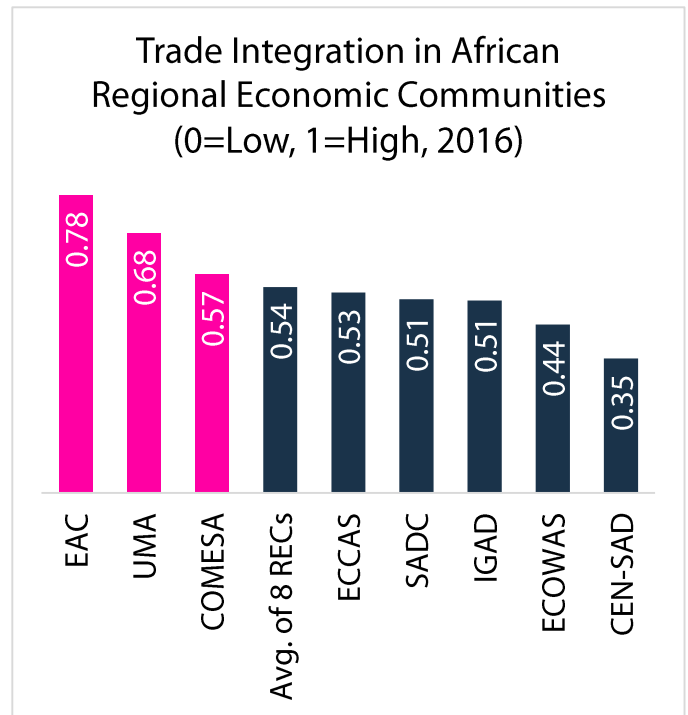


Trade integration in East Africa is the highest among African regional economic zones

The AfDB’s 2016 Regional Integration Index (RII) assesses the state of integration within and among 8 African Regional Economic Communities (RECs). Five key areas including Trade Integration and Free Movement of People make up the RII. The East African Community (EAC) is the top performer in Trade Integration scoring 0.78 on a scale of 0 (low) to 1 (high). The EAC is followed by the Arab Maghreb Union (UMA, 0.63) and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA, 0.57). The top three regions above score higher than the 0.54 average for all 8 RECs.



The ability of people to move freely between countries in Africa is key to unlocking Africa’s full economic potential. Among the 8 RII regions, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS, 0.8), the EAC (0.72) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC, 0.53) lead in enabling free movement of people. All 15 ECOWAS countries allow for visa-free movement of citizens between borders. In the EAC, Rwanda leads and enables visa free movement of most African nationals and many foreign nationals into the country.

