



Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee

GENERAL AFFAIRS



09.10.09

Enlargement

Progress in Croatia's EU accession process – 02/10/2009

At the meeting of the Intergovernmental Conference with Croatia on 2 October in Brussels, six chapters were opened and five closed in the country's negotiations with the EU. Accession negotiations with Croatia have entered a decisive stage and further substantial progress in the accession negotiations can be expected over the next months. Croatia has now opened 28 chapters and provisionally closed twelve with the EU underlining that on all these chapters, monitoring of progress in the alignment with and implementation of the *acquis* would continue throughout the negotiations. [Click here](#) for more info

International Trade

EU and Uruguay settle complaint over taxation of imported spirits – 05/10/2009

The European Commission decided to close an investigation into Uruguay's taxation regime on spirits, following the removal of unfair barriers to the sale of European spirits in the country. The investigation had been opened under the EU Trade Barriers Regulation (TBR) following a complaint by the Scotch whisky industry. The Commission's enquiry led to changes in the Uruguayan legislation without the need to resort to WTO dispute settlement.

[Click here](#) for further info



Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee

Statistics

EU-27 consistent world leader in trade of food and drink – 07/10/2009

As a matter of fact, Brazil and Argentina became two leading sources of food and drink imports to EU-27. The EU is in fact the major world player in both imports and exports of food and drink.

The sum of exports and imports in 2007 (the most recent year for which a comparison is possible) was EUR 138 million, compared with EUR 115 million for the second largest player, the United States. Food and drink made up 5.2% of both imports and exports for the EU-27 in 2008. The value of EU-27 food and drink exports rose by 10.2% between 2007 and 2008, compared to a rise in imports of 6.1% over the same period.

The United States was the most important trading partner for EU-27 exports in 2008. Together, the United States and Russia accounted for just over a quarter of EU-27 exports. For EU-27 imports, however, Brazil and Argentina were the main trading partners, accounting together for just over a fifth of EU-27 imports in 2008. France remained the largest contributor to EU-27 food and drink exports, with around one fifth of the total extra EU-27 trade. However, the greatest growth in exports between 2000 and 2008 was registered by Estonia, Romania, Lithuania and especially by Latvia, with a growth of almost 35% per year on average.

A major growth area for EU-27 exports of food and drink between 2000 and 2008 was beverages, which grew by over EUR 5 billion, leading to a trade surplus for this product group of EUR 12.4 billion in 2008. 'Vegetables and fruit' and 'fish and crustaceans' were by far the largest two product groups for EU-27 imports of food in 2008. However, the largest growth rate in imports between 2000 and 2008 was recorded for cereals and cereal preparations. [Click here](#) for further info