



Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee

COMPETITIVENESS AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS

Sectoral Committee
Weekly Update
26.03.10

Contents

Banana Tariffs - Page 2

European Company Statute - Page 3

Block Exemption Regulation - Page 4





Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee

[COM \(2010\) 96](#) - Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1964/2005 on the tariff rates for bananas

On 22 March 2004 and on 29 January 2007 the Council authorised the Commission to open negotiations under Article XXIV: 6 of the GATT 1994 in the course of the accession to the EU of several countries including Malta.

The negotiations under Article XXVIII and Article XXIV: 6 of the GATT 1994 were successfully concluded on 15 December 2009 by the initialling of a "Geneva Agreement on Trade in Bananas" with Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru and Venezuela ("the Geneva Agreement") and of an "Agreement on Trade in Bananas" with the United States of America (the "EU/US Agreement").

The Agreements negotiated by the Commission provide for the settlement of the claims of the countries concerned under Articles XXIV: 6 and XXVIII of the GATT. In addition, they implement the Understandings by binding a 'tariff regime only' and provide a solution to all the pending disputes concerning the tariff treatment of bananas, which should therefore be formally settled upon certification of the new EU tariff schedule on bananas. With the Geneva Agreement entering into force, it is therefore necessary to abolish the existing applied EU Most Favoured Nation (MFN) tariff rate for the importation of bananas by repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1964/2005 of 29 November 2005 on the tariff rates for bananas which established the currently applied rate of €176/tonne.

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0096:FIN:EN:PDF>



Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee

[COM \(2010\) 102](#) - Proposal for a Regulation (EU) No .../... of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EC) No 1905/2006 establishing a financing instrument for development cooperation

In order to support sustainable development, poverty reduction and to promote the gradual integration of banana-exporting ACP countries into the global economy, the EU has provided assistance to the banana sectors of a number of countries through the Special System of Assistance (SSA, 1994-1999) and the Special Framework of Assistance (SFA, 1999-2008).

A reduction in tariff preferences for ACP banana-supplying countries will lead to additional adjustment requirements, building on the adaptation and restructuring processes underway. In view of these challenges, the European Commission proposes to create an ACP Banana Accompanying Measures (BAM) programme for the main ACP banana-supplying countries. The measures to be adopted under this programme aim to support the adjustment of areas dependent upon banana exports through budget support or specific interventions. The measures will support the adaptation to broader impacts (e.g. social and environmental), economic diversification policies, or investments in improving competitiveness, where this is a viable strategy. They will take into account the results of and experiences gained through the Special System of Assistance and the Special Framework of Assistance.

The Banana Accompanying Measures are proposed as a temporary programme with a maximum duration of four years (2010-2013). They would have a budget of €190 million and be governed by an Amending Regulation to the Development Cooperation Instrument.

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0102:FIN:EN:PDF>



Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee

Commission launches consultation on how European Company Statute (SE) works

The European Company Statute (SE) gives companies operating in more than one Member State the possibility to reorganise their cross-border business under one European label. This enables them to work within a stable legal framework, reduce the internal costs of operating in several countries and hence be more competitive in the Internal Market. The SE has proved to be very popular in some Member States but it has not taken off in others. In order to determine whether changes are needed to make the SE Statute work better, the European Commission has launched a public consultation. With the review of the SE Statute, the Commission is aiming to increase the use of the SE across the European Union.

The questionnaire, together with more information on the SE, is available at:

http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/company/se/index_en.htm

For frequently asked questions kindly find the link below

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/10/97&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=fr>

Commission adopts new Block Exemption Regulation for insurance sector

The Commission has adopted a new Regulation that exempts certain types of agreements in the insurance sector from the EU's general prohibition of practices restrictive of competition. The new Block Exemption Regulation will come into force on 1st April and renews two of the four categories of agreements currently exempted, namely joint compilations, tables and studies, and co(re)insurance pools, with some amendments. This issue has been discussed in two open consultation sessions organised by MEUSAC in collaboration with the Consumer and Competition Division.

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/10/359&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>