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**IN FOCUS:
A LOOK BACK
AT THE 2020 GERMAN
EU COUNCIL
PRESIDENCY**

#EU2020DE

Dear readers,

A turbulent year is drawing to a close. The global pandemic undoubtedly marked the six months of Germany's EU Council Presidency.

Despite challenging conditions, the European community was nevertheless able to adopt a new EU budget and commit billions of euros in a coronavirus recovery package last week after lengthy negotiations. Another significant milestone was already reached at the beginning of December: Negotiations on the so-called Post-Cotonou Agreement came to a successful conclusion. You can read more on the EU/Africa-Caribbean-Pacific Partnership Agreement in our exclusive interview with EU Commissioner Jutta Urpilainen.

Other plans, by contrast, could not be implemented due to the COVID-19 crisis. 2020 was meant to be an EU-Africa year, culminating in a summit in October to adopt a new EU-Africa strategy. The EU intends to hold a physical meeting in the coming year.

A conclusive verdict on the German EU Council Presidency in 2020 is therefore not (yet) in reach. 'We will have to work right up to the last day,' stressed Chancellor Angela Merkel at the end of November during the virtual conference of the Parliamentary Committees for Union Affairs of the EU. Germany will hand over the EU Council Presidency to Portugal on 1 January 2021. In July, it will be Slovenia's turn. Thanks to the Trio Programme, efforts towards implementing jointly set objectives will continue over the next 12 months. For GIZ, the EU remains an important setter of political frameworks and a key partner, including in numerous projects, some of which we would like to present to you in this newsletter. All in all, there are enough reasons to look forward to 2021 with hope.

We wish you an enjoyable read and – despite the current circumstances – happy holidays and a healthy start into the New Year.

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In Focus

'Africa and Europe need each other'

EU Commissioner Jutta Urpilainen in conversation with akzente



Photo: © European Union

Stronger partnerships with implementing organisations like GIZ is what Jutta Urpilainen, European Commissioner for International Partnerships, would like to see. The 'Team Europe' approach, through which the European Commission and EU Member States coordinate their development policy cooperation – such as in the fight against the pandemic – is to become the benchmark. In an interview with the GIZ magazine akzente, she also describes how Africa and the EU are interlinked and where the negotiations on the EU budget (the so-called multiannual financial framework) and the Post-Cotonou Agreement stand. Read more in the full-length interview.

» [Interview with Commissioner Jutta Urpilainen](#)



Teamwork and transnational cooperation

In the Western Balkans, prosecutors and investigators are fighting organised crime

The countries of the Western Balkans are still considered an international transit zone for trade in illegal goods. In 2019, a team of investigators in Northern Macedonia successfully struck a significant blow against a drug cartel. The success of the search resulted from effective cooperation against cross-border crime – realised with the support of GIZ on behalf of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and co-funded by the EU. The

project aims to improve collaboration between the police and public prosecutors' offices in the Balkan countries and the EU. Already, more than 100 investigations received assistance. For more, take a look at GIZ's integrated company report.

- » [More in GIZ's Integrated Company Report](#)
- » [Project 'Countering Serious Crime in the Western Balkans'](#)



Photo: © Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina / Admir Malagić



Activist Aya Chebbi: The voice of the African youth **A portrait of the African Union's first-ever Special Envoy on Youth**



Photo: © Private

'We have to make the governments of the world see they can no longer lead without us, without young people,' says Aya Chebbi, the African Union's first youth ambassador. Together with young people, the 32-year-old wants to rethink the relations between her continent and Europe. In a special profile in *akzente*, the young diplomat describes how she encountered patriarchal abuse, violence and discrimination at an early age and how she transformed these experiences into resistance and energy. Read her whole story in the *akzente* special online on the German EU Council Presidency.

- » [Profile of Aya Chebbi in akzente](#)



'Oases' in Egypt's big cities **Leisure centres for learning, games and recreation**

Many people, little space: There are no green areas or parks in the rapidly growing districts of Egypt's major cities. Recreational centres are often only available to residents in affluent neighbourhoods. To enable people in less privileged communities to meet in a clean and safe place, a project commissioned by BMZ is expanding these centres in Egypt. The social clubs and youth centres co-financed by the EU are planned and designed together with the local communities. They are particularly popular with families for games, sports or learning and recreation. Read more in our *akzente* report.

- » [akzente report](#)



Photo: © GIZ



In brief

Worldwide: How our work with the EU is delivering results **Our results data of the last year**

In 2019, 365,000 people were supported in coping with climate change. In the area of employment, almost 333,000 people increased their

giz works
worldwide

income. These are just two examples of what we achieved last year on behalf of the Federal Government and co-financed by the EU. akzente provides a vivid and tangible account of our efforts in cooperation with German federal ministries such as the BMZ, the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) and the Federal Foreign Office (AA). As a result, our vision becomes more concrete: We are dedicated to shaping a future worth living around the world and creating prospects.

Graphic: © GIZ

» [Read more in akzente](#)

» [More information and background on the GIZ's aggregated results data](#)



Green Economy, Green Deal, Green Bond **Steve Stone (UNEP) and Vera Scholz (GIZ) discuss green economic reform**



Photo: © GIZ

A decade ago, 'green economy' was little more than a concept on paper. And today? 'The EU's Green Deal and the current debates on green recovery packages to overcome the COVID-19 crisis show that a green economy is well-positioned to provide policy solutions to the challenges we face in the 21st century,' explains Steve Stone, Head of the Resources and Markets branch at the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). In our interview, he and GIZ climate expert Vera Scholz talk about the opportunities their cooperation offers. GIZ and UNEP have been working together successfully since 2011, for example on environmental reforms in taxation and subsidies in South Africa on behalf of the International Climate Initiative (IKI) of the BMU.

- » [The interview in full length](#)
- » [More on the project in South Africa](#)



Interview with Vera Scholz and Steve Stone. Photos: © GIZ/UNEP



Agroforestry made easy **Live expert training in Timor-Leste**



Photo: © GIZ / Partnership for Sustainable Agroforestry (PSAF)

A higher income thanks to multi-use of land: for woods, arable farming and animals. But agroforestry is not widely known in Timor-Leste. For this reason, GIZ, on behalf of BMZ and co-funded by the EU, supports the rural population with on-site training. But COVID-19 made these in-person trainings impossible. Now they're done with live broadcasts!

- » [More about rapid and local solutions for the coronavirus pandemic](#)
- » [More about the programme 'Employment promotion for marginalised](#)

- groups (Partnership for Sustainable Agroforestry)
- » Video 'Distant Coaching of Ai ba Futuru (GIZ Timor-Leste)'



Video: Distance Coaching of Ai ba Futuru (GIZ Timor-Leste). (This link opens a YouTube video. Please note the data protection regulations valid on that site.)



From Ghanaian fields to dinner tables around the world Promoting sustainable supply chains through agribusiness and innovation



Foto: © GIZ / Market-Oriented Agriculture Programme (MOAP)

Agriculture and the food industry are among the most important sectors of Ghana's emerging economy. Yet four-fifths of agricultural products still come from small farms. To make them more competitive, GIZ supports them on behalf of the BMZ and co-funded by the EU. Georgina Koomson shows how this works in practice. The Ghanaian entrepreneur describes how she has been able to expand her knowledge of farming methods and international market access through trainings: 'That's where I learned how a processor actually works.' In 2019 alone, roughly 15,000 farmers attended training events. By adopting modern growing techniques, gaining organic certification and entering into contracts with customers, yields increased by up to 50 per cent.

- » Read more in GIZ's Integrated Company Report
- » More information on the programme 'Market-Oriented Agriculture Programme (MOAP)'
- » Video 'Meet Georgina, an organic agribusiness entrepreneur in Ghana'



Video: Meet Georgina, an organic agribusiness entrepreneur in Ghana. (This link opens a YouTube video. Please note the data protection regulations valid on that site.)



'One topic, two perspectives' What future for EU-Africa relations?



Photo: © GIZ

The new EU-Africa Strategy is a focus of the German EU Council Presidency. But what does a future-proof partnership look like? Sandra Kramer, Director EU-AU Relations, West and East Africa in the European Commission's Directorate-General DEVCO, and Patrick Awuah, founder and president of Ashesi University in Ghana, examine this question in the new akzente feature section 'One topic, two perspectives'.

- » akzente: 'One topic, two perspectives'



Partnership with the EU and events in Brussels

You can find more information about GIZ's partnership with the EU and on the latest events and news from Brussels online at www.giz.de/eventsbrussels and, from July, in the context of Germany's EU Council Presidency at www.giz.de and akzente.giz.de.



About GIZ

The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH is a global service provider in the field of international cooperation for sustainable development and education work with 22,199 employees in around 120 countries. GIZ is a public-benefit federal enterprise. It supports the German Government and many public and private sector clients such as the European Union in a wide variety of areas, including economic development and employment, energy and the environment, and peace and security.



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