging all stakeholders.

For more information: [DCF Survey](#)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

15-16 January, Paris	International Forum on Migration Statistics 2018
23-25 January, New York	Expert Group Meeting on Sustainable Development in Territories of Indigenous Peoples
29 January – 7 February, New York	56th Session of the Commission for Social Development (CSocD56)
29 January – 7 February, New York	2018 Regular Session of the Committee on NGOs
30-31 January, New York	ECOSOC Youth Forum

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