

*“The Vision of the African Union is to become an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the global arena.”*

*African Union Agenda 2063*



# Foreword, African Union



Agenda 2063 sets out the vision for Africa's integration path over the next 50 years. The African Union's Minimum Integration Programme and the first ten-year action plan set out the specific steps that are needed to put this in place. Key areas of the plan focus on trade and market integration, free movement of people and infrastructure development.

The development of trade and economics are key elements for the success of Agenda 2063 and regional integration, as this will help transform economies and drive growth. It is therefore important

to put in place mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating progress being made across the continent, especially within the context of the first ten years development plan. In this regard, this index will contribute greatly to transforming the way we do business by institutionalizing a results-based mindset with regards to the implementation of Africa's development agenda.

Deeper regional integration means larger markets and industrialization and productivity as part of value chains. It means talent mobility thanks to greater visa openness. Investment in infrastructure means less congestion along regional corridors and facilitation of trade by cutting time and costs. With a stable economic outlook, foreign investment also rises.

The continent needs to up its pace and performance and measure how and what more can be done. That is where the Africa Regional Integration Index comes in. By acting upon calls to monitor and evaluate integration at the AU-ECA Conference of Ministers, as well as the Conference of African Ministers in Charge of Integration, a data platform has been created.

Through the Index, the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank and the Economic Commission for Africa are bringing the continent's integration goals within closer reach. Findings show that while progress is being made, with 28 high performing countries across the eight Regional Economic Communities, average integration scores stand at below half of the scale. It is time for Africa to build on this and drive regional integration ever further forward.

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**Erastus Mwencha**  
Deputy Chairperson  
African Union Commission

*“The vision of the Bank Group is for a stable, integrated and prospering continent of competitive, diversified and sustainably growing economies participating fully in global trade and investment.”*

*Bank Group Regional Integration Policy  
and Strategy (RIPoS) 2014-2023*



AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK GROUP

# *Foreword, African Development Bank*



Integration is at the foundation of Africa's future. A future that will be forged by its 1.1 billion citizens and growing young population; a future of opportunities with a marketplace of 54 countries and growing consumer purchasing power; and a future where Africa is open for business with the rest of the world, competing in higher value goods and services.

'Integrate Africa,' along with 'Industrialise Africa,' 'Light up and power Africa,' 'Feed Africa' and 'Improve quality of life for the people of Africa' is one of the Bank's five priority areas to

transform the continent over the next ten years. Our Regional Integration Policy and Strategy (2014-2023) provides the blueprint to make this happen, from developing high quality regional infrastructure to boosting industrialization and trade and building critical country and regional capacity.

To empower Africa's transformation, data and information are vital. The Africa Regional Integration Index, now in its first edition, aims to plug the knowledge gap on regional integration. It is a dynamic and evolving tool that tracks how the continent's eight Regional Economic Communities (RECs), and countries within each REC, are doing on regional integration overall and by priority areas. The Index showcases the high performers and highlights what is now needed to accelerate progress.

Index findings show that each REC, and each country, score higher than average on at least one priority area of integration. This is a strong basis for each region to build on and for sharing lessons and insights to encourage greater policy reforms across the continent.

As a driver for change, the Index will build the case for a more competitive Africa. An Africa that is better connected through its people as well as on the ground and on the airwaves, with stronger intra-African trade flows and greater productivity. Ultimately, it will help us to improve the quality of life for all Africans and for our future generations.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stefan Nalletamby'.

**Stefan Nalletamby**

Acting Vice President

Infrastructure, Private Sector and Regional Integration  
African Development Bank

*“Africans must seek growth that is primarily anchored on their priorities and that is capable of delivering structural transformation. Regional integration is a key strategy for development.”*

*Economic Commission for Africa,  
[www.uneca.org](http://www.uneca.org)*



United Nations  
Economic Commission for Africa

# *Foreword, Economic Commission for Africa*



Measuring regional integration matters for Africa's development, whether in the area of trade, infrastructure, production, talent mobility or capital. Yet progress on integration across the continent has been difficult to judge and map against agreed goals and plans. Tracking what is happening on the ground, region-by-region, by monitoring the flow of goods, production or people is as important as looking at policy frameworks or agreements.

The Economic Commission for Africa has been working to shape Africa's transformation and growth prospects by promoting prosperity at regional and subregional levels. Our overarching focus is to promote policies and programmes that strengthen the process of economic cooperation and integration, in furtherance of the Abuja Treaty establishing the African Economic Community and the Constitutive Act of the African Union and, of course, Agenda 2063.

Through our partnership with the African Development Bank and the African Union Commission, we have come up with a first on regional integration – the Africa Regional Integration Index. The Index is a measurement exercise and a call to action. It is for everyone interested in Africa's prospects: regional and national decision-makers, policymakers, researchers, business leaders, civil society, development partners, the media and the public.

The Index is an independent source of quality data on regional integration that helps to assess the level of integration for every Regional Economic Community and their member countries. It will help to identify particular strengths and gaps by looking at regional integration through five dimensions and also follow their progress and changes over time.

Index findings show that the highest average scores are on Trade integration, which has been a longstanding priority across the regions. This bodes well for the Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA), whose negotiations are currently under way. The lowest average regional scores are on financial and macroeconomic integration, where progress has been more limited to date.

In this way, the Index serves to identify where solutions are needed to bring the different regional and subregional development priorities to life and truly build an integrated Africa.

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**Abdalla Hamdok**

Deputy Executive Secretary and Chief Economist  
Economic Commission for Africa