

**EU Nutrition  
investment**

**No time  
to waste**



**T**he world is not on track to achieve the World Health Assembly (WHA) targets on maternal, infant, and young child nutrition by 2025<sup>1</sup>, nor the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. Before COVID-19 hit, chronic malnutrition (stunting<sup>2</sup>) affected 149 million children worldwide, while 45 million children suffered from acute forms of malnutrition (wasting<sup>3</sup>)<sup>4</sup>. The pandemic has since had disastrous effects on nutrition for millions of additional people. This is why **the 2021 Nutrition Year of Action and the 2021 Nutrition for Growth summit (N4G)<sup>5</sup> come at a critical time, where the EU has the opportunity and responsibility to show leadership**. Renewal of the EU's engagement to the fight against malnutrition through ambitious financial and policy commitments is a prerequisite towards ensuring prosperous lives and a healthy planet in line with the SDGs.

Several EU policy processes and frameworks already exist which have the potential to provide suitable platforms to positively impact the nutritional status of the most vulnerable people: the Green Deal clearly shows the connection between the planet and food systems and the need to feed the world within planetary boundaries; the renewed EU-Africa partnership can re-prioritise nutrition to build a healthier, greener, fairer and more resilient future; and the Global Europe instrument (NDICI) committed to allocating at least 20% of the Official Development Assistance (ODA) to social inclusion and human development, including basic social services, such as health, education, nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene, and social protection. Each of these frameworks must embrace nutrition as a cross-cutting and stand-alone issue which needs ambitious action.

1. The targets are: a 40% reduction in the number of children under-5 who are stunted; achieve a 50% reduction of anaemia in women of reproductive age; achieve a 30% reduction in low birth-weight; ensure that there is no increase in childhood overweight; increase the rate of exclusive breastfeeding in the first 6 months up to at least 50%; reduce and maintain childhood wasting to less than 5%, [link](#)

2. Stunting is a condition where a child's height is too low for his/ her age because of long-term nutritional deprivation. It is associated with longterm development and health risks.

3. Wasting is a condition where a child's weight is too low for his/ her height. It is associated with a high risk of mortality in young children.

4. Levels and trends in child malnutrition, UNICEF / WHO / World Bank Group, Joint Child Malnutrition Estimates, Key findings of the 2021 edition, [link](#)

5. The Nutrition for Growth (N4G) summit is a global pledging moment to galvanize commitments on nutrition, gathering high burden countries, donors and development agencies, civil society organisations, the private sector, philanthropies and universities.

# Why should the EU invest in nutrition?

## Nutrition is a maker and marker of sustainable development

To end poverty and inequalities, it is essential to make progress on nutrition. Nutrition is inextricably linked to other key sustainable development issues, either because it depends on them (i.e. water, sanitation and hygiene, and agriculture), because it enables them (i.e. health, employment), or because it does both (i.e. gender equality, and education). Hence, there is a need for a system, government, and stakeholder-wide response. **Nutrition is an important issue underlying and driving the achievement of at least 12 of the 17 SDGs<sup>1</sup>.**

## Nutrition: the key to COVID-19 recovery

The 2021 Council Conclusions on strengthening Team Europe's commitment to Human Development rightly highlight that "the COVID-19 pandemic and its socio-economic consequences, including in terms of rising food insecurity and malnutrition in all its forms, represent an unprecedented shock to human development, jeopardising gains achieved in the last decades"<sup>2</sup>. **Due to the impacts of COVID-19, an additional 168,000 children will die by 2022<sup>3</sup>.**

And the number of people suffering from acute hunger could double<sup>4</sup>. That is why nutrition programming should be at the heart of all recovery plans. Good nutrition is key in building resilience at individual, household and society levels, and will allow a better response to future shocks.

## Deliver on its commitments towards resilient, fair, and sustainable food systems

The European Commission has shown commitment to the fight against climate change and the transformation of food systems, with the proposed Green Deal and the Farm to Fork strategy. In 2020, **2.37 billion people did not have access to safe, nutritious and sufficient food** – an increase of 320 million people in just one year<sup>5</sup>. Investing in interventions that give universal access to, and boost consumption of, diverse, affordable, safe, sustainable, and sufficiently nutritious food is part of the solution. Investing in N4G, with a new focus on the sustainability and resilience of food systems, has the potential to save lives and the planet, help millions of children develop to their full potential, and deliver greater economic prosperity. **Every dollar invested in nutrition interventions can generate a return of up to USD 16<sup>6</sup>.**

1. Global Nutrition Report 2017, [link](#), p 10.

2. Council conclusions on Strengthening Team Europe's commitment to Human Development, [link](#)

3. The potential impacts of the COVID-19 crisis on maternal and child undernutrition in low and middle income countries, [link](#)

4. World Food Programme, Risk of hunger pandemic as coronavirus set to almost double acute hunger by end of 2020, [link](#)

5. FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO. 2021. The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2020. Transforming food systems for food security, improved nutrition and affordable health diets for all. Rome, FAO, [link](#)

6. Global Nutrition Report 2018, [link](#), p xiv

## Nutrition unlocks human potential

If the EU is serious about investing in youth, continuing its commitment to N4G is essential. Undernutrition has persistent negative consequences for the health of individuals, impairing both cognitive and physical development in children, stunting growth, weakening immunity, increasing the risk of diseases for children and leading to premature deaths. **Adults who were stunted as children may have learning difficulties, earn about 20% less, are less likely to be in skilled work, and are 30% more likely to live in poverty<sup>1</sup>.** Malnutrition also has a significant impact on societies and economies. Malnutrition exacerbates poverty. Estimates show that malnutrition in all its forms **costs society up to USD 3.5 trillion per year**, and as a result of poor learning potential and school performance, reduces adult productivity, and increases health care costs<sup>2</sup>.

**“Improved nutrition is the platform for progress in health, education, employment, empowerment of women and the reduction of poverty and inequality, and can lay the foundation for peaceful, secure and stable societies.”**

BAN KI-MOON, FORMER SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS

1. World Economic Forum (2015), Why Stunting Remains a Major Challenge, [link](#)  
2. FAO, FAO urges end of malnutrition as priority, June 2013, [link](#)

## Nutrition needs to be included in the EU-Africa strategy

In Sub-Saharan Africa, the total number of stunted children increased by 13.9 million between 1990 and 2017<sup>3</sup>. If current trends continue, Africa will be the region with the highest number of undernourished 2030<sup>4</sup>. The March 2020 Communication “Towards a comprehensive Strategy with Africa” rightly focuses on unleashing the potential of the fastest and youngest population on earth. To deliver on this opportunity, nutrition should be at the core of the future strategy and particularly in the partnership for green transition and for sustainable growth and jobs. According to the FAO, the agricultural sector is the main source of employment and provides jobs to almost half of the employed population with 49.3 percent<sup>5</sup>. The future strategy must ensure both food and nutrition security, and support small-scale producers, especially women and youth. The development of local production and consumption networks ensure short supply chains and increase environmental resilience. A robust commitment to N4G can help to cement a nutrition-sensitive approach to the implementation of the EU-Africa Strategy.

3. Levels and trends in child malnutrition, UNICEF / WHO / World Bank Group, Joint Child Malnutrition Estimates, Key findings of the 2017 edition, [link](#)  
4. FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO. 2020. The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2020. Transforming food systems for affordable healthy diets. Rome, FAO, [link](#)  
5. ILO Modelled Estimates, November 2019, accessed on May 2020





# EU commitment since 2013

At the first N4G summit in 2013, the European Union showed strong leadership, by pledging 19.8% of the total commitments<sup>1</sup>. More specifically, the EU committed to spend a total of EUR 3.5 billion, between 2014 and 2020, as follows:

- **EUR 3.1 billion** for nutrition sensitive programmes
- **EUR 410 million** for nutrition specific interventions<sup>2</sup>

1. Out of the total \$23 billion committed by all stakeholders, the EU committed \$4.6 billion.

2. Nutrition for Growth Commitments: Executive Summary, 2013, p 12, [link](#). Nutrition specific interventions or programmes that address the immediate determinants of fetal and child nutrition and development - adequate food and nutrient intake, feeding, caregiving and parenting practices, and low burden of infectious diseases

The Fifth Progress Report on the EU Action Plan on Nutrition (covering the period from April 2019 to March 2020) mentions that the 2013 EC financial pledge was achieved one year ahead of schedule, as EUR 3.8 billion have been committed for nutrition from 2014 to 2019<sup>3</sup>. Also, the EU committed to reduce the number of children impacted by stunting by at least 7 million by 2025<sup>4</sup>. The fifth progress report indicates that at this rate, 4.7 million children will be averted from stunting. It highlights that “the challenge over the next 5 years will therefore be to accelerate significantly the annual rate of stunting reduction [...] so that the 7 million target is achieved.”

3. European Commission, Action Plan on Nutrition - Fifth Progress Report (April 2019-March 2020), 2020, [link](#)

4. European Commission, Action Plan on Nutrition, 2014, [link](#)



Now, the EU must renew and increase investment in nutrition in order to reach its commitment and achieve the entire Action Plan by 2025<sup>1</sup>.

**EU leadership is valued and much needed.** Nutrition strategies work, and further investments are called for. We have reached a funding cliff-edge.

The World Bank estimated that, before COVID-19, USD 7 billion were needed, per year, to reach the global nutrition targets<sup>2</sup>. New financing estimates from 2020 show that an additional USD 1.2 billion per year is now required to combat the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on malnutrition<sup>3</sup>. The latest round of EU commitments for nutrition came to an end in December 2020, and a huge financing gap for nutrition remains. In this context, the Council of the EU “encouraged the European Commission to maintain and intensify its engagement at the global level, including at the N4G summit”<sup>4</sup> in 2021. The Commissioner for International Partnerships has also become a new member of the SUN Leadership

Group, and SUN has adopted a new strategy in 2020, which makes clear the need to accelerate action. In this same spirit, the European Commission is a member of the Global Nutrition Report Stakeholder Group, aiming for concrete and ambitious actions to end all forms of malnutrition and hold stakeholders accountable to their commitments.

Therefore, the EU should step up to act as a champion in the fight against malnutrition and use the N4G to change the course of malnutrition thanks to a new robust EU pledge and strong policy commitments.

**“Undernutrition is the cause of nearly half of all child deaths worldwide. And yet less than 1% of donor funding is dedicated to basic nutrition.”<sup>5</sup>**

1. European Commission, Action Plan on Nutrition - Fifth Progress Report (April 2019-March 2020), 2020, [link](#)

2. *Ibid*

3. The potential impacts of the COVID-19 crisis on maternal and child undernutrition in low and middle income countries, [link](#)

4. Council conclusions on the Fourth Progress Report on the Action Plan on Nutrition, 2019, [link](#)

5. Shekar M, Kakietek J, D'Alimonte M, Walters D, Rogers H, Dayton Eberwein J, Soe-Lin S, Hecht R, Investing in nutrition: the foundation for development - An investment framework to reach the global nutrition targets, 2017, [link](#)

# 2021

## Nutrition Year of Action

The 2021 Nutrition Year of Action will see many major events that will allow stakeholders to commit resources for improved nutrition outcomes, such as at the UN Food Systems Summit, taking place in September, and the COP 26 in November. Finally, 2021 will culminate with the N4G summit on 7 and 8 December, hosted by the Government of Japan. Nutrition for Growth (N4G) is a global pledging moment to galvanize commitments on nutrition, gathering high burden countries, donors and development agencies, civil society organisations, the private sector, philanthropies and universities. We call on the EU to be represented at the highest levels at this summit. This event will mark a historic moment, as it is the last opportunity to accelerate progress towards achieving the World Health Assembly targets by 2025 and the SDGs by 2030.



# Financial recommendation

**Generation Nutrition is calling on the EU to make a commitment to:**

**1.9 billion EUR**

spent on basic nutrition interventions for the years 2021-2027

**2027  
60%**

ensure that at least 32% of relevant sectors are nutrition-sensitive by design by 2024 (matching the USA performance), rising to 60% by 2027 (matching the IFAD target).

**2024  
32%**



# Policy recommendations

In addition to the financial ask, Generation Nutrition has consolidated a series of policy recommendations, drafted with the understanding that increasing the quantity of funding is only one step towards eradicating hunger; we must also improve the quality of our nutrition programming. These policy recommendations have been organised around key priorities for the N4G summit: health, food systems, fragile and conflict-affected context, and data and finance. Civil society and communities play a meaningful role in ensuring the most marginalised have access to nutritious food and in finding alternative ways of producing food.

Finally, it is important to recognise the interdependence of gender equality and nutrition, particularly the role that women and adolescent girls. Both **gender and the role of civil society should be mainstreamed across the five thematic areas**. Nutrition policies must be formulated in a way that takes into account inequalities and power asymmetries and enables women in particular to have better access to education, health, decision making – including control over their own time-, economic development opportunities, social safety nets and sustainable healthy diets. Donors have specifically been asked to consider how gender impacts nutrition outcomes when making commitments.

## Nutrition & Health

An undernourished person is, by definition, missing the nutrients their body needs to survive and thrive, and this has multiple consequences on the metabolism. **Malnutrition is the underlying cause of almost half of under five child age deaths<sup>1</sup>**. Community Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM) coverage rates remain low, less than 25% of all children suffering from severe acute malnutrition are admitted to treatment. No country can achieve Universal Health Coverage (UHC) without investing in essential nutrition actions, and good nutrition for all will

not be achieved without UHC. Nutrition services must be included in all basic health packages, as part of the UHC. It will help to scale up the needed interventions to fight undernutrition and by doing so enhance healthy lives of mothers and children.

Effective and quality health systems play a crucial role in delivering key nutrition services, which build a solid foundation for good health throughout the life-cycle. The emergence of COVID-19 reinforces the crucial importance of supporting resilient and strong health systems that can ensure the continuity of care during epidemic shocks.

Moreover, WASH needs to be an integral part of the strategy to ensure that the basic nutrition interventions are not undermined by the consequences of inadequate access to clean water and basic sanitation.

Therefore, at the N4G summit, the EU should commit to:

- Enhancing **multisectoral programming which includes strengthening health systems**, integrating nutrition essential services, and **ensuring adequate WASH infrastructure within healthcare facilities** to be able to provide quality, safe and dignified health care, in particular to women and girls.
- Promoting **equitable access to quality essential health services**, including nutrition services and WASH.
- Supporting the **integration of undernutrition treatment and preventive services in the essential care packages of national health systems to achieve UHC**. Integrating nutrition within UHC policies is paramount to achieving the right to health for all.
- Ensuring that the **Global Recovery plan delivers on nutrition**, fulfilling the pledge to build back better. It can add value by making nutrition a core part of its planned actions on training public health workers, hygiene and WASH and accelerate progress on stunting and wasting in countries with fragile health systems.

1. WHO, Malnutrition: Quantifying the health impact at national and local levels. Environmental burden of diseases series, 2005, [link](#)

- **Scaling-up the treatment of acute malnutrition** through sustainable financing for health systems.
- Ensuring health, including nutrition services, is a stand-alone and cross-cutting **focal area in the next EU-Africa Partnership**, with a specific focus on nutrition and WASH.



## Food Systems

The current food systems contribute to persistent hunger, increasing obesity and non-communicable diseases, biodiversity losses, degradation and misuse of land, water and ecosystems, and high greenhouse gas emissions. Climate and nutrition profoundly impact each other. Climate change is already adversely affecting the quantity and quality of food produced, which impacts access to healthy diets. Some existing flaws in food systems stem from gender inequalities. Women and girls play a relevant role for food security, food production and food provision for their households, but their contributions are frequently unseen. Too often, women eat last and least. Approaches that have prioritised high yields, agricultural productivity and economic growth at the expense of biodiversity – and without consideration of energy and nutrient requirements – and equity are no longer viable<sup>1</sup>. The 2019 DAC report underlined climate-nutrition linkages<sup>2</sup>. The challenge for the EU from 2021 to 2030 will be to “feed a growing population with adequate, nutritious diets, in an environmentally sustainable manner, in the context of climate change and natural resource scarcity”<sup>3</sup>. A food systems approach brings together agriculture, health, livelihoods, food and the planet. The UN Food Systems Summit, the COP 26 and N4G in 2021 underline the essential linkages between food and nutrition, agriculture and climate change. The UN Food Systems Summit is a complementary moment where crucial steps towards transformed food systems have to be taken.

Therefore, at the N4G summit, the EU should commit to:

- **Promoting agroecology and agro-forestry** as a model and as an approach to nutrition sensitive programming that increases the availability of nutrient-rich diverse food throughout the year, preserves biodiversity, increases climate

resilience, and reduces social inequalities. The EU should also commit to measurable targets on women food producers and female-headed households.

- Ensuring that **future international trade agreements do not have a negative impact on the food and nutrition status and rights of the most vulnerable**. Actions by agri-food companies should be consistent with the right to food and include requirement for full compliance with the Breast Milk Substitute codes. The EU should state clearly that **all trade agreements must require the Right to Food** under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to supersede other provisions<sup>4</sup> in the proposed legislative framework for a sustainable food system planned for 2023<sup>5</sup>.
- Using the depth of its technical capacity to engage at the programme planning stage to **ensure that EU investments in agriculture, economic development, climate mitigation and adaptation other sectors take nutrition fully into account**. By incorporating measurable nutrition outcomes at the planning stage, the EU can get more value from existing spending by ensuring that nutritional impact is designed-in and measured.



## Resilience/fragile contexts

For several years, due to ongoing conflicts, and economic and climate shocks, the number of people who cannot meet their daily food needs without humanitarian assistance has increased<sup>6</sup>. As a result, at least 155 million people were acutely food insecure and in need of urgent assistance (IPC/CH Phase 3 or above) or equivalent in 2020<sup>7</sup> and at least 34 million people one step away from famine<sup>8</sup>. Evidence shows that multiple forms of

4. The EU is not a member of the ICESCR (but member states including Germany; France, Netherlands, Ireland, Spain, and Sweden are all parties to the Covenant and France and Spain are also parties to its Optional Protocol). “It is generally accepted in public international law that states’ human rights duties apply also to the action of international organisations to which states are parties” Gruni, p28. Gruni, G. The EU, World Trade Law, and the Right to Food: rethinking free trade agreements with developing countries, Hart/Bloomsbury publishing 2018

5. The EC makes an important commitment in the Farm to Fork strategy (Annex page 20) “To accelerate and facilitate the transition and ensure that all foods placed on the EU market become increasingly sustainable, the Commission will make a legislative proposal for a framework for a sustainable food system before the end of 2023. This will promote policy coherence at EU and national level.”

6. FSIN and Global Network Against Food Crises, Global Report on Food Crises, 2021, [link](#)

7. FSIN and Global Network Against Food Crises, Global Report on Food Crises, 2021, [link](#)

8. WFP, Acute hunger at five-year high, study warns, as famine looms for millions, 2021, [link](#)

1. [The Economics of Biodiversity: The Dasgupta Review](#), Box 4.5, March 2021

2. More frequent climate-related shocks are also rattling growth and development prospects, jeopardising hard-won gains by increasing food insecurity” OECD Development Cooperation Report 2019, a fairer, greener, safer tomorrow, p28. [link](#)

3. Sustainable forestry for food security and nutrition. A report by The High-Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition June 2017, [link](#)



malnutrition co-exist in different contexts, even within the same household and reveal that stunting is greater in conflict-affected countries, while both stunting and wasting are found in humanitarian and development contexts<sup>1</sup>. A more coordinated approach to addressing all forms of malnutrition and building resilience in fragile and conflict affected settings is needed to ensure no malnourished child is left behind.

Therefore, at the N4G summit, the EU should commit to:

- **Revising the EU Action Plan on Nutrition, to address all forms of malnutrition in humanitarian and development contexts**, in line with the Council Conclusion of November 2018<sup>2</sup>.
- **Developing a specific target to tackle wasting**: new research by UNICEF, the WHO and the WB shows that in 2020, 45.4 million children under 5 were affected by wasting, of which 13.6 million were severely wasted<sup>3</sup>.

We know that COVID-19 is already exacerbating these figures, due to deteriorations in household wealth and disruptions to the availability and affordability of nutritious foods. Setting an ambitious target for wasting with a concrete action plan will be essential in the coming years.

- Ensuring the NDICI-Global Europe instrument focuses on **building resiliency of partner countries and communities in the most vulnerable situations**, while addressing the root causes of malnutrition and simultaneously driving improvements in nutrition. Efforts to build resilience should align with **ongoing operationalisation of the humanitarian-development -peacebuilding nexus**. It should take the opportunity to expand nutrition specific and sensitive programming and put into action the joint guidance issued by INTPA (DEVCO), ECHO and NEAR on social protection across the nexus.<sup>4</sup>

1. Global Nutrition Report 2018, p 61., [link](#)

2. Council Conclusions on Strengthening global food and nutrition security, 2018, [link](#)

3. UNICEF, WHO, World Bank (5 May, 2021). Joint child malnutrition estimates: levels and trends in child malnutrition: key findings of the 2021 edition. [link](#).

4. [Link](#)

## Financing and Data

The EU must incentivise and support multisectoral approaches to malnutrition. This includes supporting national governments to ensure sufficient budgets are allocated for nutrition through a multisectoral approach, incorporating nutrition-sensitive approaches to ministries responsible for other nutrition-relevant services, such as WASH. For instance, supporting access to hand hygiene at home is also critical to nutrition outcomes as the majority of the burden of diarrhoeal diseases actually occurs at home.

Improved tracking of nutrition spending is imperative in order to ensure that disbursements and impact are tracked adequately. Producing accurate and reliable data on all nutrition investments is central to ensuring accountability.

Therefore, ahead and at the N4G summit, the EU should commit to:

- **Encouraging partner countries to make financial and political commitments at the N4G summit**, integrating the SDGs and WHA targets on malnutrition into national policies with costed action plans. The EU should encourage **partner countries to allocate sufficient budgets for nutrition through a multi-sectoral outlook**, which incorporates nutrition-sensitive approaches to relevant services areas, such as WASH and education.
- Continuing its use of **budget support** as a mechanism for sustainable finance for nutrition.
- **Making data on all programming and nutrition investments publicly available on a yearly basis using the OECD policy marker for nutrition** to allow the capture of multi-sectoral nutrition investments. It should now explore the use of the policy marker to analyse the extent of nutrition-sensitive humanitarian spending.<sup>1</sup>

- **Ensuring no one is left behind by using indicators, monitoring, and results frameworks that show whether the poorest groups are included in progress.** At minimum, it should measure nutritional progress disaggregated by income and wealth quintile, geography (subnational location) and sex.<sup>1</sup>
- **Presenting a plan for annual allocations based on a transparent and measurable methodology to ensure the target of allocating at least 20% of ODA to human development is reached.**

## Cross-cutting approaches

All commitments made on nutrition must integrate gender equality, as well as the meaningful role and experiences of civil society organisations, small producers and farmers and communities in the delivery of such commitments.

Therefore, ahead and at the N4G summit, the EU should commit to:

- Acknowledging that gender inequalities shape food and nutrition dynamics at the household and community levels that affect women's and girls' production of, access to, ability to afford and consumption of nutritious food. Therefore, the EU must **ensure that all commitments made on nutrition integrate gender equality considerations and are gender transformative, in line with the EU Gender Action Plan III.**
- **Supporting and promoting the role and good practices from civil society organisations, small producers and farmers and communities.** They play a meaningful role in ensuring the access to nutritious food of the most marginalised groups.

1. Whereas in the past, having disaggregated data on everyone seemed a pipedream, the data revolution is making it possible to provide data on individuals at greatly reduced cost. Today companies routinely collect and analyse detailed, individual data on billions of people. Private and government investment to ensure that everyone is counted and that government statistical systems match the best corporate data is a critical and achievable component of Leave No-one Behind and the data revolution.

# ANNEX

## Methodology to calculate our financial ask

### The basic nutrition target<sup>1</sup>

Since N4G 2013 there have been two major studies<sup>2</sup> on the costs of achieving the WHA targets for stunting, wasting, low birth weight, anaemia and breastfeeding and the goals of SDG2, including “An Investment Framework for Nutrition” (IFN) by the World Bank Group. To meet the WHA targets, the IFN calculates additional funding requirements of USD 70 billion over 10 years - with around EUR 2.28 billion a year that should come from additional ODA over 2015 levels.<sup>3</sup>

The IFN analysis also found that just over half of spending on WHA targets was captured under the DAC code on basic nutrition<sup>4</sup>. The target for additional funding for basic nutrition reported under the DAC code should therefore be half of the total additional funding needed - EUR 1.14 billion.

The EU has committed 19.8% of global commitments made at N4G in 2013. We expect the EU to match the ambition of its 2013 pledge and ensure a continuous engagement. EU institutions should, on top of 2015 EU spending levels of EUR 51 million, contribute 19.8% of the EUR 1.14 billion needed annually. **The total pledge over 7 years is therefore EUR 1.945 billion, or an average of EUR 278 million a year in constant (2019) prices.** Past performance shows this is achievable. The EU has exceeded its goal of committing EUR 410 million to basic nutrition for the 2021-2027 period, by over EUR 230 million, a year early.<sup>5</sup>

1. The EU pledge on nutrition specific investment should be based on the basic nutrition indicator used by the DAC. This can be monitored, is independently validated against an international standard and is comparable over time and with other providers.

2. The World Bank Investment Framework for Nutrition calls for \$7b a year in additional funding to deliver the WHA targets, [link](#)

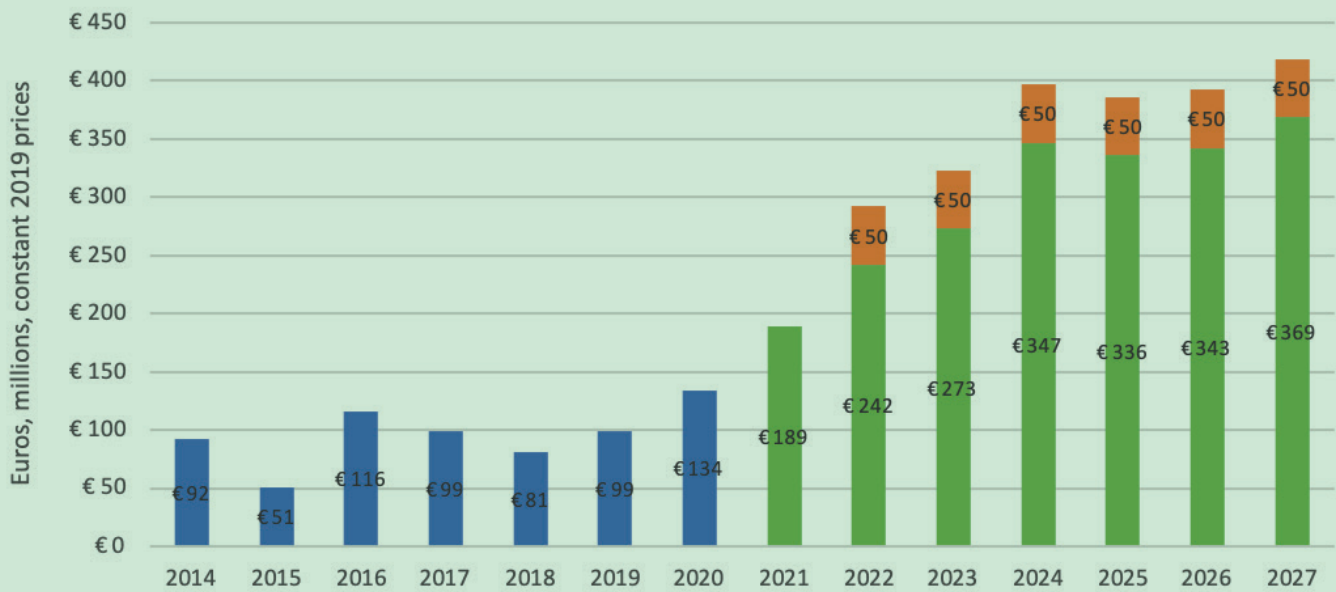
CERES looks for an additional \$14b of ODA each year for agriculture and food security to achieve the zero hunger targets over the \$12b that they assess as current expenditure, [link](#)

3. It is ambiguous about the split between ODA and country budgets – in one place saying that 80% of the additional 70 billion over ten years would come from middle income countries and in another showing that ODA would need to contribute 25.6 billion over 10 years on top of 2015 spending of around \$1b a year - which means an extra \$2.5b (EUR 2,28 bn) a year in ODA.

4. 53% of ODA disbursements for nutrition were captured by the basic nutrition code, 13% for health and 34% through emergency response.

5. European Commission, Action Plan on Nutrition - Fifth Progress Report (April 2019-March 2020), 2020, [link](#)

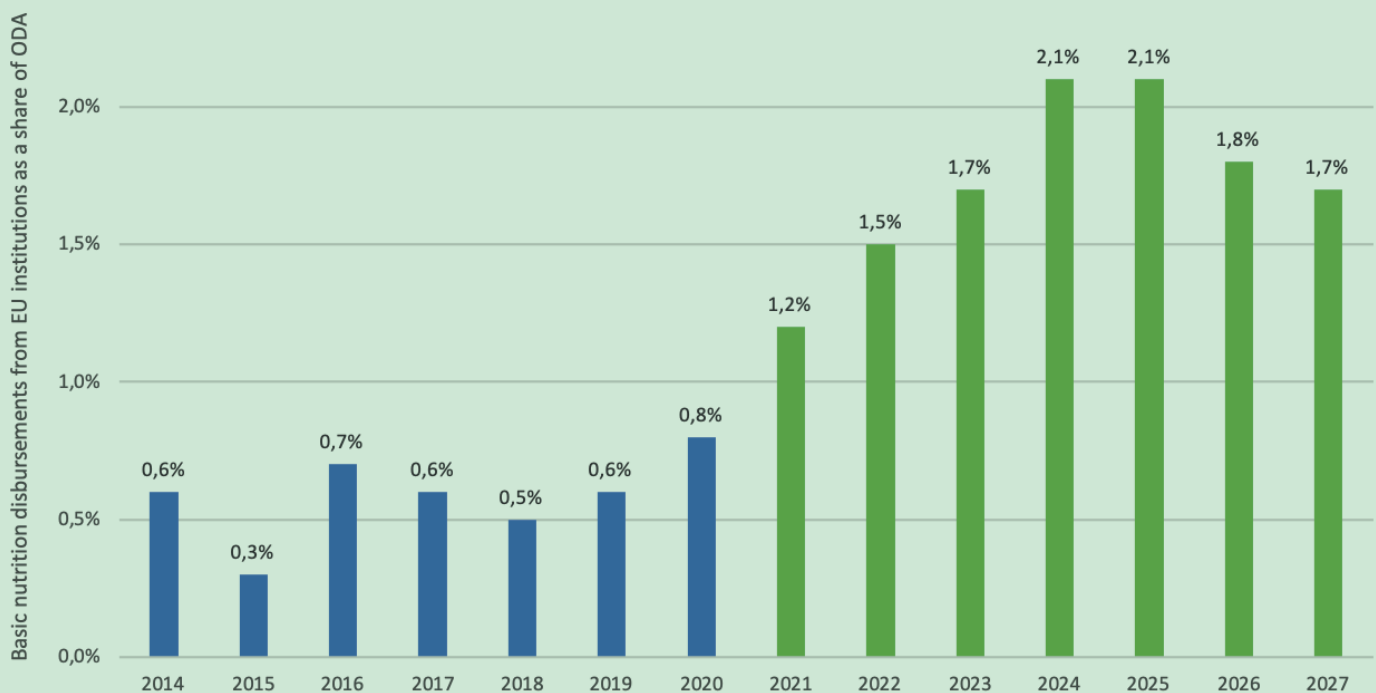
## Basic nutrition investments needed from the EU institutions



Sources: OECD DAC CRS code 12240, constant (2019) prices for years 2014-2019. Authors estimates for years 2020-2027, based on funding needs assessments. Covid Recovery, authors' estimate, based on the percentage increase levels of wasting and stunting resulted from COVID estimated and the need to contribute to the additional \$1.2 billion per year needed to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic (see this article: <https://assets.researchsquare.com/files/rs-123716/v1/4aadae3e-ac75-4bfa-9dde-356ae0a5f8b1.pdf>)

EU aid for basic nutrition remains a tiny proportion of ODA – currently just 0.6%. It means that EU institutions spend just 60 cents out of every 100 euros of ODA on basic nutrition. Even with an increase to EUR 278 million per year, the EU institutions will peak at allocating 2.1% of their total aid to basic nutrition.

## Basic nutrition investments need to rise from 0,6% of ODA to 2% by 2024



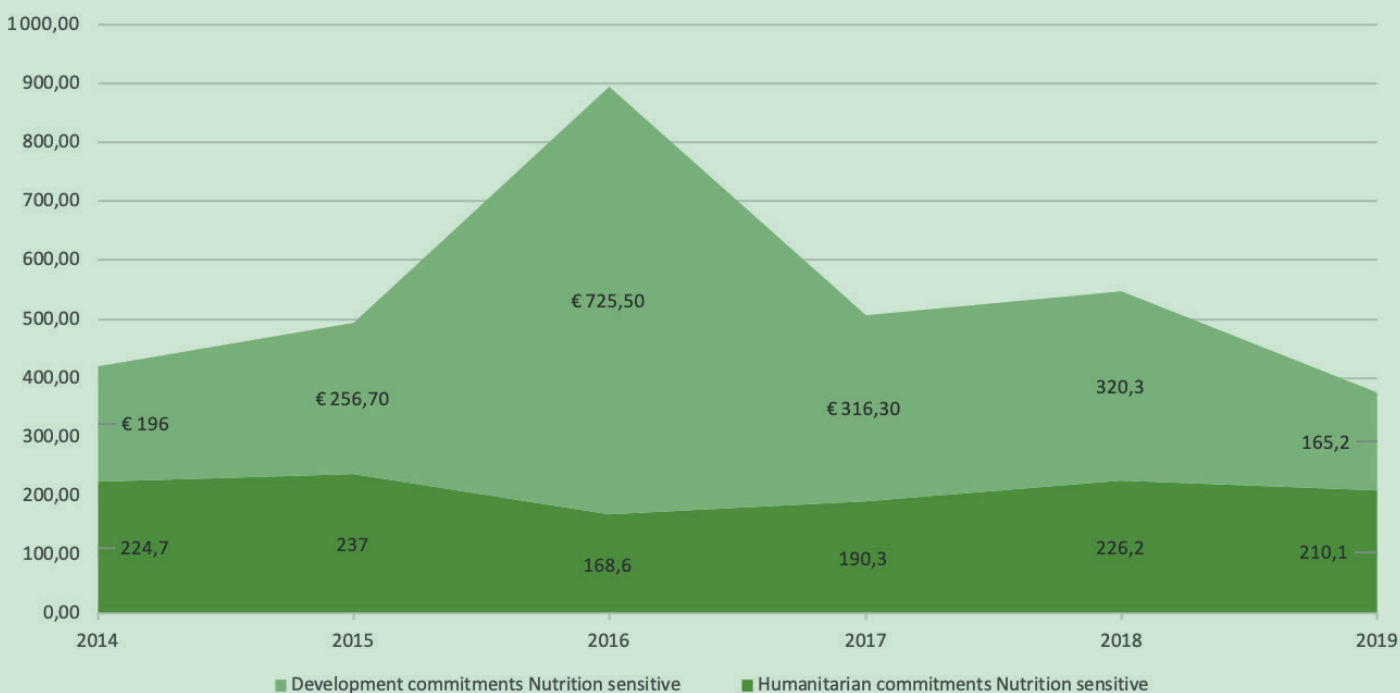
Sources: OECD DAC CRS Basic Nutrition Code 12240 and OECD DAC International Development Statistics Online Table 1. This is the translation in percentage of the absolute numbers in the previous graph. As 2015 is the reference point, we use the amount of ODA in 2015 as the base value to calculate the percentage.

## The nutrition sensitive target

The EU exceeded its 2013 N4G target for nutrition sensitive spending – committing EUR 3.4 million against the target of EUR 3.1 million - a year in advance of the deadline.

There is potential for the EU to deliver significantly increased impact on nutrition. Currently, just 8% of EU institutions’ aid to sectors identified by the SUN network as having nutrition potential (like agriculture, rural development, water, sanitation and hygiene, primary healthcare, women’s empowerment, education and social protection) is nutrition sensitive<sup>1</sup>. While the EU is not the worst performer, other donors are doing much better. A quarter of Ireland’s aid to these sectors is nutrition sensitive and nearly a third of the USA’s. The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) has a current target that 50% of new investments should be nutrition sensitive, rising to 60% by 2025. These figures provide a benchmark and a set of milestones.

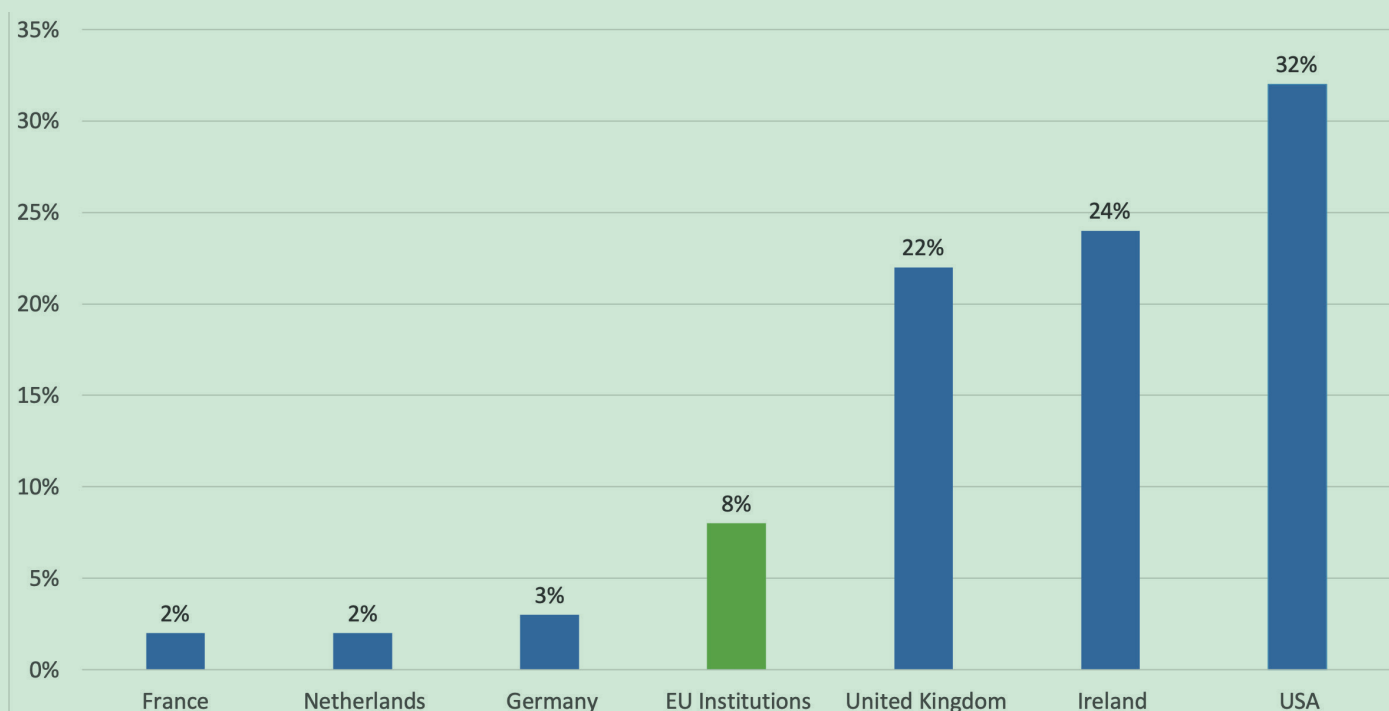
Nutrition sensitive commitments by EU institutions 2014-2019 (million EUR)



Source: European Commission, Action Plan on Nutrition - Fifth Progress Report (April 2019-March 2020), 2020, [links](#)

1. Steps to calculate the 8%: 1. We take the total nutrition sensitive spending as reported to the GNR by the EU; 2. We then add up all the spending against the DAC purpose codes that the SUN methodology identifies as relevant to nutrition sensitive spending including budget support; 3. We take the nutrition sensitive spending reported to GNR as a percentage of the total under the codes; 4. This is all disbursement data – including the EU’s own reporting to GNR.

## Nutrition sensitive spending as a share of nutrition sensitive sectors and budget support



Sources. Data on nutrition sensitive from the GNR commitment tracker most recent year 2018 <https://globalnutritionreport.org/resources/nutrition-growth-commitment-tracking/> Nutrition sensitive sectors are OECD DAC CRS purpose codes identified in the SUN methodology [http://docs.scalingupnutrition.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/RESOURCE\\_TRACKING\\_METHODODOLOGY\\_SUN\\_DONOR\\_NETWORK.pdf](http://docs.scalingupnutrition.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/RESOURCE_TRACKING_METHODODOLOGY_SUN_DONOR_NETWORK.pdf) . Data on budget support from OECD DAC Table 1 current prices.

The EU, as a leader on nutrition, should be as good as the best. It should therefore pledge that at least **a third of its spending on relevant sectors is nutrition-sensitive by design by 2024 (matching the USA) rising to 60% by 2027 (matching the IFAD target)**. What we mean by design is that at the planning and results framework stages, nutrition outcomes need to be deliberately included with appropriate indicators linked to SDG 2 - not just a retrospective assessment based on project documents. It should be noted that this does not require new money at scale – it requires commitment and investment in programme design, training and awareness raising (with other sectors departments and consultants and technical people), procedures, knowledge, evidence, about best practice, indicators on nutrition outcomes across a wide range of programmes.

This can build on the significant investment EU institutions have already made in research and knowledge on nutrition. While this represents a major increase, it should be pledged as a minimum standard. Investments in agriculture, WASH, social protection, health and other sectors should all be capable of supporting improved nutrition outcomes. By investing more on building nutrition outcomes into the design of programmes ranging across different sectors and continuing to use budget support, the EU should be able to deliver significantly increased nutrition impact.





# GENERATION NUTRITION

Generation Nutrition EU (GN) is a network of multisectoral civil society organisations, collaborating to end malnutrition in all its forms. Members of GN include Action Against Hunger, Alliance2015, CARE, Global Health Advocates, Save the Children, WaterAid and World Vision. The coalition works with and towards the EU to ensure and enhance its commitments and action towards achieving a world without malnutrition in all its forms by 2030.

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