



# EU Trade Policy Review and relations with Africa

© Unsplash

The Communication on the [EU Trade Policy Review - An Open, Sustainable and Assertive Trade Policy](#), presented in February 2021, sets out the trade strategy of the European Union for the coming years. Relations with Africa are placed in the centre of this trade strategy.

The three core objectives of the EU Trade policy are:

- 1. Supporting the recovery and transformation of the EU economy in line with its green and digital objectives.**
- 2. Shaping global rules for a more sustainable and fairer globalisation.**
- 3. Increasing the EU's capacity to pursue its interests and enforce its rights.**

To deliver on these three objectives, the Commission is focusing on six areas:

- Support the green transition and promote responsible value chains;
- Strengthen the EU's partnerships with Africa and its neighbouring and enlargement countries;
- Strengthen the EU's focus on implementation and enforcement of trade agreements;
- Reform the World Trade Organisation (WTO);
- Support the digital transition and trade in services;
- Strengthen the EU's influence on international standards and regulations.





## EU relations with Africa

**The EU's most significant relationships are with those who are geographically closest, stability and prosperity in Africa are in the mutual interest.**

The EU's trade strategy outlines how the EU is reinforcing its engagement with African countries by:



### **Enhancing political dialogue and cooperation with the African Union and its Members**

The EU is making efforts to establish a permanent high-level dialogue with the African Union. With regards to its bilateral cooperation, the EU is engaging with Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire and Cameroon in the EU's Sustainable Cocoa Initiative.



### **Engaging on the smooth implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)**

For example, the EU is engaging with the private sector and promoting common standards in Africa to enhance regional and continental integration.



### **Deepening and widening its existing trade agreements with African regional economic communities and strengthening their sustainability dimension**

The EU is currently negotiating a deepening of the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) with the Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA) and is working on widening the membership of the EPA with the Southern African Development Community (SADC).



### **Exploring further the possibility of enhancing links and synergies between different trade arrangements with African countries**

For example, the EU started working towards more harmonised rules of origin for Africa's trade with the EU.



### **Pursuing sustainable investment agreements with Africa and the Southern Neighbourhood, designed together with development cooperation tools to support investment and ensure synergies with EU countries, the private sector and civil society**

Negotiations with Angola on a Sustainable Investment Facilitation Agreement are already underway, and the EU is exploring the launch of such negotiations with Nigeria as well.



## EU Trade Policy Green Agenda

The EU is built on openness and it is a major destination for exports from many regions, including from Africa. The EU's open trade policy at the same time promotes the green transition globally, which is a top priority for the EU. This is also the centrepiece of the EU trade strategy.

The EU's trade policy aims to ensure that trade tools support a global transition towards a climate neutral economy, including accelerating investments in clean energy, and promote value chains that are circular, responsible and sustainable.

The EU is also engaging with like-minded countries to pursue a strong environmental agenda at the WTO.

In December 2021, the EU endorsed three WTO initiatives on trade and the environment.

In addition to multilateral actions, the EU's vast network of bilateral trade agreements, including with Africa, facilitates trade in green technologies, goods, services and investments. They provide an essential platform to engage with our partners on a vast array of green matters such as climate change, biodiversity, circular economy, pollution, clean energy technologies including renewable energy and energy efficiency, and on the transition to sustainable food systems.

### Outcome of the EU-African Union 2022 Summit

In February 2022, the sixth EU-African Union Summit took place, where the EU presented the Global Gateway Africa – Europe Investment Package, a €150 billion investment. It aims to support Africa for a strong, inclusive, green and digital recovery and transformation by:

- accelerating the green transition
- accelerating the digital transition
- accelerating sustainable growth and decent job creation
- strengthening health systems
- improving education and training
- working closely with business.

The Investment Package will be delivered through Team Europe initiatives: the EU, its Member States and European financial institutions will work together to support concrete and transformational projects jointly identified in priority areas.

