

EU trade policy digest July–September 2024

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Regulation

European Commission: [Negotiations and agreements](#)

What is changing and why?

EU negotiations with low- and middle-income countries

India:

Negotiations on a Free Trade Agreement between the EU and India have generally been difficult, with ongoing disagreement on many issues. At the eighth round of talks in June some progress was made on intellectual property rights, rules of origin, and dispute settlement.

Indonesia: “Fruitful discussions” have been reported at talks held in July on the EU Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA). Work has advanced in particular on rules of origin, and trade and sustainable development. However, further negotiations are needed on export/import restrictions and investment.

Kenya: The EU and Kenya Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) entered into force on 1 July 2024. The EPA will remove import tariffs on all goods exported from Kenya to the EU (including agricultural products). Kenya will remove import tariffs on the majority of goods over the coming 15–25 years, but certain agricultural products will be excluded.

Thailand: Following “constructive discussions” in June, the EU and Thailand will continue talks in November. Discussions on market access for goods are still at a preliminary stage. It was agreed to include a comprehensive chapter on food safety (sanitary and phytosanitary, SPS), with discussions focusing on trade facilitation and approvals.

Türkiye: The EU and Türkiye have held their first High Level Dialogue on Trade to resolve some outstanding trade barriers experienced by both sides in the functioning of the Customs Union.

Trade policy

European Commission sets out trade priorities for 2024–2029: The Commission President has set out the EU’s vision and priorities, including its ambitions in relation to trade. Major priorities are reforming and strengthening the World Trade Organization; ensuring the enforcement of trade agreements; and deepening engagement with the Indo-Pacific region, Africa, and Latin America and the Caribbean.

Strategic Dialogue on the Future of EU Agriculture: A consensus paper by major stakeholders in the agri-food sector sets out recommendations on trade to the European Commission. These include ensuring that imports meet EU food standards, and that non-EU and EU farmers are competing on a level playing field by meeting comparable sustainability standards. A cross-EU system of measuring and benchmarking sustainability performance is proposed. Greater assistance is proposed to help operators in non-EU countries meet EU standards.

EU reintroduces quotas for Ukrainian eggs, oats, groats, honey, and sugar: These products have benefited from zero duty and zero quota since 2022, but increases in imports of these products has led the EU to re-establish full most favoured nation (MFN) tariffs. EU quotas have been established for the first 5 months of 2025.

Evaluation of EU–CARIFORUM Economic Partnership Agreement: The EU has reviewed its 2008 EPA with Caribbean countries, and reports a doubling of trade between 2008 and 2022. Agricultural, fishery, and food exports have increased by 60%, although the share of agri-food products in overall trade has decreased.

However, the region's operators remain generally uncompetitive in global value chains. For smaller producers, the cost of complying with food and sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) standards is an area where trade facilitation and technical support is particularly needed. Structural challenges in relation to transport infrastructure and slow progress in regional integration are factors limiting foreign investment in the region. The report acknowledges that the EPA cannot address all these challenges, but can help provide a stable framework for trade, improving the regulatory environment and supporting regional integration.

Timeline

Recent developments in EU trade policy, July–September 2024.

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