

TDB and EIB deepen their partnership with a USD 120 million 15-year SME and climate action facility



In what is yet another step in the growing relationship between the Eastern and Southern African Trade and Development Bank (TDB) and the European Investment Bank (EIB), the institutions signed today a USD 120 million 15-year SME and climate action facility.

The Agreement was signed by Ambroise Fayolle, EIB Vice President and Admassu Tadesse, TDB President and Chief Executive, in the presence of Dr. Patrick Gomes, ACP Secretary General, Dr. Chileshe Kapwepwe, Secretary General of COMESA, Jutta Urpilainen, European Commissioner for International Partnerships and Dr. Patrick Njoroge, Governor of the Central Bank of Kenya, at the 9th ACP Summit of Heads of State and Government in Nairobi.

The Agreement is part of the Investment Facility resources pursuant to the Partnership Agreement between ACP States and the European Union and its Members signed in Cotonou.

The facility will be used towards financing the cost of projects by the private sector, including small and medium enterprises, with a special focus on climate action, renewable energy and energy efficiency.

This is the second line of credit to be extended by EIB to TDB, the first one having been signed in 2014 for EUR 80 million with a focus on SMEs and mid-cap companies, and already having created hundreds of jobs.

Among other examples, this first facility has made possible the purchase of medical equipment for the establishment of a diagnostic service center with

advanced health services in Djibouti – bringing in the country’s first MRI machine, enabling technology and knowledge transfer, and supporting Djibouti in its efforts to achieving SDGs by reducing mortality through the early detection of diseases.

Likewise, a plant and machinery for the manufacturing of steel towers were acquired in Ethiopia – contributing to infrastructure development, and fuel transportation vehicles were purchased in Rwanda – addressing energy security needs for this landlocked country.

EIB and TDB, with its SME Programme and TDB Academy, have also been cooperating in the framework of the EIB Eastern Africa SME Banking & Microfinance Forum, which this year took place last October in Nairobi.

“We are very pleased to be deepening our partnership with EIB” says Admassu Tadesse, TDB President and Chief Executive. “Alongside these lines of credit, we are also thankful for EIB’s technical assistance support to TDB via which world-class trainings were delivered to our staff, among other activities. Half of our portfolio is directly and indirectly contributing to SDGs; 70% of our energy portfolio is in renewables; and apart from our regular operations, we have recently launched an SME programme to address the missing middle-SME financing gap. Our multifaceted partnership with EIB will enable us to step-up our commitment to delivering triple-bottom line results in the region we serve.”

“The largest ever cooperation between the EIB and TDB will support a total of EUR 240 million of new investment across Africa. Scaling up climate related private sector investment is key for climate action and saving our planet. The new financing will accelerate investment in renewable energy, energy efficiency and clean transport by businesses in Africa. This is a model for private sector financing worldwide that demonstrates how new business investment can include climate action.” said Ambroise Fayolle, European Investment Bank Vice President.

In Eastern and Southern Africa and in most emerging markets, SMEs are by far the biggest contributor to employment and account for up to 40% of GDPs. They play a key role in driving competition and innovation in almost all sectors and are also crucial to industrial growth as they support the development of pools of skilled and semi-skilled labour forces.

The financing gap for formal SMEs in emerging markets is at 1.2 trillion US dollars and up to 2.6 trillion US dollars if we include the informal sector. In Sub-Saharan Africa, this figure is estimated at 331 billion US dollars, including 42 billion for women entrepreneurs.

On the climate front, as evidenced by recent disasters such as Cyclones Idai and Kenneth, it is crucial to point out that up to 65% of the African population is directly impacted by climate change, while only 4% of global greenhouse-gas emissions. EIB aims to be Paris Aligned in all of its activities by 2020 by implementing its Climate Strategy. Likewise, along with other International Development Finance Club (IDFC) members, TDB is committed to aligning itself to the Paris Agreement.

Background information

About TDB

Established in 1985, the Eastern and Southern African Trade and Development Bank (TDB) is a multilateral, treaty-based, investment-grade development financial institution, with assets of USD 6 bn. The Bank's mandate is to finance and foster trade, regional economic integration and sustainable development through trade finance, project and infrastructure finance, asset management and advisory services.

www.tdbgroup.org

[COP25: Luxembourg-EIB joint event at COP today – Scaling up private finance for climate action](#)



At the UN Climate Change Conference in Madrid, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg

and the European Investment Bank, the EU bank, organised a side-event to discuss challenges and solutions to scale up private finance for climate action.

During a keynote conversation, EIB President Werner Hoyer and Pierre Gramegna Minister of Finance of Luxembourg, stressed the need for increased partnership and cooperation between the public and private sector to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement and looked back on the successful partnership between the Luxembourg and EIB in mobilising finance to tackle climate change

The event highlighted the [Luxembourg-EIB Climate Finance Platform](#), as an innovative example to mobilise private finance for climate action. The Luxembourg-EIB Climate Finance Platform, a fund endowed with an initial EUR 30m by the Grand Duchy, has been investing in projects with a strong impact in the fight against climate change since 2017.

The partners announced the launch of the second phase of the LCFP that run for another five years until the end of 2024, with Luxembourg committing another EUR 40 million to the fund.

In the second panel, EIB Vice President Emma Navarro joined Carole Dieschbourg, Minister for the Environment, Climate and Sustainable Development, Luxembourg, José Carlos García de Quevedo, Chairman, Instituto de Crédito Oficial and Javier Manzanares, Deputy Executive Director, Green Climate Fund to discuss concrete examples of innovative climate finance solutions from around the world.

[See more information about the EIB participation in COP 25 and a selection of videos, blogs, podcasts](#)

[European Cooperation: new online services in Austria](#)

December 09, 2019 [News](#)

European Cooperation: new online services in Austria



The [Austrian Patent Office](#) (APO), with the support of the EUIPO's European Cooperation Projects, has improved the service provided to their users through the launch of a set of modern online services for trade mark and design applications.

The new digital services platform became available on 9 December 2019.

This has been the third successful launch at APO of front office tools developed and offered by the EUIPO to the European Union national and regional intellectual property offices, following the introduction earlier this year of online forms to receive digital requests for registration of trade marks and designs.

The new platform includes 44 new online services for trade marks and designs that will help modernise operations in the Austrian IP office, benefitting users across the EU.

The release comes as a result of the work carried out by the EUIPO and its partners under the [European Cooperation projects](#).

These projects support intellectual property offices in developing more efficient, reliable and user-friendly tools and services for trade marks and designs within the European Union Intellectual Property Network (EUIPN).

[Ireland continues to be integral](#)

partner in Eurojust

✘ December 2019 December 2019

Ireland will continue to be an integral and full operational partner in Eurojust as of 12 December, when the new Regulation establishing Eurojust as an Agency will officially apply. Both houses of Parliament (the *Oireachtas*) already decided to opt-in as a full-fledged member of Eurojust in June of this year. Ireland and the UK were required to opt-in to the Eurojust Regulation in view of the special protocol of both countries in the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice. The decision to opt-in builds on the existing cooperation and exchange of information in judicial matters and the strong rise in the number of Irish cases registered at Eurojust. Ireland also participated for the first time in a Eurojust-funded joint investigation team (JIT) last month.

Eurojust's President, Mr Ladislav Hamran, said: *'We are very pleased that the excellent cooperation with Ireland will continue after 12 December, when we will officially become an EU Agency. Eurojust helps the judiciary to cooperate in a practical way and Ireland's participation as an integral partner is of enormous importance in our joint efforts to combat cross-border crime.'*

Ireland's Minister for Justice and Equality, Mr Charles Flanagan, stated: *'Ireland has been a committed member and supporter of Eurojust since its foundation. Opting into the new Eurojust Regulation was a matter of priority for Ireland. Ireland believes the new Regulation offers a modern framework for Eurojust to perform its role effectively and efficiently and looks forward to the Regulation coming into application on 12 December next.'*

The National Member for Ireland at Eurojust, Mr Frank Cassidy, pointed out: *'While a more open European Union brings many advantages, it creates significant challenges in addressing cross-border crime. The ability to continue to cooperate within Eurojust, and avail itself of the range of facilities available, is of invaluable importance for Ireland and will enable us to tackle crime in the most efficient way.'*

Based on Protocol 21 on the position of the UK and Ireland within the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice, annexed to the Treaty on the European Union, both countries were required to opt-in to the new Eurojust Regulation, which is established as an official EU Agency as of 12 December of this year. The UK and Ireland decided to opt-in, respectively, in March and June. The participation of Ireland was confirmed by the European Commission on 29 November 2019.

The opt-in and international judicial cooperation with the future Agency were discussed at a seminar in Dublin on 21 November, organised by Eurojust, with the support of Claire Loftus, the Irish Director of Public Prosecutions, Marion Walsh of the Irish Department of Justice and Equality, and Assistant Commissioner Michael O'Sullivan of the national police force, An Garda

Síochána. The seminar focused on the practical aspects of International cooperation in criminal law and included a delegation from the FBI. Vice-President Mr Klaus Meyer-Cabri, National Member for Ireland Mr Frank Cassidy and National Member for Portugal Mr António Cluny participated on behalf of Eurojust.

Over the last five years, the number of Irish cases registered at Eurojust has increased by 41 per cent, with 78 new cases last year. They involve a range of crime types, with the number of cases opened by Ireland being roughly the same number as the number of cases for which other Member States ask for Irish support.

Recently, Ireland for the first time participated in a Eurojust-funded JIT, together with the UK. The agreement on this JIT was signed on 8 November, with a coordination meeting taking place in Dublin. Ireland is the last EU Member State to sign up to a [JIT](#).

 Eurojust's Vice-President *Klaus Meyer-Cabri* addressing a seminar in Ireland on 21 November 2019, with the National Member for Ireland *Frank Cassidy* (right). Photo © Irish Ministry of Justice and Equality.

[Article – The Parliament's fight for gender equality in the EU](#)



Photo by Brooke Cagle on Unsplash

From migration policy to EU trade

Parliament has repeatedly called on the European Commission to increase consistency between gender equality policies and other policies, such as those covering trade, development, agriculture, employment and migration.

In a resolution adopted in 2016, members called for a set of [EU-wide gender guidelines](#) as part of wider reforms on migration and asylum policy.

In a [report](#) adopted in 2018, MEPs called for climate change measures to take into account [the role of women](#) as well as action to empower them and protect the most vulnerable.

All [EU trade agreements](#) must include binding and enforceable provisions to ensure respect for human rights, including gender equality, according to a [resolution](#) adopted in 2018.