



OVERVIEW OF ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS

Updated March 2021

Region	Current status	Next step
<u>CENTRAL AFRICA</u>	<p>Cameroon signed the EPA between the EU and Central Africa as the only country in the region on 15 January 2009. The European Parliament gave its consent in June 2013. In July 2014, the Parliament of Cameroon approved the ratification of the Agreement and on 4 August 2014, the agreement entered into provisional application. Tariff liberalisation started in 2016 and entered in its 4th phase in 2019.</p> <p>The fourth annual EPA Committee between Cameroon and the EU took place on 18 and 19 February 2019 in Yaoundé to oversee the implementation of the agreement and related issues.</p> <p>An extraordinary (virtual) session of the EPA Committee took place on 28 of October to discuss the recent unilateral measure taken by Cameroon to suspend its tariff phase out. After this meeting, Cameroon agreed by letter, to resume with its commitments by 1 January 2021.</p>	<p>Meeting of the EPA Committee: The fifth meeting was planned in Brussels in March 2020. It has been postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and travel restrictions. Both sides agreed that, if the sanitary situation allows, this meeting should take place in physical format in Brussels at the earliest moment. If that is not possible, a virtual meeting should be organised.</p> <p>In the meantime, discussions continue between the Parties to strengthen the implementation of the agreement. Decisions concerning the procedure for mediation and arbitration, the code of conduct for arbitrators, as well as the list of arbitrators have been recently signed. Negotiations are also ongoing to agree on a joint protocol on rules of origin.</p>

Region	Current status	Next step
<u>WEST AFRICA</u>	<p>The EPA with Côte d'Ivoire was signed on 26 November 2008, approved by the European Parliament on 25 March 2009, and ratified by the Ivorian National Assembly on 12 August 2016. It entered into provisional application on 3 September 2016. The fourth meeting of the joint EPA committee took place in Abidjan on 27-28 November 2019 to oversee the implementation of the agreement and related issues. Side meetings took also place with the private sector and Ivorian authorities. Effective liberalisation started officially on 6 December 2019.</p> <p>The EPA with Ghana was signed on 28 July 2016, ratified on 3 August 2016 by the Ghanaian Parliament and approved by the European Parliament on 1 December 2016. It entered into provisional application on 15 December 2016. The second Meeting of the joint EPA committee with Ghana took place on 29 November 2019 in Brussels. Ghana started tariff liberalisation in 2020.</p> <p>Negotiations of the regional EPA covering 16 countries in West Africa were concluded on 30 June 2014. All EU Member States and 13 West African Countries signed the EPA in December 2014, except Nigeria, Mauritania and The Gambia. The Gambia signed on 9 August 2018 and Mauritania on 21 September 2018, leaving Nigeria the only country of West Africa that has not signed the EPA.</p> <p>Mauritania and ECOWAS signed an Association Agreement on 9 August 2017 to define the country's participation in ECOWAS' trade policy, including the EPA.</p>	<p>EPAs with Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana: the agreements are provisionally applied.</p> <p>The third EPA committee with Ghana will be held in the second quarter of 2021.</p> <p>The fifth EPA committee with Côte d'Ivoire will be held in the second quarter of 2021.</p> <p>Regional EPA: After signature by all the Parties, the agreement will be submitted for ratification.</p>

Region	Current status	Next step
<u>EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA(ESA)</u>	<p>In 2009 Mauritius, Seychelles, Zimbabwe and Madagascar signed an interim Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA). The Agreement is provisionally applied since 14 May 2012. The European Parliament gave its consent on 17 January 2013.</p> <p>The provisional application for Comoros started on 7 February 2019. The inaugural EPA Committee was held in October 2012 in Brussels, and the latest, eighth, meeting took place in January 2020 in Seychelles. The Customs Cooperation Committee and the Joint Development Committee also met alongside the EPA Committee.</p> <p>The Parties have also agreed to extend the scope of this EPA to areas not currently covered by the current agreement. These so-called “deepening” negotiations will include all trade-related issues, trade and sustainable development, as well as consultative bodies for civil society and parliaments. The upgraded EPA will be a comprehensive and high-end modern agreement.</p> <p>Negotiations for the ‘deepening’ of the existing agreement were officially launched in Mauritius in October 2019. The Parties clarified horizontal issues relating to the negotiations and exchanged views on a number of areas, including the trade and sustainable development chapter, technical barriers to trade (TBT), agriculture, services and investment, and digital trade. Since then, three rounds of negotiations took place, the first in Victoria (Seychelles) from 15 to 17 January 2020 and the two last by vide conference due to the covid-19 pandemic from 6 to 8 July and from 24 to 27 November 2020. During these rounds, the following issues were discussed: rules of origin (ROO), trade barriers to trade (TBT), customs and trade facilitation (C&TF), sanitary and phytosanitary standards (SPS), agriculture, trade and sustainable development (TSD) and trade in services, investment liberalisation and digital trade (S, IL&DT). All the rounds took place in a constructive atmosphere, allowing progress on all topics. The two last issues (TSD, S, IL&DT) were discussed for the first time in the last round. For TSD, the discussions helped the parties to understand better the respective positions on divergent points. For S, IL&DT, no text-based discussions yet, but ESA party had the opportunity to raise questions and clarifications on the EU’s approach presented to them.</p>	<p>Negotiations on deepening of the agreement will continue in April 2021 (fourth round).</p> <p>The ninth meeting of the EPA Committee will take place in Brussels in 2021 at a date to be jointly decided.</p>

Region	Current status	Next step
<u>EASTAFRICAN COMMUNITY (EAC)</u>	<p>The negotiations for the regional EPA were successfully concluded on 16 October 2014.</p> <p>On 1 September 2016, Kenya and Rwanda signed the Economic Partnership Agreement between the East African Community and the EU. All EU Member States and the EU have also signed the Agreement. All EAC members need to sign and ratify the EPA to be implemented.</p> <p>The EAC Summit of 28 February 2021 concluded that while not all EAC members are not ready to sign and ratify the EPA, those members, who wish to implement the EPA should be able to commence engagements with the EU with a view to starting the EAC EU EPA implementation under the principle of variable geometry”.</p>	<p>The EU will start discussions with the EAC members willing to engage in the implementation of the EPA as their leaders concluded in the Summit of 28 February 2021.</p>

Region	Current status	Next step
<u>SOUTHAFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY (SADC) EPA Group</u>	<p>On 15 July 2014, the EPA negotiations were successfully concluded in South Africa. The agreement was signed by the EU and the SADC EPA group on 10 June 2016 and the European Parliament gave its consent on 14 September 2016. Pending ratification by all EU Member States, the agreement came provisionally into force as of 10 October 2016.</p> <p>The provisional application for Mozambique started on 4 February 2018. A first Joint Council meeting at Ministerial level took place on 19 February 2019 in Cape Town and put in place the institutional and dispute settlement framework.</p> <p>On 14 June 2019, the EU formally requested dispute settlement consultations with SACU over their safeguard measure on EU poultry. This is the first step in the EPA's dispute avoidance and settlement mechanism. Consultations took place on 13 September 2019 in Gaborone, Botswana. In April 2020, the EU requested the establishment of an arbitration panel. This process was initially put on hold because of COVID, but has been resumed in November 2020.</p> <p>The sixth meeting of the Trade and Development Committee took place in Brussels on 19-20 February 2020 where progress on many implementation topics (e.g. joint monitoring, setting up of a joint civil society platform, levels for triggering agricultural safeguards) was noticeable. The Committee also took note of Angola's formal request for accession to the EPA.</p> <p>The seventh meeting of the Trade and Development Committee took place in a virtual format on 26 February 2020. Both sides discussed the pending Joint Council Decisions on Angola's accession and on the revision of the agricultural safeguard thresholds. Both sides continued to discuss the participation of non-state actors and on the monitoring mechanism they agreed to include indicators related to ratification of international labour conventions and multilateral environmental agreements. They appointed coordinators with a view of initiating the work on the report that should be published by 15 October. They also agreed to launch the EPA review in October and to set up a Technical Group that will start working on a draft outline. Parties also discussed the request from SACU for extended cumulation with the UK as well as a number of pending market access issues (next steps in poultry dispute and AD review on frozen potatoes as well recent alcohol ban adopted in SA).</p>	<p>The seventh meeting of the Trade and Development Committee should take place in the first half of 2021. The first joint civil society meeting should take place back-to-back to this meeting.</p> <p>At the beginning of 2021, the Joint Council should adopt by written procedure decisions concerning the start of the accession process with Angola and the agricultural safeguard clause. Further to the seventh TDC meeting both sides still need to agree the joint conclusions with regard to the Joint decision on Angola (a feedback would be provided by the SADC side by 12 March). TDC tentatively agreed to hold the 2nd Joint Council meeting in November 2021. Next TDC meetings will take place in June and October.</p>

Region	Current status	Next step
<u>CARIBBEAN</u>	<p>The CARIFORUM – EU EPA was signed in October 2008 and approved by the European Parliament in March 2009.</p> <p>The EPA joint institutions have met regularly since 2010 :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 4th Joint CARIFORUM-EU Council (Ministers) held its meeting in Brussels in November 2017. • The 9th Trade and Development Committee (senior officials) held its meeting in Brussels on 28 and 29 November 2019 • The 5th Consultative Committee representing civil society held its meeting in Brussels on 26 November 2019. • The 6th CARIFORUM-EU Special Committee on Customs Cooperation and Trade Facilitation was held in April 2019. • The 3rd CARIFORUM-EU Special Committee on Agriculture and Fisheries was held in January 2019. 	<p>The ex-post evaluation study concerning the first 10 years of implementation of the EPA was finalised at the end of 2020. The results of the study will serve as an input to the 2020 EPA Review (delayed due to Covid).</p> <p>Negotiations on the agreement to protect geographical indications (GIs) are ongoing.</p> <p>The Decision on setting up the Services Committee is ready for adoption by the Trade and Development Committee in a written procedure.</p> <p>Key topics under discussion are: setting up a joint monitoring system, 2020 Review Task Force, activation of the Cultural Protocol and dialogue on tourism.</p> <p>The 5th Joint Cariforum - EU Council together with the 10th Trade and Development Committee are scheduled to take place in the Cariforum region in mid - 2021 (when the sanitary situation allows).</p>

Region	Current status	Next step
<u>PACIFIC</u>	<p>The EU and Papua New Guinea (PNG) signed the interim EPA on 30 July and Fiji on 11 December 2009. The EP gave its consent on 19 January 2011. The Parliament of PNG ratified the EPA on 25 May 2011. On 17 July 2014, Fiji decided to start provisionally applying the Agreement.</p> <p>Seven meetings of the Trade Committee established under the EPA have taken place as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11 April 2011, Port Moresby • 24 February 2012, Port Moresby • 11 July 2013, Brussels • 24 June 2015, Brussels • 19 October 2017, Brussels • 24 October 2018, Brussels • 3-4 October 2019, Suva, Fiji <p>Samoa acceded to the EPA on 21 December 2018 and Solomon Islands on 17 May 2020. Tonga and Timor-Leste informed the EU on 19 July 2018 and 15 October 2020 respectively of their intention to accede to the EPA.</p>	<p>The processes leading to the accessions of Tonga and Timor-Leste are underway.</p> <p>The eighth EU-Pacific EPA Trade Committee meeting will take place in 2021 in the Pacific region.</p>