

Government procurement: European Union looking for reciprocity

In March 2012, the European Commission presented its "international procurement initiative", a proposal for a new regulation limiting access to the EU's government procurement markets for third countries which fail to propose reciprocal access to their markets.

In December 2013, after a series of amendments, the European Parliament presented a draft legislative resolution. This is a preliminary attempt at giving the EU an international government procurement policy. One of the main objectives is to give the EU more weight in international trade negotiations via a principle of reciprocity to combat the current imbalance in the extent to which government procurement markets are open. In non-EU countries, the market is far from being as open as Europe's. The European Parliament's proposal therefore aims to restrict access to its markets for third countries which fail to propose reciprocal access to theirs.

EU - Central America Association Agreement : fully up and running

On June 29, 2012, the EU signed an association agreement with the Central America countries (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama), the first agreement of this kind to be signed with another regional trade block. The agreement relies on three pillars: political dialogue, cooperation and trade.

The trade pillar has been applied with Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama since August 1, 2013, with Costa Rica and Salvador since October 1, 2013 and with Guatemala since December 1, 2013.

According to the European Commission, the measures agreed under the vast trade pillar go far beyond those of a multilateral trade agreement, notably where the services sector, government procurement, intellectual property, sustainable development and technical trade barriers are concerned. These measures will boost development throughout the region by offering companies, exporters and European investors improved access to these markets.

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Registration until the 20th of March

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