



## PRESS RELEASE

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## European Union Surpasses United States As Single Greatest Population Donor

**BERLIN, September 2**— The European Union has for the first time surpassed the United States as the single greatest donor of population assistance worldwide, even as total such spending declined, according to a new report.

The *Euromapping 2009* study shows that the EU spent US\$2.96 billion in 2006 on population programmes and activities, up \$600 million from earlier levels. This is nearly 46 percent of overall global health aid.

Meanwhile, U.S. assistance declined by about the same amount in 2006, to a total of \$2.5 billion. Together, the EU and the United States accounted for 70 percent of global population assistance in 2006, said the report.

However, overall donor-country population assistance worldwide is half of its 1996 level in absolute terms, the report said, chiefly because most new funding for population assistance has been directed against HIV/AIDS.

At a press conference releasing the report in Brussels, Susanne Weber-Mosdorf, head of the EU office of the World Health Organization, noted that maternal mortality rates directly reflect the quality of a country's health care system. "With this reduction, donors save money at the very wrong end," she said.

The study was released as more than 400 delegates of non-governmental organizations worldwide convened a Forum on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Development in Berlin to assess 15 years of work on global population issues.

"A three-fold increase in donor funding over the next four years will be needed if the new estimated needs are to be met," said Neil Datta, secretary of the European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development (EPF), which created the report along with the German Foundation for World Population (DSW). "Given the leading position of the EU in the world, with 63 percent of the total official development assistance, a failure to meet its targets will deliver a worrying message."

DSW Executive Director Renate Baehr called upon European governments to live up to the commitments to reproductive health they made 15 years ago at the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). "The financial crisis will impact developing countries most severely," she said. "Sustaining European support for ODA and population assistance is therefore imperative."

The full *Euromapping 2009* report is available at <http://www.euroresources.org/euromapping>