

Procedure file

Basic information		
NLE - Non-legislative enactments	2016/0038(NLE)	Preparatory phase in Parliament
EU/East African Community Partner States Economic Partnership Agreement		
Subject		
6.20.05 Multilateral and plurilateral economic and trade agreements and relations		
6.40.06 Relations with ACP countries, conventions and generalities		
Geographical area		
Rwanda		
Uganda		
Tanzania		
Burundi		
Kenya		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	INTA International Trade		
	Former committee responsible		15/03/2016
	INTA International Trade		
	Committee for opinion	GUE/NGL SCHOLZ Helmut	Appointed
	DEVE Development	Rapporteur for opinion	
Council of the European Union	Former committee for opinion		28/04/2016
	DEVE Development		
		PPE PREDA Cristian Dan	

Key events			
11/02/2016	Legislative proposal published	COM(2016)0064	Summary

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2016/0038(NLE)
Procedure type	NLE - Non-legislative enactments
Procedure subtype	Consent by Parliament
Stage reached in procedure	Preparatory phase in Parliament

Documentation gateway					
Legislative proposal		COM(2016)0064	11/02/2016	EC	Summary
Document attached to the procedure		COM(2016)0063	11/02/2016	EC	

Additional information

2016/0038(NLE) - 11/02/2016 Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to conclude the Economic Partnership Agreement between the East African Community Partner States, of the one part, and the European Union and its Member States, of the other part.

PROPOSED ACT: Council Decision.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: Council may adopt the act only if Parliament has given its consent to the act.

BACKGROUND: on 12 June 2002, the Council authorised the Commission to open negotiations for Economic Partnership Agreements with the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States.

The negotiations were completed at the level of the Chief Negotiators in Brussels on 14 October 2014. The Agreement was initialled on 16 October 2014 in Brussels.

The attached proposal for a Council Decision constitutes the legal instrument for the conclusion of the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) between the East African Community (EAC) Partner States, of the one part, and the European Union and its Member States, of the other part (EAC EPA). The EAC Partner States are Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda.

It should be noted that:

- Kenya currently benefits from the scheme contained in the Market Access Regulation (MAR);
- the other countries of the region currently benefit from the 'Everything But Arms' initiative, since they are classified among the Least Developed Countries (LDCs).

The Agreement will provide a uniform access regime for the EAC Partner States as soon as it enters into force.

CONTENT: under this proposal, the Council is called upon to adopt a Decision aiming to approve, on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, an Economic Partnership Agreement between the East African Community Partner States.

Scope and objective of the Agreement: the EAC EPA contains provisions on:

- trade in goods;
- customs and trade facilitation;
- technical barriers to trade;
- sanitary and phytosanitary measures;
- agriculture;
- fisheries.

The provisions concerning cooperation for the implementation of the development dimension lay down the priority areas of action for the implementation of the EAC EPA, which are set out in the Regional Indicative Programme for 2014-2020.

The EAC EPA contains commitments relating to regional integration, which will support the implementation of the EAC custom union.

The EAC EPA also intends to continue the negotiations at regional level on:

- services;
- competition policy;
- investment and private sector development;
- trade, environment and sustainable development;
- intellectual property rights;
- transparency in public procurement.

Trade provisions: the EAC EPA is a development-oriented trade agreement.

It offers asymmetric market access to the EAC Partner States, which allows them to shield sensitive sectors from liberalisation.

It provides a large number of safeguards and a clause for infant industry protection, as well as provisions on the rules of origin that facilitate exports.

It eliminates the use of export subsidies in trade between the Parties. These provisions contribute to the objective of Policy Coherence for Development.

Institutional provisions: the institutional provisions of the EAC EPA foresee the establishment of an EPA Council, responsible for supervising the implementation of the EPA.

- The EPA Council shall be composed of the representatives of the Parties at ministerial level and will be assisted by a Committee of Senior Officials.
- A Consultative Committee will assist the Committee of Senior Officials with a view to promoting dialogue and co-operation between representatives of civil society, the private sector and social and economic partners.

Lastly, the EAC EPA shall be reviewed after every five years from the date of its entry into force.

BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS: four out of five EAC Partner States are LDCs benefitting from the 'Everything But Arms' initiative which offers them duty-free quota-free market access into the EU. Kenya benefits from the Market Access regulation which also offers duty-free quota-free market access into the EU. Therefore, there will be no budgetary implications given that the Agreement will continue their market access into the EU on the same terms.

