Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

The European Union, based on its own experience, supports regional integration as a tool for development, fostering sustainable growth and smooth and gradual integration in the world economy.

In this respect, the EU has a comprehensive relationship with the Economic Community of West Africa States (ECOWAS), involving close dialogue and cooperation on political and security matters, conflict prevention, development cooperation, regional integration and trade.

Political dialogue

The EU has a regular political dialogue with ECOWAS. In this context, ECOWAS and the EU meet once a year at Ministerial level and twice a year at Senior Officials level, on a number of issues of common interest and concern, notably ECOWAS role in promoting peace and security, democracy and good governance in the West Africa region. The political situation in Europe and in ECOWAS Member States as well as occurring crises situation and are part of the discussions. Economic issues, trade and investment are regularly on the agenda of the dialogue. Horizontal themes such as security, terrorist threats and the fight against organized crime are also discussed.

Development cooperation

Benefiting the entire West Africa region for the period 2014 - 2020, the 11th Regional Indicative Programme, was signed on 23 June 2015 à Cotonou, Benin. It is based a thorough preparatory work on regional priorities for development and growth, carried out jointly by the European External Action Service, the European Commission, ECOWAS and WAEMU[1].

Under the 11th EDF Regional indicative Programme, three focal sectors have been identified for EU support and cooperation: (i) Peace, security and regional stability, (ii) Regional integration and support for trade, (iii) Resilience, food and nutrition security and natural resources. A total amount of 1,150 million Euros has been allocated to the implementation of this programme, divided as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focal Sector</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Peace, security and regional stability</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>250 M€</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focal Sector II:</td>
<td>Regional economic integration and support for trade</td>
<td>50 % of total: 575 M€</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Focal Sector III:</td>
<td>Resilience, food and nutrition security and natural resources</td>
<td>26 % of total: 300 M€</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Focal Sector</td>
<td>(other programmes)</td>
<td>2 % of total: 25 M€</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Regional Indicative Programme</strong></td>
<td><strong>Total:</strong> 1,150 M€</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Trade**

The EU and the West Africa region have negotiated and agreed an Economic Partnership Agreement that is meant to foster regional integration, investment and trade, thus contributing to economic growth and the creation of jobs. It is designed as an instrument for development.

**Contacts**

The Headquarters of ECOWAS Commission is based in Abuja, Nigeria. The European Union Delegation to Abuja is also accredited to ECOWAS.

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**See also**

Delegation to the EU to Nigeria and ECOWAS
www.eeas.europa.eu

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