



Customs Union

What is the Customs Union?

The Customs Union is the first Regional Integration milestone and critical foundation of the East African Community (EAC), which has been in force since 2005, as defined in Article 75 of the Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community.

It means that the EAC Partner States have agreed to establish free trade (or zero duty imposed) on goods and services amongst themselves and agreed on a common external tariff (CET), whereby imports from countries outside the EAC zone are subjected to the same tariff when sold to any EAC Partner State.

Goods moving freely within the EAC must comply with the EAC Rules of Origin and with certain provisions of the Protocol for the Establishment of the East African Community Customs Union.

Sectors under the Customs Union:

Agriculture and Food Security



Enhancing food security and rational agricultural and livestock within the Community through harmonisation of agricultural policies as well as joint programmes for efficient and effective production.

Customs



Enabling the EAC Partner States to enjoy economies of scale, with a view to supporting the process of economic development through the establishment of a Single Customs Territory.

Health



Undertaking joint action towards the prevention and control of communicable and non-communicable diseases and to control pandemics and epidemics of communicable and vector-borne diseases.

Immigration and Labour



Accelerating economic growth and development of the Partner States by facilitating the free movement of persons and labour through the adoption of common policies and procedures.

Industrialization & SME Development



Improving the competitiveness of the industrial sector so as to enhance the expansion of trade in industrial goods within the Community and the export of industrial goods from the EAC Partner States.

Trade



Rationalising investments and the full use of established industries to promote efficiency in production, as well as harmonising trade policies, investment incentives and product standards, with a view to promote the Community as a single investment area.

Key Initiatives under the Customs Union:

Single Customs Territory

Involves interconnectivity of customs systems to facilitate seamless flow of information between customs stations and a payment system to manage transfers of revenues between EAC Partner States

African Growth Opportunity Act

EAC is benefiting from AGOA, the cornerstone of U.S. economic engagement with the countries of sub-Saharan Africa.

COMESA-EAC-SADC Tripartite

Consisting of 26 member countries, the COMESA-EAC-SADC Tripartite is accelerating economic integration for the people of the Eastern and Southern African Region.

EAC-EU Economic Partnership Agreements

Trade and development agreements have been negotiated between the EU and African, Caribbean and Pacific partners to cover goods, fisheries and development cooperation.

European Union Everything But Arms

Four EAC Partner States receive full duty-free and quota-free access to the EU for all their exports with the exception of arms and armaments.