

THE EU-CARIFORUM ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT (EPA)

HOW TO UNLOCK THE TRADE POTENTIAL BEHIND THE EPA?

Date : Thursday 11 March, 2021 – 9 :00 - 12 :00 AST/ 14:00 – 17:00 CET

Location : Virtual

The EU-CARIFORUM Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), which entered into force in December 2008 has as its overarching objective enhancing reciprocal trade in goods, services and investment, competition, sustainable development, as well as deepening regional integration between the Parties.

This webinar will be an occasion to discuss the impact of the EPA on the private sector, hear from firms in the goods and services sector about their experiences regarding trade under the EPA and comment on the recommendations for the future on how to unlock the trade potential under this EPA.

The consulting firm Ecory's will present the results of their assessment on the state of EU-CARIFORUM trade as well as four sector case studies, namely cultural and creative services, beverages and rum, the dairy sector and investments with a focus on tourism. For their study a total of 200 stakeholders were consulted in the CARIFORUM Region and in the EU

8:45 – 9:00 REGISTRATION

9:00 – 9:20 OPENING REMARKS

Master of Ceremonies – Jo Ellen Laryea; Senior Advisor PR and Marketing, Caribbean Export Development Agency

Mr. Deodat Maharaj - Executive Director, Caribbean Export

Ambassador Malgorzata Wasilewska - EU Delegation to Barbados, the Eastern Caribbean States, the OECS and CASRICOM/CARIFORUM

Mr. Percival Marie - Director General, CARIFORUM Directorate

9:20 - 10:25 SESSION I –EU-CARIFORUM TRADE: PRESENTATION ON CASE STUDY FINDINGS

Moderator – Mr. Adam Wisniewski, First Secretary - Trade Affairs Manager, European Union Delegation to Barbados, the Eastern Caribbean States, the OECS and CARICOM/CARIFORUM

- Presentation of the Case Studies by ECORYS (30 mins) - Nora Plaisier, the Project Manager for the Study (<https://www.ecorys.com/>)

On behalf of ECORYS, consultant Ms Nora Plaisier will present the main findings and recommendations of their assessment on the state of trade between CARIFORUM and the EU as well as of four case studies in the fields of trade in goods and services. The presentation will be followed by a discussion of the findings and recommendations as well as a Q&A session.

Discussants (20 mins)

- Escipion Oliveira, Assistant Secretary General - Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States
- Marie Louise, Director/Member, European Business Chamber in Trinidad and Tobago

Q&A (15 MINS)

10:25-11:10

SESSION II – LESSONS FROM TRADING GOODS UNDER EPA. DEFINING OWNERSHIP OF THE AGREEMENT

Despite opportunities offered by the EPA, many economic operators and traders are struggling to achieve full benefits that could be derived from the Agreement due to a myriad of challenges. The Panellists will present their own accounts on trading with Europe with a focus on challenges and strategic options. Impact of BREXIT and disruptions/challenges posed by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic will also be discussed together with a presentation of case studies on exports to the EU under the Agreement. The specific case studies look into growth and opportunities of the Beverages and Dairy sectors under this EPA.

Moderator - Dr. Damie Sinanan, Manager Competitiveness & Export Promotion, Caribbean Export

Panelists (25 mins)

- Vaughn Renwick, CEO West Indies Rum & Spirits Producers' Association
- Ronald Ramjattan, CEO Baron Foods
- Hugo J Ramirez Risk, Coco Cluster
- Ferry Böhnke, Consultant for Market Access at German Import Promotion Desk

Q&A 20 MINS

11:10 – 11:50

SESSION III – TRADE IN SERVICES AND INVESTMENTS: TAPPING UNTAPPED POTENTIAL. WHAT IS NEEDED TO STIMULATE GREATER SERVICES AND INVESTMENTS FLOWS? WHAT ARE THE KEY SECTORS THAT COULD BECOME DRIVERS FOR THAT?

Given the economic importance of the services sector to both the Caribbean and the European Union, and the inter-dependence of the services sector with the manufacturing and agriculture sectors, the EPA covers market access for services suppliers and the provision of services in various sectors, including tourism, e-commerce and cultural and entertainment services. The latter ones are in addition supported by the specific Protocol on Cultural Cooperation. The cases studies take a closer look at creative services and the tourism sector and try to define the barriers to potential growth by replying to some questions: What are the challenges and opportunities for EU-CARIFORUM trade in cultural services and investment? How can tourism become a driver of sustainable economic growth? What are EPA-related impacts on tourism?

The panelists will present their views on unlocking the potential of the services sector under the EPA with recommendations for the way forward and for necessary transitions and business models adaptations (e-commerce, digital economy).

Moderator – Ms. Allyson Francis – Services Specialist, Caribbean Export

Panelists (20 mins)

- Camille Selvon Abrahams, Anima Caribe Creative Director
- Taiana Mora, Head of Dominican Republic Coalition of Services
- Dr. Keron Niles, Managing Director, Koru Green
- Benedikt Wiedenhofer Adviser, International Relations Department, Business Europe

Q&A 20 MINS

11:50-12:00

CLOSING
