



eurAC

european network
for central africa

2022 ANNUAL REPORT

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Dear readers,

The year 2022 is not ending well in the Great Lakes region with the resumption of the conflict in the east between the Congolese army and the M23 rebel movement. Once again, the populations are caught between the strategic interests of the states in the region to the detriment of respect for their fundamental rights and the preservation of peace. The resurgence of this conflict shows how necessary it is to mobilize the highest international authorities to put an end to the reign of impunity. While the tone of the international community has lately become tougher regarding the protagonists, the European Union and its Member States must further strengthen the coherence of their actions in favor of peace in the region. It is also with a bitter taste that we observed the lifting of sanctions and a possible restart of international cooperation between Burundi and the EU without significant changes or guarantees from the authorities in the field of Human Rights. These political choices, and more generally the renewed tensions in the region, show the importance and relevance of the work carried out by **EurAc** and its members.

A busy agenda lies ahead in 2023 for the EU's external action with numerous crucial milestones such as the elections in the DRC, the legislative review of the European Regulation on Responsible Sourcing and the adoption of a new European external strategy for the Great Lakes region. **EurAc** and all its members are already fully mobilised on these crucial issues for the stability of the region.

Finally, **EurAc** welcomed in September a new Advocacy officer on the issue of natural resources and new members to its Board. The resumption of the General Assemblies in person has allowed to strengthen the synergies between the members of the network in favor of stronger advocacy for the Great Lakes region!

Camille Liewig, **EurAc**'s President



About EurAc

The European Network for Central Africa (EurAc), created in 2003, aims for the EU and its Member States to develop and implement strong and coherent policies regarding peace, security, inclusive political participation, the sustainable and equitable management of natural resources, and the full respect of human rights in the Great Lakes region.

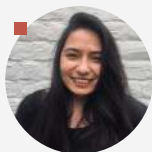
Secretariat



Clara DEBEVE –
Director



Clément IRAOLA –
Project and policy
Officer



Teodora NGUEN –
Advocacy Officer



Daniela BISHOP –
Communication Officer
until January 2022



Vasty MIGUEL –
Communication Officer until
November 2022

Eurac's Board

- **Camille LIEWIG** –
President, Secours Catholique -
Caritas France
- **Véronique PATERNOSTRE** –
Treasurer,
CNCD-11.11.11.
- **Lore BERTREM** –
Administrator, 11.11.11.
- **Davide SOTO NARANJO** –
Administrator, Cordaid
- **Thibaud KURTZ** –
Administrator, AEDH

Political objectives and thematic

EurAc focuses its advocacy on 3 thematic axes translated into 4 policy objectives:



■ PEACE AND SECURITY



■ HUMAN RIGHTS AND INCLUSIVE POLITICAL PARTICIPATION



■ NATURAL RESOURCES

The EU adopts meaningful policies, legal and political instruments to minimise the adverse environmental, social and economic impact of the exploitation of natural resources in the Great Lakes region.

The EU supports democratic, civil-society-led efforts from the people of the Great Lakes region to promote human rights and democratic participation.

The EU engages in foreign relations that promote peace and security for the citizens of the region, and particularly for the most vulnerable groups.

European Member States act with one voice with regards to their political and economic relations with the region, which are rooted in human rights and prioritise the wealth and well-being of its people and the environment.



Member organisations

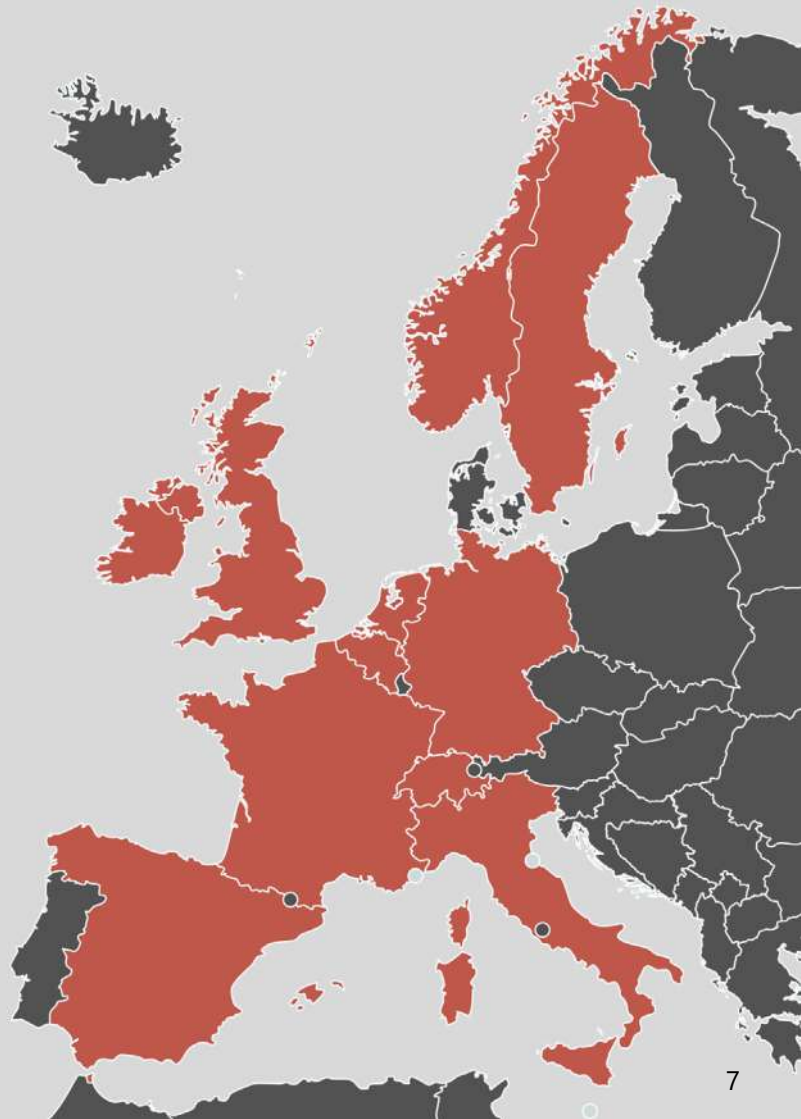


EurAc gathers 34 member organisations across 12 European countries.

EurAc members are European civil society organisations working in and on the region and supporting local civil society in Burundi, DR Congo and Rwanda in the promotion of peace and development and the defense of human rights.

Country of origin:

- Belgium (11)
- France (5)
- Germany (1)
- Ireland (1)
- Italy (1)
- Netherlands (4)
- Norway (1)
- Spain (2)
- Sweden (2)
- Switzerland (2)
- United Kingdom (1)
- Finland (1)
- International (2)



A glimpse of 2022

- **30+** different key policy-makers met
- **6+** publications (reports, policy briefings and statements) released publicly or confidentially
- **2** press releases published
- **6** public events organised in Brussels and Kinshasa
- **35+** consultation meetings with civil society organisations in Europe and the Great Lakes region
- **3** working missions of the Secretariat in the Great Lakes region



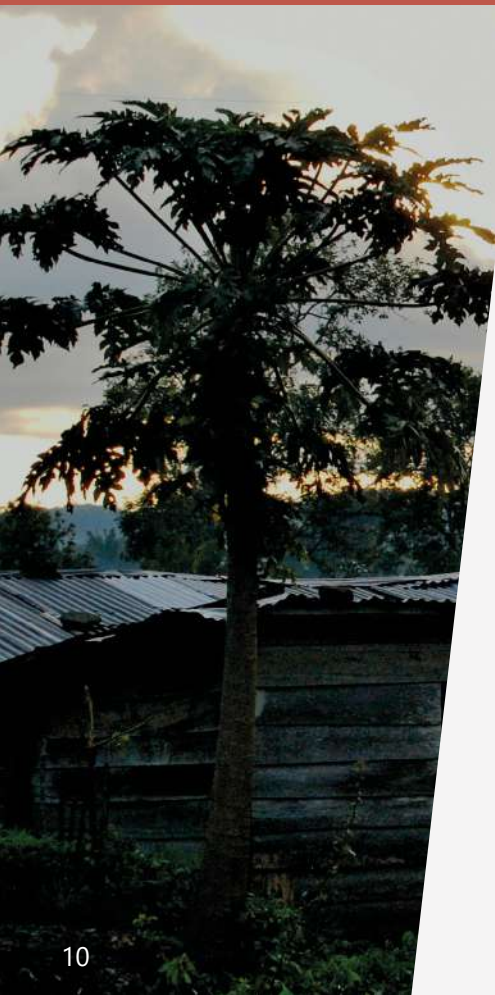
Joining forces

To develop its analysis, elaborate its policy recommendations and conduct its advocacy, **EurAc** collaborates with numerous stakeholders from Europe and the Great Lakes region: civil society organisations, experts, researchers, diplomatic networks, representatives of the private sector, national, European or international policy-makers.

EurAc's team regularly travels to the Great Lakes region to meet with frontline actors, partners and decision-makers, this year we had the opportunity to visit **Kigali**, **Bukavu** and **Kinshasa**.



Towards an EU regional approach for the Great Lakes



The resurgence of the M23 rebel group, combined with the persistence of other armed groups in the east of DRC, has led to an alarming deterioration of the security situation and to episodes of targeted violence. This crisis has already forced the displacement of thousands of people, while humanitarian needs in the DRC, already high, have continued to increase.

Throughout the year, **EurAc** organised **online panel discussions** that brought together experts and local actors to exchange views on the security situation, humanitarian challenges, as well as electoral issues and the role of the international community. These exchanges allowed us to mobilise our members, their partners, as well as other international NGOs working on human rights, peace and security **to feed our advocacy and analysis.**

In parallel, the EU and its Member States have developed their new strategy for the Great Lakes region which recognises the need for a regional approach to address the root causes of instability and will serve as a reference framework for all EU policies and actions in the region. **EurAc** has been **actively advocating** to present its strategic priorities for the region and to ensure that the EU and its Member States act with one voice regarding their political and economic relations in the region.

Giving voice: «Young people mobilising for peace and democracy in Africa's Great Lakes»

Youth represents a significant demographic weight in the African continent. Although their role is increasingly recognised by regional and international institutions, some of them still struggle to give the youth proper consideration in peace-building and reconciliation issues. Young people should be recognised as essential drivers of change.

The UN adopted two resolutions on youth in 2015 and 2016. In 2022, the UN established a UN Youth Desk. In DRC, the Resolution 2250 on National Action Plan was launched in August 2022. Its objective is to strengthen and promote the participation of youth in decision-making and peace processes. At the European level, following the EU Council Conclusions on Youth in External Action (2020), the EU adopted an EU External Action Action Plan for Youth (2022-2027) on 4 October 2022.

On this occasion, we organised a round table with our member Justice and Peace to bring the voice of youth fighting peacefully, across borders, for peace and democracy in Africa's Great Lakes region. The **round table** created a **space for exchange** between the young Burundian and Congolese participants and representatives from the European External Action service. These exchanges drawn conclusions on how the EU and its Member States can better contribute to youth-led efforts in the region and the tools they should implement to support them.



HIGH REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE UNION FOR
FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND
SECURITY POLICY

Strasbourg, 4.10.2022
JOIN(2022) 53 final

JOINT COMMUNICATION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE
COUNCIL

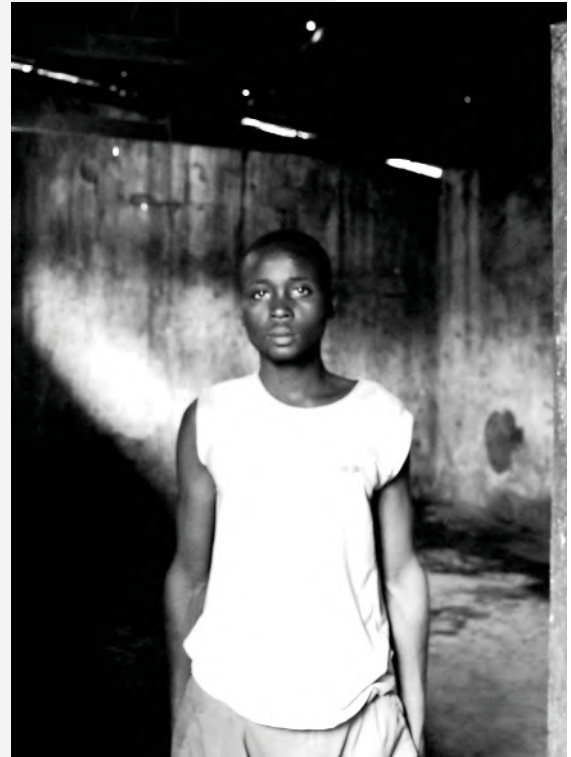
Youth Action Plan (YAP) in EU external action 2022 – 2027

Promoting meaningful youth participation and empowerment in EU external action
for sustainable development, equality and peace

What future for EU-Burundi relations after the lifting of restrictions under Article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement?

After the political crisis of 2015, the change of head of state, President Evariste Ndayishimiye, in 2020 raised many hopes for the improvement of the security and human rights situation in Burundi. However, in 2022, human rights organisations continued to document killings, enforced disappearances, torture, arbitrary arrests and detention, as well as sexual and gender-based violence. In response to President Ndayishimiye's openness and willingness to re-engage with the international community, the Burundian government and EU representatives resumed their political dialogue, which had been suspended since 2016. The EU also lifted restrictions under Article 96 of the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement on 8 February 2022. However, many civil society organisations deplore the lack of tangible changes and the continued shrinking of civic space.

EurAc, in collaboration with its members and other European civil society organisations, continues **to monitor the situation of human rights** and civic space in Burundi; and **to propose possible actions** for the EU and its Member States to ensure that their diplomatic and cooperation initiatives promote the full exercise of the citizens' civil, social and political rights, paying particular attention to youth and women.



Pygmy Indigenous People in the DRC

A success for the rights of Pygmy Indigenous People... and for our project !

The year 2022 marked the achievement of a long advocacy work led by indigenous pygmy people (IPPs) for almost 10 years with the adoption of the National Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of IPPs in the DRC.



The **PEUPLE** project has been implemented since 2020 by a consortium of 6 Congolese (SPFA, REBAC and PIDP) and European (AEDH, EurAc, and DOCIP) organisations. It promotes the defence of IPP's rights and interests in the DRC, particularly in the provinces of Equateur and North Kivu, where our partners' activities are implemented. The project aims to strengthen IPPs' advocacy strategies to increase their visibility and advocacy message at national, European and UN level.

In 2022 within the framework of this project, **EurAc** coordinated the production of an '**action research**' in collaboration with a researcher from the University of Mons in Belgium. This research aims to document and provide a global analysis of the discrimination and rights violations encountered by indigenous populations and to question the European Union's action and leverage to respond to these challenges. The research will be published in 2023.



The partners of the project in visit in Kinshasa - DRC, December 2022

Assessing the consequences of climate change in the Great Lakes

In December 2022, during its General Assembly, **EurAc** organised a conference on 'Climate change in the Great Lakes Region'. Climate change and environment protection are at the center of discussions at the highest political level. The EU stresses the importance of climate mitigation measures and the need for a green energy transition. Yet, EU's attention to issues related to climate change in the Great lakes region remains largely insufficient.

The implication of climate change and environmental protection goes beyond natural hazards, floods and droughts. Social cohesion, stability and economic development are deeply linked with climate concerns. The stabilization efforts of the region need to be integrated within an environmental prospective.

This event brought together the members of the network to reflect on how to deal with climate change in the Great Lakes region, which is directly linked to all **EurAc**'s core thematic of work: peace and security, land conflicts and land grabbing, the rights of indigenous peoples, the exploitation of natural resources and human rights.

Conference - panel



Samuel Pommeret

CCFD – Terre Solidaire

Intervention:
Land conflict issues



Clément Iraola

EurAc – Natural Resources

Intervention:
Moderator & Panelist



**Maria Martin de Almagro
Iniesta**

Professor - University Ghent

Intervention:
Gender, natural resources
& peacebuilding

European regulation on responsible sourcing (3TG) - Madini project

Throughout 2022, EurAc, together with its members and partners, has continued its advocacy work with the EU for an effective implementation of the European Regulation on Responsible Sourcing (3TG).

In September 2022, **EurAc published the report of a three-day online workshop that brought together more than 50 representatives of Colombian, Congolese and European civil society organisations (CSOs) to formulate policy recommendations to the EU and its Member States** on the implementation of the EU Responsible Sourcing Regulation (3TG). This workshop was followed by a public online conference where civil society representatives expressed their concerns to EU representatives (Parliament and Commission) and presented their recommendations. This report calls for more transparent and effective regulation of minerals.



In December 2022, **EurAc organised a visit to the DRC (Bukavu and Kinshasa) to meet local CSOs in the formalisation of the artisanal mining sector.** These meetings were an opportunity to understand the implementation of the European Regulation on 3TG in the DRC and to relay local CSOs' concerns to the European institutions in Brussels and Kinshasa during an advocacy tour carried out in the framework of the MADINI project.

Read the report: [European Regulation on Responsible Mineral Sourcing](#)

Elections and inclusive political participation in DRC



In view of the up-coming elections scheduled for December 2023 in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), **EurAc** developed a series of activities to mobilise its members and the European community to speak with one voice in support of an inclusive, transparent and credible electoral process that respects the sovereign will of the Congolese people.

In this regard, **EurAc**, in collaboration with the Royal Egmont Institute for International Relations, organised a webinar **aimed at drawing lessons learnt from the 2018** electoral cycle in the DRC with various local and international civil society actors as well as diplomatic representatives. This allowed to propose concrete recommendations and actions to the EU and its member states, in order to rectify the mistakes of the past.

In its report «**Elections in 2023 in the DRC: rectifying past mistakes to consolidate democracy**», **EurAc** has drawn up a state of play of the various challenges faced by Congolese officials in the preparation of this new electoral cycle. The network also makes a series of recommendations to the EU and its Member States to prepare for this crucial moment for the future of democracy in Congo.

The report was elaborated thanks to the contributions of **EurAc** members, as well as their partners in the field who observe closely the organisation of the electoral cycle. On 18 and 19 May 2022, **EurAc** organised a **two-day workshop** with its members and their partners, with more than 30 participants from Europe and different parts of the DRC. Finally, the report was presented in Kinshasa on 20 May 2022 at a **conference** with European policy makers, representatives of international organisations and European and Congolese civil society actors (more than 50 participants).



EurAcworkshop with members and their partners,
Kinshasa - May 2022



Read the report: [Elections in 2023 in the DRC: rectifying past mistakes to consolidate democracy](#)

Read the statement: [EurAc statement on the electoral process in DR Congo](#)

Press releases and coverage

PRESS RELEASE : [2023 Elections in the DRC: the European Union and its Member States must adopt a clear position and a common strategy, May 2022](#)

PRESS RELEASE : [Reconnaissance des droits des peuples autochtones pygmées : une victoire historique en RDC – Novembre 2022](#) (only available in French)

PRESS PUBLICATION : [Présidentielle en RDC: un rapport visant à rectifier les erreurs du passé pour consolider la démocratie, la Libre \(BE\), 31 May 2022](#)



COMMUNIQUE DE PRESSE
Reconnaissance des droits des peuples autochtones pygmées : une victoire historique en RDC

Le vendredi 25 novembre 2022

Après adoption par les deux chambres du Parlement, l'Assemblée Nationale et le Sénat, le 14 juin 2022, la loi n°22/039 portant protection et promotion des droits des peuples autochtones pygmées en République Démocratique du Congo (RDC) a été envoyée au Président de la République, Chef de l'Etat, Son Excellence Félix Auzoué Tshibanda Tshibanda, qui l'a promulguée en date du 15 juin 2023. Le 14 novembre 2022, cette loi a officiellement été publiée au Journal Officiel de la RDC.

C'est une victoire historique pour les peuples autochtones pygmées de la RDC après quatre ans de lutte et plaidoyer en faveur de la reconnaissance légale des droits des peuples autochtones pygmées en RDC, malgré d'autres avancées éminemment précieuses.

La promulgation de la loi est le fruit du travail ardu mené par les peuples autochtones pygmées et les organisations de la société civile congolaise, avec le soutien des partenaires internationaux, pour faire reconnaître leurs droits. Cette loi est une des réponses aux recommandations formulées par le Conseil des droits de l'homme des Nations Unies au gouvernement congolais sur la reconnaissance des droits des peuples autochtones pygmées, à travers la résolution d'Exploitation Industrielle Universelle (EPIU) de 2019.

Cette loi porte des innovations très considérables notamment en création d'un fonds national pour garantir le développement et l'éducation des peuples autochtones pygmées dans la vie nationale et pour adresser la question centrale du droit à la terre et aux ressources naturelles, à la santé, à la culture et à l'éducation, conformément à leurs modes de vie traditionnels.

Aujourd'hui, on estime que la RDC compte plus de 3,1 million de personnes issues des populations autochtones pygmées, selon les chiffres des organisations des peuples autochtones pygmées et celles qui les accompagnent étroitement au sein de la société civile congolaise. Ces populations sont victimes de nombreuses atteintes sociales et de discrimination sociale. Malgré leurs capacités de gouvernance des terres et de la biodiversité sur leurs terres et territoires par leurs savoirs et pratiques traditionnelles et le fait qu'elles aient comme une importante ligne de défense contre le changement climatique et la destruction des écosystèmes menacés, ces populations subissent la discrimination et la marginalisation.



COMMUNIQUE DE PRESSE | Mai 2022

Elections de 2023 en RDC : l'Union européenne et ses États membres doivent adopter un positionnement clair et une stratégie commune

Au regard du processus électoral prévu pour 2023 en République Démocratique du Congo (RDC), le Réseau européen pour l'Afrique centrale (EurAc) publie un rapport qui dresse l'état des lieux du contexte électoral du pays et de ses enjeux. EurAc appelle l'Union européenne (UE) et ses États membres à s'accorder d'une seule voix pour accompagner les autorités congolaises dans l'organisation d'un processus électoral inclusif, transparent et crédible qui respecte la volonté souveraine du peuple congolais.

Un peu plus d'une année avant les élections générales prévues en RDC, la préparation du cycle électoral suscite déjà de nombreuses inquiétudes. Après la nomination controversée du nouveau Président de la Commission électorale nationale indépendante (CENI) M. Denis Kadima en octobre 2021, la société civile s'inquiète du retard pris dans la mise en place de son équipe, à qui incombera la lourde tâche d'organiser le scrutin dans un pays comptant une population de plus de 81 millions d'habitants, et de l'annonce du calendrier électoral fixant les étapes de l'organisation de celles-ci. Au-delà des défis logistiques que représente l'organisation des élections, le contexte politique et social dans lequel elles s'inscrivent est également préoccupant et caractérisé par l'absence de consensus entre les parties prenantes, la fragilité du système judiciaire, à la suite de la reorganisation de la magistrature, la violence, les nombreuses incertitudes concernant la réforme électorale en cours et enfin, une certaine lassitude des citoyens vis-à-vis du processus électoral.

Dans son rapport « Elections de 2023 en RDC : rectifier les erreurs du passé pour consolider la démocratie », EurAc dresse un état des lieux détaillé des différents enjeux qui attendent les responsables congolais dans la préparation de ce nouveau cycle électoral. Le réseau adresse également une série de recommandations à l'UE et ses États membres pour que ceux-ci se présentent au mieux, dès à présent, pour cette échéance cruciale pour l'avenir de la démocratie congolaise et de la pacification de la région des Grands Lacs.

« L'UE et ses États membres doivent se coordonner dès à présent et adopter une position commune face aux différents scénarios possibles de l'évolution de la situation électorale. Ils devront également se tenir prêts à donner une réponse ferme et unanime en cas d'irrésolabilité, après avoir exploré à la crédibilité du processus », souligne Tiedora Nguen, chargée de plaidoyer pour les droits humains au sein d'EurAc. « L'UE a joué un rôle important lors du précédent cycle électoral congolais et doit poursuivre son engagement dans le régime en soutenant le système judiciaire, les médias et les mouvements citoyens dans leur rôle d'observation civique, de suivi et d'observation au moment du processus électoral » poursuit-elle.



La Libre
AFRIQUE

L'actualité africaine. Libre et indépendante

Accueil République démocratique du Congo Politique Société Sports Culture Economie

Présidentielle en RDC: un rapport visant à « rectifier les erreurs du passé pour consolider la démocratie » en RDC

12 Dans République démocratique du Congo 31 mai 2022 11 1304 Views

Social Networks



Twitter

[@EurAc_Net](https://twitter.com/EurAc_Net)

More than 2,460 followers



LinkedIn

[European Network for Central Africa \(EurAc\)](https://www.linkedin.com/company/european-network-for-central-africa-eurac/)

More than 930 followers

Finance

EurAc works almost exclusively thanks to the commitment and support of its member organisations. Their annual membership fees enable the Brussels-based Secretariat to carry out its advocacy and information work independently.

REVENUES 2022*	
Membership Fees	181.940 €
Extra Contributions	25.284 €
Projects	51.231 €
Total	258.455 €

EXPENSES 2022*	
Human resources	175.951 €
Operating costs	28.030 €
Institutional and network life	5.245 €
Communication	997 €
Advocacy activities	39.901 €
Total	250.124 €

In 2022, the majority of **EurAc's** revenues came from the members' annual membership fees (70,4%). The rest of the revenues stemmed from external projects such as the MADINI project financed by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (10%), the PEUPLE project financed by the French Agency for Development (AFD) (6%) and the natural resources project financed by the Belgian cooperation (DGD) in collaboration with IPIS (3,7%). EurAc was also supported by extraordinary contributions from some of its members on specific activities such as the publication of a report and the organisation of a seminar in Kinshasa (9,7%).

Most expenses directly serve the Secretariat's advocacy work, which is essentially based on the cost of human resources (70,3%) and a series of activities (such as field missions, the organisation of meetings/events or the drafting of reports for example) called advocacy activities (16%) and communication (0,4%). Other operating costs (11%) and institutional costs (2%) remain limited.

*The figure and financial results for 2022 shown in these tables remain provisional until their final approval by the external auditor and the General Assembly.



Join us !

Are you part of a NGO based in Europe working on/in the African Great Lakes region, more specifically Rwanda, Burundi, and/or the DR Congo? Are you interested in issues linked to human rights, participatory democracy, peace and security, and/or in promoting the sustainable management of natural resources in the region? **Join the network !**

A strong, well-known and legitimate network

EurAc relies on its solid expertise and its long-standing relations with the political leaders of the EU institutions, its Member States as well as with the main actors of civil society in the Great Lakes region.

Being a member of **EurAc** means benefiting from a network of experts, privileged access to follow EU's relations with the Great Lakes region and contributing to a common advocacy to shape EU's agenda and actions in line with the network's mission and principles.



More information ► <https://www.eurac-network.org/en/become-eurac-member>

“Protection International joined EurAc in 2019, after years of being an active participant in the network. EurAc and PI have implemented numerous joint advocacy activities, such as the publication of a joint statement denouncing the DRC’s draconian human rights defenders draft bill, and the organisation of a joint event at the European Parliament to raise awareness about the criminalization of La Lucha, a pro-democracy movement in DRC. PI believes that the work carried out by EurAc is unique and highly relevant. EurAc has a deep understanding of the dynamics and realities of the Great Lakes region, is a reliable source of information, and regularly publishes relevant research. EurAc also actively seeks the participation of local organisations, giving them the opportunity to be heard by key decision-makers at the EU level.”

Marjorie Unal, Head of Programs, Protection International – Intl



“EURAC has been an important partner for many years. The network is very useful for NCA to know more about processes happening at the EU level, and about the perspectives and activities of other organisations pursuing compatible goals.”

Fernando Pineda Pinzon, Advisor, Peacebuilding and Conflict Sensitivity from NCA - Norway

“KIOS re-joined EurAc about a year ago. The membership has given a boost to our advocacy work, but also to our overall work in the Great Lakes. EurAc brings together a wealth of information and know-how. In addition, the people at the EurAc secretariat are professional, dynamic and a pleasure to work with”.

Maarit Roström, Expert from KIOS Foundation - Finland

The background of the slide is a scenic landscape photograph. It shows a large body of water, likely a lake, with several islands and peninsulas. The land is covered in green vegetation, and there are hills in the distance under a cloudy sky. In the foreground, there are some trees and foliage. A red diagonal band runs across the bottom of the image, containing contact information.

eurAC

European network
for central africa

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