

The European Union supports social protection and trade, regional integration and business development in Rwanda

Today, the European Commission adopted two programmes in favour of Rwanda for a total amount of EUR 26 million. It includes the provision of sector budget support for social protection (EUR 20 million) and support to trade, regional integration, and business development (EUR 6 million).

"I am confident that the two programmes adopted today will reinforce the fruitful cooperation between the EU and Rwanda to accelerate poverty reduction, in particular extreme poverty", said Michel Arrion, Head of the EU Delegation in Rwanda.

The first programme concerns **social protection**. In recognition of the strong strategies developed by the Government of Rwanda in this domain, the funds will be disbursed in the form of sector budget support. More specifically, the programme will support the Government of Rwanda to establish a Social Protection System that tackles poverty and inequality, enables the working poor to move out of poverty, helps improve health and education among all Rwandans, and contributes to economic growth.

The second programme will support **Trade, Regional Integration and Business Development**. Building on the success of expanding the education system, the programme supports the efforts of the Government of Rwanda to widen the focus to increasing skills and employment opportunities for the youth of Rwanda by promoting entrepreneurship and reducing the operational costs of business. Specifically, the project will support the provision of business development services, consolidating the gains made in improving the investment climate, and generally support the Ministry of Trade and Industry to achieve the objectives set out in its strategic plan. Taking advantage of the regional integration process will be an integral element of the programme.

Under the 10th European Development Fund, EUR 290 million has been earmarked for Rwanda for the period 2008-2013.

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