

Central African Ministers members of the Steering Committee for the Rationalisation of Regional Economic Communities in Central Africa (COPIL/CER-AC), are meeting today and tomorrow in [Yaoundé](#), Cameroon, to decide the future of the main two Regional Economic Communities (RECs) active in Central Africa. Plans to replace these two RECs with a single, better-structured and more efficient Community date back to October 2007, when the 13th Conference of Heads of State and Government of the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (ECCAS) held in Brazzaville, mandated the Chairpersons of the Economic Community of Central African States (CEMAC) and of ECCAS to create a Steering Committee with the aim of drawing up a roadmap of actions to harmonise policies, programmes and instruments of integration of the two communities in view of the creation, with time, of a new single Regional Economic Community in Central Africa. This Steering Committee - the COPIL/CER-AC - was established on 24 October 2009 at the 14th Conference of Heads of State and Government of ECCAS, held in Kinshasa, DRC, who also designated the Minister of Economy of Cameroon as its Chair.

In 2015, Central African Ministers in charge of economic integration, based on the considerations that the two structures (ECCAS and CEMAC) were too expensive to run and often overlapping with each other - having similar agendas - decided to accelerate the development of the [roadmap](#) for merging them into a single entity by the end of 2023. This new entity will be built through the harmonisation and integration of programmes and instruments already put in place by member states of ECCAS and CEMAC.

ECCAS, one of the eight African Union officially recognised RECs in Africa, was established on 18 October 1983 and includes eleven (11) member States in total (Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Republic of the Congo, São Tomé and Príncipe).

The Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC), is the successor of the Customs Union of the Central African States (*Union Douanière des Etats de l'Afrique Centrale* - UDEAC), and is a younger Economic Community, born on March 16, 1994, which counts six (6) member States in total, all of them francophone and already members of ECCAS (Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, and the Republic of the Congo).

According to the [Africa Regional Integration Index](#), both RECs are currently among the least integrated regions in Africa.

The COPIL/CER-AC has been working since 2020 to the preparation of the framework that will provide the legal basis for this new entity to concretely operate. These include a draft Constitutive Treaty; draft Conventions governing the Court of Auditors, the Community Parliament and the Court of Justice and Human Rights; draft Protocols governing the High Monetary Authority of Central Africa and the High Authority for Financial Markets; as well as the draft decision on the staffing plan of the new Community.