



AFRICA

EU-Africa relations are governed by the [Cotonou Agreement](#) and the [Joint Africa-EU Strategy](#), which both include political, economic and development dimensions. The EU is working actively to promote peace and security in Africa and engages with the African Union (AU) in various policy dialogues, including on democracy and human rights. Migration has emerged as a core element of Africa-EU relations. The European Development Fund remains the main channel for EU development cooperation in Africa.

LEGAL BASIS

- Article 217 of the [Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union](#) (TFEU);
- Partnership Agreement between the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) group of states and the European Community and its Member States (Cotonou Agreement);
- [Trade, Development and Cooperation Agreement](#) (TDCA) between the Republic of South Africa and the European Community and its Member States.

THE COTONOU AGREEMENT

Relations between the EU and sub-Saharan Africa are currently governed by the Cotonou Agreement, which sets out the basis for relations between the EU and 78 countries in the ACP group. South Sudan is not a signatory to the agreement.

EU-ACP relations date back to the Lomé Conventions I-IV (1975-2000) laying down development cooperation and trade provisions, which allowed 99.5 % of products from ACP countries free access to the European market. Lomé was succeeded by the Cotonou Agreement, signed on 23 June 2000 and valid for 20 years. The goal of the Cotonou Agreement is to eradicate poverty by more fully integrating the ACP countries into the world economy. Cotonou employs the term 'partnership', highlighting mutual commitment and responsibility, and emphasises political dialogue, human rights, democracy and good governance. The Agreement is implemented by joint ACP-EU institutions, including a Council of Ministers, a Committee of Ambassadors and a Joint Parliamentary Assembly. There have been two revisions to the Cotonou Agreement, in 2005 and in 2010 respectively. The European Parliament gave its consent to the ratification of the 2010 revision in June 2013 but expressed 'its strongest reservations about parts of the Agreement which do not reflect the position of the European Parliament and the values of the Union'. Parliament objected, in particular,



to the absence of an explicit clause on ‘non-discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation’.

As the Cotonou Agreement expires in 2020, discussions on the post-Cotonou framework are ongoing. In 2015, the European Commission initiated a process of reflection, which included a wide public consultation and an evaluation process. This reflection resulted in the publication in November 2016 of a joint communication, which sets out different policy options for the future. Parliament adopted a resolution on the future of ACP-EU relations beyond 2020 in October 2016. The Commission communication was followed in December 2017 by a proposal for the negotiating directives. This document was discussed in Parliament during the first half of 2018 and Parliament adopted a [resolution](#) expressing its position on 14 June 2018. This process culminated in the EU negotiating mandate, issued in June 2018, while the ACP countries issued their mandate in May. The dialogue started in October 2018 and four rounds of negotiations have been completed.

THE JOINT AFRICA-EU STRATEGY (JAES)

The EU’s overarching policy vis-à-vis all 54 African states is the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES). The JAES was adopted by European and African leaders at the second EU-Africa summit, in Lisbon in December 2007. The purpose of the strategy was to take the Africa-EU relationship to a new strategic level with a strengthened political partnership and enhanced cooperation at all levels. Its goals are:

- To move beyond development cooperation, opening Africa-EU relations to issues of joint political concern;
- To move beyond purely African matters, towards effectively addressing global challenges such as migration, climate change, peace and security;
- To support Africa’s aspirations to encourage trans-regional and continental responses to these important challenges;
- To work towards a people-centred partnership, ensuring better participation of African and European citizens.

To achieve these objectives, the JAES had originally established eight thematic partnerships for cooperation. The fourth EU-Africa summit, held in Brussels in April 2014, led to the adoption of a political declaration by Heads of State and Government and a results-oriented roadmap for 2014-2017. At the summit, it was decided to refocus the initial eight thematic partnerships around five priority areas: (i) peace and security; (ii) democracy, good governance and human rights; (iii) human development; (iv) sustainable and inclusive development and growth and continental integration; and (v) global and emerging issues. In this new cooperation framework, science, technology and innovation are recognised as a cross-cutting issue, in view of their contribution to the attainment of all other socio-economic development objectives. A separate declaration on migration and mobility was approved, along with an action plan to fight irregular migration and human trafficking, enhance international protection, better organise legal migration and strengthen the migration-development nexus.



November 2015 saw a further EU-Africa [summit in Valletta](#) (Malta) that focused on migration and led to the adoption of the Valletta Action Plan and the launch of the EUR 1.8 billion [EU Emergency Trust Fund](#) (EUTF) for Africa, aimed at addressing the root causes of irregular migration and the displacement of people in Africa. In line with the new EU global strategy, in June 2016, the European Commission introduced a new migration partnership framework with third countries. As for longer-term funding, in September 2016 the Commission announced the creation of a [European External Investment Plan](#), which includes a new innovative financial instrument, the [European Fund for Sustainable Development](#) (EFSD).

The fifth [EU-African Union](#) (AU) summit took place in Côte d'Ivoire in November 2017, focusing on 'Investing in Youth'. This is a key issue for both partners, as 60 % of the African population is aged under 25. In preparation for this event, in May 2017 the European Commission and the High Representative / Vice-President issued a joint communication for [a renewed impetus of the Africa-EU Partnership](#). Additionally, the European Parliament hosted a high-level conference to promote its vision of a new partnership ahead of the summit, gathering EU and African political leaders and policymakers to discuss peace and security, economic growth, migration and youth. At the summit, EU and African leaders adopted a [joint declaration on the common priorities for an EU-African partnership](#) in four areas: (i) economic opportunities for youth; (ii) peace and security; (iii) mobility and migration; and (iv) cooperation and governance. They also condemned the inhuman treatment of migrants and refugees in Libya, adopting a [joint statement](#) on the issue.

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

The EU remains Africa's biggest donor. Development cooperation is channelled through different financial instruments. The most important is the European Development Fund (EDF), which is based on the Cotonou Agreement and is not part of the common EU budget (see separate fact sheet [5.3.1](#) on development). This financial structure might change as a result of the negotiations on the new EU multiannual financial framework 2021-2028 (see separate fact sheet [1.4.3](#) on this issue), which started in 2018 and should be concluded by late 2019 or early 2020. The 11th EDF has a budget of EUR 29.1 billion: EUR 24.3 billion for national and regional cooperation programmes, EUR 3.6 billion for intra-ACP cooperation, and EUR 1.1 billion for the ACP Investment Facility, run by the European Investment Bank.

The EDF covers all African countries that are parties to the Cotonou Agreement except South Africa, whose cooperation funds come from the EU's Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI), part of the common EU budget. The new DCI for 2014-2020 also allocates EUR 845 million to the Pan-African Programme (PANAF), which was created to fund the JAES and continental and transcontinental activities.

Other financial instruments relating to Africa include the European Neighbourhood Instrument for North Africa, the thematic programmes under the DCI ('global public goods and challenges' and 'civil society and local authorities') and the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR).



A number of African countries situated in the north of Africa, the Horn of Africa and the Sahel and Lake Chad regions also benefit from the recently created EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa. Since the fund was launched, the total amount of funding made available for the three regional windows has increased to almost EUR 3.6 billion.

TRADE RELATIONS

The principal instruments promoting trade between the EU and African regions are the World Trade Organisation-compatible trade arrangements called 'Economic Partnership Agreements' (EPAs). However, the negotiation of these agreements, which started in 2002, proved difficult and could not be finalised as anticipated by 2008. As a result, the EU adopted a market access regulation to ensure temporary market access arrangements until 2014, which was subsequently extended (see separate fact sheet on trade regimes applied to developing countries).

The current state of play with regard to EPAs is as follows:

- West Africa — Technical-level negotiations between the EU and 16 West African countries were closed in February 2014. The text was initialled on 30 June, and on 10 July 2014 the heads of state of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) endorsed the EPA for signing. The signing process is currently in progress. However, Nigeria refuses to sign the agreement;
- Central Africa — Cameroon was the only country to sign the interim Central Africa EPA in January 2009. The European Parliament gave its consent to the agreement in June 2013, and the Parliament of Cameroon approved ratification in July 2014. The agreement has been provisionally applied in Cameroon since August 2014;
- Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA) — Four countries in the region — Mauritius, Seychelles, Zimbabwe and Madagascar — signed an interim EPA in 2009. This has been provisionally applied since May 2012, and Parliament gave its consent for ratification in January 2013. Negotiations on the full regional EPA are still ongoing;
- Eastern African Community (EAC) — A full regional EPA was concluded between the EU and Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda on 16 October 2014. However, only Kenya and Rwanda have signed the agreement (in September 2016);
- Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) — EPA negotiations were successfully concluded on 15 July 2014 between Botswana, Lesotho, South Africa, Swaziland and Mozambique on the one hand, and the EU on the other. Trade provisions in the 1999 Trade, Development and Cooperation Agreement between the EU and South Africa will be replaced by those in the regional EPA. The EU and SADC countries signed the EPA in Botswana in June 2016 and the agreement entered into provisional application in October 2016 for all the countries except for Mozambique, for which it entered into provisional application in February 2018.



ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Parliament has standing interparliamentary delegations for relations with African countries and institutions. The principal body in which Parliament cooperates on such matters is the [ACP–EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly](#), which plays a fundamental role in strengthening relations between the EU and its ACP partners and meets twice a year. The last meeting took place in March 2019 in Bucharest, Romania, and the next will be held in December 2019 in Kigali, Rwanda.

Parliament has also developed forms of parliamentary cooperation with the African Union through its [Delegation for Relations with the Pan-African Parliament](#) (PAP), established in 2009. Parliament and the PAP provide democratic oversight of the implementation of the JAES. Its last meeting took place on 16-18 May 2018, in Midrand (South Africa). There are also close bilateral parliamentary relations with [South Africa](#), which have been strengthened by the [EU-South Africa Strategic Partnership](#) (2007) — the EU’s only bilateral strategic partnership with an African country. The last interparliamentary meeting took place in October-November 2018 in Cape Town (South Africa). Besides this, the Committee on Development adopted on 16 November 2017 a [resolution on the EU-Africa Strategy](#) with a view to the upcoming EU-Africa Summit in November 2017.

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