



**KAMARAJ IAS ACADEMY**  
Only IAS Academy by Grandson of "Perunthalsivam Kamarajar"

# Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

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## Context:

**Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger**, which have been under **military rule**, have officially **left ECOWAS** due to ongoing **diplomatic tensions** with the organization. This decision follows a series of political and military changes in these countries, leading to growing dissatisfaction with ECOWAS's stance and actions regarding their political transitions.

## About:

The **Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)** is a regional political and economic union that aims to foster economic cooperation and integration among West African countries. Here's a closer look at ECOWAS and the recent developments:

## About ECOWAS:

- **Headquarters:** Abuja, Nigeria
- **Founded:** 1975
- **Objective:** The primary aim of ECOWAS is to promote **economic cooperation** among its member states in order to **raise living standards** and promote **economic development** in the West African region.
- **Rights and Freedoms:**
  - Citizens of ECOWAS member countries have the right to live and work in any other member state.
  - There is also **free circulation of goods** across the region, facilitating trade and movement.

## Members:

ECOWAS initially had 15 member states, but following the recent **withdrawal of Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger** under military rule, the number of members has decreased to **12**. The current ECOWAS members are:

1. **Benin**
2. **Cabo Verde**
3. **Cote d'Ivoire**
4. **The Gambia**
5. **Ghana**
6. **Guinea**
7. **Guinea-Bissau**
8. **Liberia**
9. **Nigeria**
10. **Senegal**

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11. **Sierra Leone**

12. **Togo**

**Impact of the Withdrawal:**

- This withdrawal marks a significant shift in the political landscape of West Africa. ECOWAS has historically played a key role in maintaining regional stability and facilitating economic growth, but the departure of these three nations could potentially challenge the effectiveness of the organization in the region.
- ECOWAS has been involved in addressing political instability, such as military coups, in the past, and has imposed sanctions or other measures on countries that have undergone unconstitutional changes in government.