Basic information

2016/2053(INI) INI - Own-initiative procedure	Procedure completed
Future of ACP-EU relations beyond 2020 **Subject** 6.40.06 Relations with ACP countries, conventions and generalities	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
DEVE Development	NEUSER Norbert (S&D)	08/04/2016
	Shadow rapporteur PONGA Maurice (PPE) DEVA Nirj (ECR) MICHEL Louis (ALDE) SÁNCHEZ CALDENTEY Lola (GUE/NGL) HEUBUCH Maria (Verts/ALE) CORRAO Ignazio (EFDD)	

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
AFET Foreign Affairs	COUSO PERMUY Javier (GUE/NGL)	18/05/2016
INTA International Trade	SILVA PEREIRA Pedro (S&D)	20/04/2016
BUDG Budgets	GARDIAZABAL RUBIAL Eider (S&D)	16/03/2016

European Commission

Commission DG	Commissioner
European External Action Service	MOGHERINI Federica

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
28/04/2016	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
31/08/2016	Vote in committee		
12/09/2016	Committee report tabled for plenary	A8-0263/2016	Summary
03/10/2016	Debate in Parliament		
04/10/2016	Decision by Parliament	T8-0371/2016	Summary
04/10/2016	Results of vote in Parliament		
04/10/2016	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2016/2053(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 55
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	DEVE/8/06161

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE582.322	01/06/2016	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE585.511	28/06/2016	
Committee opinion	BUDG	PE584.018	13/07/2016	
Committee opinion	INTA	PE583.902	20/07/2016	
Committee opinion	AFET	PE582.441	31/08/2016	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A8-0263/2016	12/09/2016	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T8-0371/2016	04/10/2016	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	SP(2017)67	29/03/2017	

Future of ACP-EU relations beyond 2020

2016/2053(INI) - 04/10/2016 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 489 votes to 146, with 37 abstentions, a resolution on the future of ACP-EU relations beyond 2020.

Valuable and unique achievement: recalling the strength and acquis of the Cotonou Agreement, Members affirmed that ACP-EU cooperation is a valuable and unique achievement that has strengthened bonds between ACP and EU peoples and countries and their parliaments throughout the last 40 years.

In light of the ACP countries' demonstration of their commitment to taking joint action as a group, Parliament insisted that in order to improve the effectiveness of cooperation and adapt it to new challenges, a new structure must be adopted that:

- **maintains those parts of the ACP-EU acquis** that are universal in nature, such as a commitment to human rights and gender equality, human development, good governance and democracy, the objective of the rule of law, and exchange of best practice in a common framework;
- **provides that while the main work must be carried out in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity**, it must take place in regional agreements that are tailored to specific regional needs and to the mutual interests existing between the EU and the respective region.

Both the common framework and the regional agreements should be **legally binding** and be designed in a way that takes into account existing regional and sub-regional organisations, e.g. the African Union and the Regional Economic Communities.

Objectives, principles and terms of cooperation: Parliament stated that the following must be placed at the centre of a new agreement:

- the 2030 Agenda and the **Sustainable Development** Goals (SDGs) and respect for internationally agreed aid effectiveness principles;
- fight against, and ultimate eradication of, **poverty and inequalities;**
- **human rights**, democratic principles and the rule of law.

A new agreement must primarily be a **political project** based on the principle of ownership and clearly leave behind the donor-recipient mentality. Cooperation should take place in areas of **common interest where mutual gains can be expected**, not just in economic terms but also with regard to peace and security, human rights and the rule of law, good governance and democracy, migration, the environment, climate change.

Members also called for:

- an **ACP-EU peer monitoring**, accountability and review mechanism to scrutinise SDG implementation in Member States on a regular basis;
- **stronger involvement in political dialogue**, programming and implementation and support for capacity building by civil society, especially for local groups that are directly concerned by policies; **national parliaments** and regional and local authorities, both in ACP and EU countries, should participate more at all stages of ACP-EU policies and activities.

The **private sector** could play a pivotal role in the development process and could contribute to financing development, provided investment occurs with respect for the people, for traditional ownership or use, and for the environment. Private investment should be supported under the auspices of the European Investment Bank (EIB).

Future ACP-EU institutions: Parliament stressed the following points:

- joint ACP-EU Council meetings should include **topical and urgent political debates, including on sensitive issues,** with the aim of adopting joint conclusions on them;
- the new cooperation agreement should include a strong **parliamentary dimension**, through a Joint Parliamentary Assembly (JPA), ensuring the adequate democratic and proportional representation and participation of all political forces in its debates;
- the JPA should be aligned with the new regional structure, thus **focusing its work in regional fora on issues of regional importance**, strongly involving the national and regional parliaments;
- further efforts should be made to **improve JPA scrutiny** of development programming, bearing in mind the development effectiveness principles and follow-up to such scrutiny.

Future funding: Parliament is convinced that the simultaneous expiry of the Cotonou Agreement and of the Union's multiannual financial framework (MFF) provides an opportunity to finally decide on the **budgetisation of the European Development Fund**. However, this budgetisation should be conditioned by:

- **a guaranteed ring-fencing of developing funds** to maintain the level of financing for developing countries, and
- **a permanent and separate solution for EU financing of security expenses** that are linked to and in coherence with development cooperation.

Members stressed that EU development aid principles must be applied on an equal basis to all developing countries, and that advanced ACP countries must therefore graduate out of receiving EU development aid on the same terms as non-ACP countries.

Furthermore, a **higher degree of self-financing by the ACP countries** would be in line with the ACP ambitions to be an autonomous player, and the new agreement should include enhanced tools for building ACP countries' capacity to fund vital economic sectors.

Parliament noted the Commission communication of 7 June 2016 on establishing a new partnership framework with third countries under the European Agenda on Migration. It noted that the EU budget and the EDF contribution to the package of EUR 8 billion is exclusively composed of aid which was already planned. It called for development assistance to beneficiaries not to be jeopardised and for **migration-related initiatives** to be financed with fresh appropriations.

Trade dimension: Members reiterated that **Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs)** constitute a basis for regional cooperation and that they must be instruments for development and regional integration. They called for a **post-Cotonou Agreement as a political umbrella agreement under which**

binding minimum requirements for EPAs are set, in order to ensure continuity for EPA linkages in the existing Cotonou Agreement to sustainability provisions on good governance, respect for human rights, including among the most vulnerable people, and respect for social and environmental standards.

Lastly, Parliament called for a **joint parliamentary scrutiny and monitoring process** on the impact of the EPA as well as structured civil society monitoring mechanisms.

Future of ACP-EU relations beyond 2020

2016/2053(INI) - 12/09/2016 - Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading

The Committee on Development adopted the own-initiative report by Norbert NEUSER (S&D, DE) on the future of ACP-EU relations beyond 2020.

Members recalled that the Partnership Agreement between the members of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States of the one part, and the European Community and its Member States, of the other part, signed in June 2000 (the Cotonou Agreement), **is based on a number of unique characteristics:** it is: (i) a legally binding document, with an unparalleled numerical strength of 79+28 member states, (ii) comprehensive through its three pillars of development cooperation, political cooperation and economic and trade cooperation, and (iii) comprised of a joint institutional framework, with a large budget in the form of the European Development Fund (EDF).

The report recalled the unique nature of ACP-EU cooperation and stressed the need to **put in place a new structure** that maintains those parts of the ACP-EU acquis, e.g.:

- a commitment to human rights and gender equality, human development, good governance and democracy;
- the objective of the rule of law;
- exchange of best practice in a common framework, while the main work must be carried out in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, that is, it must take place in regional agreements that are tailored to specific regional needs and to the mutual interests existing between the EU and the region.

Members underlined that the common framework and the regional agreements should be legally binding.

Objectives, principles and terms of cooperation: the report states that the following must be placed at the centre of a new agreement:

- the 2030 Agenda and the **Sustainable Development** Goals (SDGs) and respect for internationally agreed aid effectiveness principles;
- fight against, and ultimate eradication of, **poverty and inequalities;**
- **human rights**, democratic principles and the rule of law.

Members called for an **ACP-EU peer monitoring**, accountability and review mechanism to scrutinise SDG implementation in member states on a regular basis. They also called for **stronger involvement in political dialogue**, programming and implementation and support for capacity building by civil society, especially for local groups that are directly concerned by policies.

The **private sector** could play a pivotal role in the development process and could contribute to financing development, provided investment occurs with respect for the people, for traditional ownership or use, and for the environment. Private investment should be supported under the auspices of the European Investment Bank (EIB).

Future ACP-EU institutions: the report stressed the following points:

- joint ACP-EU Council meetings should include **topical and urgent political debates, including on sensitive issues,** with the aim of adopting joint conclusions on them;
- the new cooperation agreement should include a strong **parliamentary dimension**, through a Joint Parliamentary Assembly (JPA), ensuring the adequate democratic and proportional representation and participation of all political forces in its debates;
- the JPA should be aligned with the new regional structure, thus **focusing its work in regional fora on issues of regional importance**, strongly involving the national and regional parliaments;
- further efforts should be made to **improve JPA scrutiny** of development programming, bearing in mind the development effectiveness principles and follow-up to such scrutiny.

Future funding: Members were convinced that the simultaneous expiry of the Cotonou Agreement and of the Union’s multiannual financial framework (MFF) provides an opportunity to finally decide on the **budgetisation of the European Development Fund**. However, this budgetisation should be conditioned by:

- a guaranteed ring-fencing of developing funds to maintain the level of financing for developing countries, and
- a permanent and separate solution for EU financing of security expenses that are linked to and in coherence with development cooperation;

Members stressed that EU development aid principles must be applied on an equal basis to all developing countries, and that advanced ACP countries must therefore graduate out of receiving EU development aid on the same terms as non-ACP countries. Furthermore, a **higher degree of self-financing by the ACP countries** would be in line with the ACP ambitions to be an autonomous player, and the new agreement should include enhanced tools for building ACP countries' capacity to fund vital economic sectors.

The report called for the introduction of a dedicated instrument for all **overseas countries and territories** (OCTs), which is in keeping with their special status and their membership of the European family.

Trade dimension: Members reiterated that **Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs)** constitute a basis for regional cooperation and that they must be instruments for development and regional integration. They called for a **post-Cotonou Agreement as a political umbrella agreement under which binding minimum requirements for EPAs are set**, in order to ensure continuity for EPA linkages in the existing Cotonou Agreement to sustainability provisions on good governance, respect for human rights, including among the most vulnerable people, and respect for social and environmental standards.