

EU-Africa Trading Relationship

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JUL
2017

TRADE DATA ANALYSIS

This Trade Update documents the trading relationship between Africa and the European Union from 2007 to 2016. The analysis uses UNCOMTRADE data sourced from the International Trade Centre (ITC) Trade Map¹, and is expressed in United States Dollars.

This synopsis should be read in conjunction with the spreadsheet on tralac's website (available at <https://www.tralac.org/resources/our-resources/11938-european-union-africa-trading-relationship.html>) and contains the following data:

- EU's trade balance with African countries, by country;
- Africa's total imports from the EU, disaggregated by importing country at the HS4 level;
- Africa's total exports to the EU, disaggregated by importing country at the HS4 level;
- Africa's imports and exports products at HS4 level;
- The trade profiles for COMESA², EAC³, SACU⁴, SADC⁵, ECOWAS⁶, and Maghreb⁷;

¹ <http://www.intracen.org/>

² The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa consists of 19 member states, namely Burundi, Comoros, D.R. Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Rwanda, Seychelles, Sudan, Swaziland, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe

³ The East African Community consists of 5 member states, namely Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda

⁴ The Southern African Customs Union consists of 5 member states, namely Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland. Prior to 2010, South Africa-SACU trade data is shaky, and not available

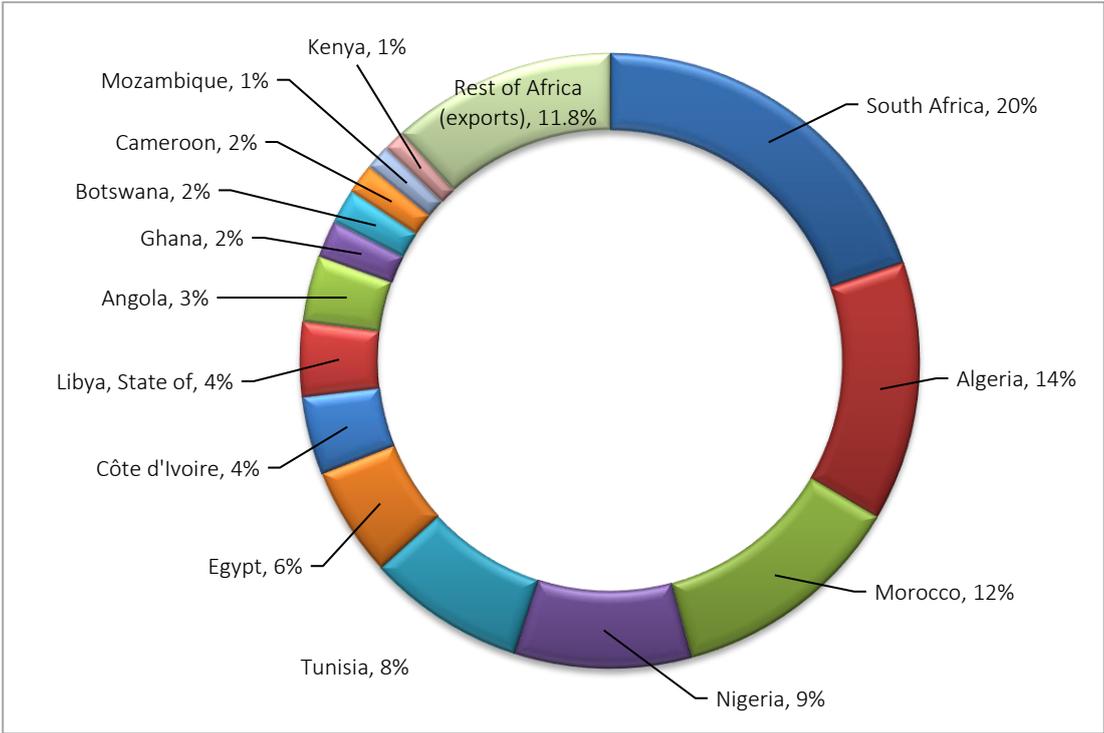
⁵ The Southern Africa Development Community consists of 15 member states, namely Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

- The top 20 African exports to the EU, and top 20 African imports from EU at the HS4 level, by country for all African countries;
- Graphical illustrations of the EU’s trading relationship with Africa’s Regional Economic Communities.

SYNOPSIS

- In 2016, Africa’s exports to the EU stood at US\$132.88 billion, registering a 11.85% decline from previous year’s total of US\$150.75 billion.
- The top 20 export commodities comprise of petroleum oil, petroleum gas, gold and platinum, motors (mainly from South Africa), cocoa beans, diamonds, clothing items, copper, citrus fruits, and unmanufactured tobacco. The export basket has remained undiversified, historically.
- Major exporting countries in 2016 were South Africa, accounting for (20%), Algeria (14%), Morocco (12%), Nigeria (9%), Tunisia (8%), Egypt (6%), Cote d’Ivoire (4%), Libya (4%), and Angola (3%), as shown by Chart 1 below⁸.

Chart 1: Africa’s Export Shares to EU, 2016



Source: Author’s computations using ITC data

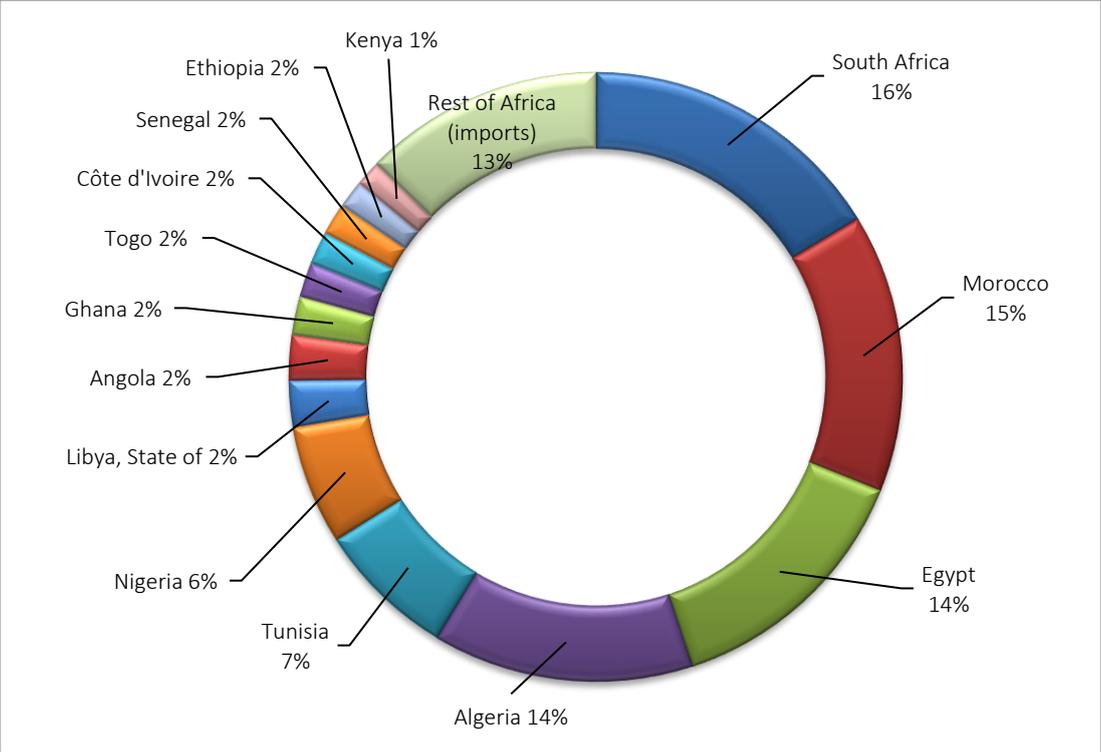
⁶ The Economic Community of West African States consists of 15 member states. The founding members of ECOWAS were: Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania (left 2002), Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo, and Burkina Faso (which joined as Upper Volta).

⁷ The Maghreb consists of 5 member states, namely Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, and Tunisia.

⁸ Rest of Africa (Exports) is a grouping of Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cape Verde, Central Africa Republic, Chad, Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Namibia, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

- In 2016, Africa’s imports from the EU stood at US\$155,58 billion, representing a 7.36% decline from the previous year’s total imports of US\$167.95 billion.
- Top 20 major imported commodities include petroleum oils, motor cars, medicaments, motor vehicles accessories, wheat, telephone sets, powered aircraft, human blood, and electrical apparatus.
- Major importing countries in 2016 were South Africa (16%), Morocco (15%), Egypt (14%), Algeria (14%), Tunisia (7%), Nigeria (6%), Libya (2%), Angola (2%), Ghana (2%), Togo (2%), Cote D’Ivoire (2%), Senegal (2%), Ethiopia (1%), and Kenya (1%), as shown by Chart 2 below⁹.

Chart 2: Africa’s Import Shares from EU, 2016



Source: Author’s computations using ITC data

- In general, Africa’s exports to the EU have been declining since 2012, mainly due to falling commodity prices and the global economic slowdown. The impact of commodity prices, and the very evident cyclical trends, are evident in the Africa-EU trade profile, as shown the Chart 3 below.
- In 2014, Africa registered its first ever Balance of Trade Deficit in 20 years. The declining trend of balance of trade has been gathering momentum since 2012, and is likely to continue into the foreseeable future.

⁹ Rest of Africa (Imports) is a grouping of Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cape Verde, Cameroon, Central Africa Republic, Chad, Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Chart 3: Africa-EU Trade Profile

