

ASEAN INTEGRATION ADVOCACY PAPER 2018



ABOUT EPBN



OUTREACH



SUPPORT SERVICES



ADVOCACY

The EU-Philippines Business Network (EPBN) established in January 2014, is a project co-funded by the European Union and implemented by a consortium of European business organizations based in the Philippines. Led by the European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (ECCP), partner chambers include the Belgian-Filipino Business Club, British Chamber of Commerce Philippines, French Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines, German-Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Italian Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines, Nordic Chamber of the Philippines, and Spanish Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines.

The overarching objective of EPBN is to support European companies, especially small-medium enterprises, to increase exports to and investments in the Philippines by facilitating market access and ensuring a level playing field for all companies.

Adopting a threefold approach of outreach, support services and advocacy, EPBN provides a strong support system at every stage of entry to the Philippine market for European businesses. In delivering these services, EPBN cooperates closely with its partner organizations in other Association of South East Asian Nation (ASEAN) countries to provide information on ASEAN as a market, promoting the Philippines as a gateway to the region.



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Positions expressed in the advocacy papers are the result of the activities of the 14 Sector Committees working under the EU-Philippines Business Network.

METHODOLOGY

The 2018 edition of the EPBN Advocacy Papers features issues and recommendations formed after extensive discussions between members of the EPBN sector committees, dialogues and meetings with representatives from the Philippine Government, the EU Delegation to the Philippines and other EU national chambers and embassies. The EPBN has also taken into consideration the information gathered from organizing different events, participating in numerous hearings and committee meetings in both chambers of the Philippine Congress, as well as in private sector consultations held by several executive and regulating agencies of the government.

Further, the recommendations stated in each paper were created based on the discussions during the quarterly sector committee meetings, most of which were conducted with a representative from a concerned government agency based on the issues to be discussed. In close cooperation with the sector committee leaders and members, the EPBN secretariat thoroughly analyzed every issue and advocacy recommendation to ensure that they are in line with EU business interests and priorities. Once the secretariat has finalized the first draft of each sector paper, it was then circulated to the Committee members, Market Access Team Meeting for consultation and subsequently, gathered inputs to be included in the final draft of the papers.

The assessment of the status of each recommendation included in 2017 EPBN Advocacy Papers were examined under the following criteria:

Completed/Substantial Progress: Recommended action has either been completed or there has been significant progress towards the realization of the recommendation.

Some Progress: Movement towards realizing the recommendation has been made, but substantial work still needs to be done to fully achieve and complete the proposed measure.

No Progress/Retrogression: Minimal progress or no movement towards attaining the recommended reforms were done, or the status of the issue has worsened and has evolve to an even bigger bottleneck for EU businesses in the former year.

ABOUT THE THEME



EU-PHILIPPINES BUSINESS SUMMIT

EU AND THE PHILIPPINES: Jointly Pursuing Competitiveness for Inclusive Growth

Since its launch in January 2014, the EU-Philippines Business Network (EPBN) has strived to create an attractive investment and trade environment for EU businesses in the Philippines.

This 2018, we look at how the current administration's initiatives and programs in line with its Socioeconomic Agenda and priorities have substantially progressed – Build, Build, Build Program, tax reform, ease of doing business, labor protection furthered through the Executive Order on Contractualization, sustainable development and climate adaptation, and universal healthcare, among many others. In addition, the Philippines' economy is maintaining steady growth, the EU continues to be one of the top trading partner of the Philippines, and the EU-Philippines Partnership Cooperation Agreement has been put into force – a major milestone for the EU-Philippine relations.

With this, the EU-Philippines Business Network (EPBN) is organizing the EU-Philippines Business Summit 2018 with the theme "EU and the Philippines: Jointly Pursuing Competitiveness for Inclusive Growth" on 18 October 2018, at Solaire Resort Hotel, Paranaque. During the Summit, EPBN will hand over the 4th edition of the EPBN Advocacy Papers which contains a wish list of reforms towards a competitive, fair and more inclusive economic environment. We sincerely hope that the EU-Philippine economic ties will be deepened further. Rest assured that European business community will remain as the Philippine government's partner in achieving competitiveness and inclusive growth.

MESSAGE FROM THE AMBASSADOR

H.E. Franz Jessen
Head of Delegation,
Delegation of the European Union of the Philippines



The EU sees trade and investment as part of the answer to challenges faced in the country in terms of inclusive and pro-poor growth. Indeed, the EU and its industries have a positive agenda that is values-based and comes with an open dialogue to ensure nobody is left behind in strengthening its trade relations. It also recognizes the importance of opening new markets that contributes to growth on both ends. This is why the EU has even in times of economic turmoil led global efforts to fight protectionism, and promoted open trade and investment at home and abroad.

The EU economy grew at its fastest rate in 10 years in 2017 at 2.4%. For the first time since 2007, all EU member states saw their economies expand. Robust growth is facilitating further reduction in government deficit now at less than 1% of GDP as well as debt levels and an improvement in labour market conditions with unemployment rate of 7.6% falling to almost the pre-crisis level. More important to our trading partners is the fact that our trade continues to grow strongly resulting to an 8% growth in EU imports and exports of goods to the world.

This shows that the EU economy is competitive, yet open and it will remain so and continue to benefit Philippines' development agenda. Philippines total trade with the EU increased by 16% in 2017 due to the remarkable 32% growth of PH exports to the EU market partly thanks to the increasing utilisation of the GSP+ preferences. Strong growth is particularly seen in sectors benefiting from GSP+ trade preferences, such as agri-food products. On top of this, sizable portion of all newly reported approved investments in the Philippines were sourced from the EU – contributing to the creation of more quality jobs.

The economic expansion in Europe is set to continue at a solid pace in 2018 and next, supporting further job creation. However, the EU also recognizes risks on the horizon. That is why the EU is working hard to make its economy even more resilient through many useful and necessary reforms – necessary to further improve productivity and investment as well as to ensure a more inclusive growth model.

I look forward continuing to work together to the benefit of effective value chains and supply chains so that the Philippines can take advantage of its position in the region and of its competitive skills and people. I warmly welcome this advocacy book as a good basis of our continued collaboration in our pursuit of enhancing and strengthening EU-Philippine trade and commercial relations.

MESSAGE FROM THE STEERING COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

Mr. Guenter Taus
EPBN Steering Committee Chairman



The EU-Philippines Business Network (EPBN) is pleased to present to you the 4th edition of its Advocacy papers with the theme, “EU and the Philippines: Jointly Pursuing Competitiveness.” Pursuing competitiveness and sustainable growth has been at the front and center of our agenda.

The European business community has always looked towards close cooperation with the Philippine Government to achieve mutually beneficial goals, which strengthen the country’s investment and trade environment in support of increased competitiveness and long term, sustainable and inclusive growth.

Several positive reforms in 2018 were the Ease of Doing Business Act, the Build Build Build Program, the implementation of Universal Healthcare and the issuance of Memorandum Order No. 16, which eases restrictions on certain investment areas.

Despite these improvements, there are still several key barriers stifling EU-Philippine trade and investment. In particular, we look forward to passage of the Amendments to the Public Services Act of 1936 into law. These Amendments result in an open market coupled with stronger regulations which in turn will increase the quality of public services while lowering costs.

Moreover, we advocate for the reassessment of the licensing requirements from the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board. A level playing field in infrastructure paves the path for the realization of the “Golden Age of Infrastructure” envisioned by President Duterte.

Finally, we strongly urge the government to consider the massive economic growth and job creation that fiscal incentives under the Philippine Export Zone Authority have brought about. An ambitious corporate income tax reduction in addition to other incentives will aid the Philippine in competing with other countries in the region.

These amendments would be a game-changer for the Philippines and they assist in EU investments contributing to Philippine development. It is in this context that the EPBN presents its recommendations towards a competitive, fair and more inclusive economic environment for the benefit of the Philippines and the EU.



MALACAÑAN PALACE
MANILA



MESSAGE

My warmest greetings to the **EU-Philippines Business Network (EPBN)** as it publishes the newest edition of its **Advocacy Papers**.

The Philippine government welcomes this publication which contains the EPBN's wishlist of reforms in the areas of economic liberalization, global competitiveness and other topics. Rest assured that this administration and its team of economic managers will look closely into the suggestions of the network, especially if it will help us in shaping a much stronger and more resilient Philippine economy.

We also appreciate the European business community's recognition of this administration's strong resolve in ensuring ease of doing business, sustaining infrastructure development and uplifting Filipino lives. It is our hope that the network will remain our steadfast partner in achieving mutually beneficial goals, especially in strengthening the country's competitiveness, investment and trade environment, and long term, sustainable and inclusive growth.

I wish you success in your endeavors.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rodrigo Duterte".

RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE

MANILA
August 2018

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

THE PHILIPPINES: A MACROECONOMIC OVERVIEW

The Philippines has been recently dubbed as one of the fastest growing economies in Southeast Asia. With a 6.7% GDP growth in 2017, it is among the highest in the region next to China (6.9%) and Vietnam (6.8%).¹ ADB, IMF and the World Bank maintain their bullish forecast on the Philippine economy for 2018 and 2019,^{2,3,4} which is largely attributed to its strong economic performance in 2017 and its growth prospects. The current administration's commitment to increase public infrastructure spending as well as rising domestic demand, remittances, and employment are also expected to heavily fuel the economy.

On the local scene, Services remain to cover most of the GDP with 57.46%, followed by Industry at 34.01%, and Agriculture at 8.53%.⁵ From a dip in last year's agriculture sector, 2017 has posted a 3.9% growth. Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW) remittances, household consumption, exports of goods and services, and manufacturing posted growth,⁶ while unemployment rate increased to 5.7%.⁷

As for investments, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas reports that foreign direct investment net inflows reached USD 10 billion in 2017, showing a 21.4% increase from the previous year.⁸ On the other hand, 2017 posted a negative trade balance amounting to USD 27,380 million.⁹

While global competitiveness, as evaluated by the World Economic Forum, improved by a notch in ranking,¹⁰ it is imperative that the Philippines continuously builds on its current successes for competitiveness and inclusive growth.

Indeed, the Philippines has made great strides in various aspects; however, a lot of work still needs to be done. A number of important measures, including **amendments to the Public Services Act, Retail Trade Liberalization Act, and amendments to restrictive economic provisions of the Constitution**, have yet to materialize. Furthermore, boosting the Philippine manufacturing sector, deepening the ASEAN integration, and enhancing customs facilitation are all crucial for the Philippine economy to step up in the global arena.

1 WorldBank. (2018) *Philippines Economic Update: Investing In The Future April 2018*. Retrieved 5 September 2018 from <http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/280741523838376587/Philippines-Economic-Update-April-15-2018-final.pdf>.

2 ADB. (2018). *Philippine GDP expected to grow by 6.8% in 2018 and by 6.9% in 2019*. *ADB Report*. Retrieved 5 September 2018 from <http://www.adb.org/countries/philippines/economy>.

3 WorldBank. (2018). *Philippines Growth to Remain Strong Despite Global Uncertainties*. Retrieved 5 September 2018 from <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2018/07/13/philippines-growth-to-remain-strong-despite-global-uncertainty>.

4 Reuters. (2018). *IMF sees the Philippines' GDP growth at 6.7% percent in 2018 and 2019*. Retrieved 5 September 2018 from <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-philippines-economy-imf/imf-sees-philippines-gdp-growth-at-67-percent-in-2018-2019-idUSKBN1KF0A2>.

5 Philippine Statistical Authority. (2018). Retrieved from 3 September 2018 <http://psa.gov.ph/regional-accounts/grdp/highlights>.

6 Ibid.

7 Philippine Statistics Authority. (2017). *2017 Annual Labor and Employment Status*. Retrieved 3 September 2018 from <http://psa.gov.ph/content/2017-annual-labor-and-employment-status>

8 BSP. (2018). *Full-Year 2017 FDI Hit All-Time High of US\$10 Billion*. Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas. Retrieved 4 September 2018 from <http://www.bsp.gov.ph/publications/media.asp?id=4630>.

9 BSP. (2018). *Selected Economic Indicators*. Retrieved 4 September 2018 from http://www.bsp.gov.ph/statistics/spei_new/tab48_sas.htm.

10 National Competitiveness Council. June 2018. *Global Competitiveness Report Card*. Retrieved 20 June 2018.

ASEAN INTEGRATION



INTRODUCTION

ASEAN's economic performance continues to improve from 4.8% GDP growth in 2016 to 5.3%/p in 2017¹. The combined 2017 GDP of the bloc was at USD2.768 trillion, while its population for the same year was at 643.47 million. In 2017, ASEAN received FDIs that totals to USD137.006 million, with (1) wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles and cycles, (2) manufacturing, and (3) financial and insurance activities as the top contributing sectors^{2 3}.

The EU continues to be ASEAN's second largest trading partner with a share of 13.2% of the bloc's total world trade in 2017⁴, while ASEAN is EU's 3rd top trading partner. ASEAN's top imports from EU are chemical products, machinery, and transport equipment. On the other hand, the EU's top imports from ASEAN are machinery and transport equipment, agricultural products, textiles and clothing⁵. The EU also accounted for more than 10 million (8.8%) of the 115.5 million tourists that visited the ASEAN in 2016⁶. The EU is also by far the largest investor in ASEAN countries. In 2016, the EU Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into the region accounted for 31% of the total at USD30.4 billion⁷.

The ASEAN Economic Community serves as the actualization of the region's fundamental goal of economic integration. The ASEAN Community Vision⁸ envisions a region that is integrated as a bloc and with the global economy, and highly competitive and innovative. Increasing global interconnectivity and emerging trends and developments pose both opportunities and challenges that need to be taken into great consideration to realize the ASEAN vision and maximize the benefits of an integrated region. We therefore put forth our recommendations to (1) facilitate trade, (2) attract more investments, and (3) increase the region's competitiveness.

1 ASEAN Stats Data Portal. (2018). ASEAN Member States: Selected Key Macroeconomic Indicators. Retrieved 07/06/2018 from <https://data.aseanstats.org>

2 Sectors totaled to USD38.951 million, USD31.619 million, and USD15.610 million respectively

3 ASEAN. (2018). Flows of Inward Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) by Host Country and Source Country (in million US\$). Retrieved 07/06/2018 from <https://data.aseanstats.org/fdi-by-hosts-and-sources>

4 China ranks as 1st with a 21.8% share. Retrieved 07/06/2018 from http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2006/september/tradoc_113471.pdf

5 European Commission. (2018). Retrieved 07/06/2018 from <http://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/countries-and-regions/regions/asean/>

6 ASEAN. (2018). Top ten country/regional sources of visitors to ASEAN. Retrieved 07/06/2018 from <https://data.aseanstats.org/indicator/AST.STC.TBL.30>

7 ASEAN. (2017). A Journey Towards Regional Economic Integration: 1967-2017. Retrieved 07/10/2018 from <http://asean.org/storage/2017/09/ASEAN-50-Final.pdf>

8 ASEAN. (n.d). ASEAN Community Vision 2025. Retrieved 07/06/2018 from <http://www.asean.org/wp-content/uploads/images/2015/November/aec-page/ASEAN-Community-Vision-2025.pdf>

RECENT REFORMS AND INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENTS

The following ASEAN-wide reforms and developments were recently adopted:

- **The ASEAN Economic Ministers (AEMs) on 8 September 2017 adopted the ASEAN Seamless Trade Facilitation Indicators (ASTFI)**, which will measure and monitor the extent to which trade facilitation measures are implemented in the region through sectoral work plans. The AEMs also then adopted the 2025 Trade Facilitation Strategic Action Plan (ATF-SAP) which aims to reduce trade costs by 10% in 2020, double intra-ASEAN trade by 2025, and improve the region's global rankings⁹.
- **In September 2017, the ASEAN Work Programme on Electronic Commerce (AWPEC) 2017-2025 was adopted by the AEM**, with the aim of facilitating cross-border e-commerce in the region¹⁰. The AEM also then endorsed the ASEAN Inclusive Business (IB) Framework, to help integrate the poor and low-income communities as partners, suppliers, and employees into global value chains, and improve quality of lives and better businesses¹¹.
- **The ASEAN Roll-on Roll-off (RORO) shipping service was established** on 30 April 2017, in which the Maiden Voyage – Davao-General Santos-Bitung, Indonesia route – was launched by President Rodrigo Duterte and Indonesian President Joko Widodo¹². This was initiated to help ease port-to-port transportation and maximize the potentials of inter-ASEAN shipping routes. Its full and successful implementation will improve maritime connectivity and AMSs' relations.

9 ASEAN. (2012). AEC 2025 Trade Facilitation Strategic Action Plan. Retrieved 07/09/2018 from <http://asean.org/storage/2012/05/AEC-2025-Trade-Facilitation-SAP-FINAL-rev.pdf>

10 ASEAN. (n.d). ASEAN Work Programme on Electronic Commerce. Retrieved 09/07/18 from <http://asean.org/asean-economic-community/sectoral-bodies-under-the-purview-of-aem/e-commerce/>

11 DTI. (n.d.). Retrieved 09/07/18 from <https://www.dti.gov.ph/inclusive-business/1057-main-content/inclusive-business/10444-boi-adb-launch-asean-inclusive-business-awards-2017>

12 DOTR. (n.d.). Retrieved 07/09/2018 from <https://dotr.gov.ph/10-press-releases/228-dotr-to-investors-businesses-maximize-opportunities-of-new-asean-ro-ro-shipping-link.html>

- **The ASEAN Ministers for Agriculture and Forestry (AMAF) met in September 2017**, where the ASEAN Regional Guidelines on Food Security and Nutrition Policy was endorsed. The Framework is intended to help AMS create better cooperation in the area of food security and nutrition (FSN)¹³.
- **This 2018 marks the live operation of the ASEAN Single Window in 5 ASEAN Member States**, namely Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, and Vietnam – the “exchange-ready AMSs”. This then now allows for the electronic exchange of ATIGA Form D in the said countries¹⁴.
- **In April 2018, the administration of the ASEAN Small and Medium Enterprises Academy was handed over to the ASEAN Coordinating Committee on Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (ACCMSME)¹⁵**. The EU also then launched two key programs in ASEAN: E-READI¹⁶ and ARISE Plus¹⁷.



13 ASEAN. (2017). ASEAN Regional Guidelines on Food Security and Nutrition Policy. Retrieved 07/09/18 from <http://asean.org/storage/2012/05/1.-ASEAN-Regional-Guidelines-on-Food-Security-and-Nutrition-Policy.pdf>

14 Singapore Customs. (2017). Retrieved 07/20/2018 from <https://www.customs.gov.sg/-/media/cus/files/circulars/ca/2017/circular152017%20ver%201.pdf>; <https://www.customs.gov.sg/-/media/cus/files/notices/2017/notice172017-ver-1.pdf>

15 US Mission to ASEAN. (2018). ASEAN manages online academy for MSMEs. Retrieved 07/23/2018 from <https://asean.usmission.gov/press-release-asean-manages-online-academy-for-msmes/>

16 E-READI or Enhanced Regional EU-ASEAN Dialogue Instrument provides for sharing of EU integration experience to ASEAN, in its support to ASEAN's integration process

17 European Commission. (2018). Retrieved 07/28/2018 from https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/43068/eu-and-asean-launch-two-flagship-programmes-arise-plus-and-e-readi_it

EPBN ADVOCACY

1. TRADE FACILITATION

- **REMOVE NON-TARIFF BARRIERS TO TRADE**

In recognition of the increasing need to address trade barriers, the EPBN supports the call of the Philippine government towards the creation of an ASEAN-recognized guideline that provides the parameters to justifying the implementation of Non-Tariff Measures (NTMs). We look forward to the realization of this initiative.

We also look forward to the ratification of the Philippine Senate of temporary admission agreements – ATA Carnet Convention and/or the Istanbul Convention, for the country to be recognized as a jurisdiction that remains compliant with international instruments. Altogether, these developments will greatly ease related customs procedures and make the country a more attractive trading partner to other countries.

- **IMPLEMENT AN ASEAN SINGLE WINDOW**

The EPBN recognizes and lauds the efforts of the Philippine government in furthering its efforts to implement the ASEAN Single Window. To this, we highly anticipate the effective and full implementation of the TradeNet, and its integration with the ASEAN Single Window.

We likewise look forward to the establishment of the same in all of the other ASEAN Member States. This will then complete the introduction of the ASEAN Single Window that will help increase trade activities and confidence, and provide more efficient trade procedures in the region.

- **EASE EXISTING CUSTOMS PROCEDURES ACROSS ASEAN TO FACILITATE INTRA-ASEAN TRADE**

The EPBN lauds the government's initiative to modernize and simplify the customs rules, laws, and procedures in the country, especially through the enactment of the Foreign Ships Co-Loading Act and the Customs Modernization and Tariff Act.

In moving forward with the objectives of these measures, we strongly suggest the effective and full implementation of the said laws, including the finalization and publication of the CMTA Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR). Moreover, efforts taken at international and regional levels aimed at easing trade and customs procedures are likewise encouraged and will be highly supported by EPBN.

2. INVESTMENT PROMOTION

• PROTECT IPR AND CLAMP DOWN ON ILLICIT TRADE

The EPBN looks forward to the enactment of measures that will increase the capacity of ASEAN member states to combat IPR-related crimes. In this regard, specific and collective efforts by the AMSs and the ASEAN region are similarly welcomed and supported. Especially for the Philippines, the EPBN strongly recommends strengthening the execution of the mandate of its IP agencies and the provisions of IP-related laws.

The EU remains committed to supporting the Philippines and ASEAN and extending its expertise and technology in developing intellectual property systems that further promote innovation and creativity, and counter piracy and counterfeiting, among others.

• IMPLEMENT REGIONAL HARMONIZATION OF STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS

The EPBN recognizes that the ASEAN and its member states have continuously taken steps towards increased harmonization in terms of standards and regulations, including several Mutual Recognition Agreements on various services and the ASEAN Cosmetic Directive.

In furtherance towards an improved and strengthened value chain, the EPBN strongly pushes for increased regional efforts that provide for the mutual recognition of standards, regulations, and procedures across ASEAN. To this end, we also look forward to the adoption of the standards by ASEAN Member States, which will ultimately lead to the efficiency and effectivity of measures as well as the harmonization of trade procedures in the region, for both goods and services.

3. COMPETITIVENESS

• ESTABLISH A SUPPORT FRAMEWORK FOR MSMEs

The EPBN supports the initiatives and plans of the ASEAN region towards the empowerment and development of MSMEs, and their further integration into the global economy and value chain. For the Philippines, the full realization and proper implementation of measures such as MSMEs development programs and proposed legislations are also being sought.

In addition to this, the EPBN believes that national and regional actions must be taken up to further attract, increase competitiveness of, and ease doing business for SMEs in the region. In recognition of their economic benefits including technology and knowledge transfer, job creation, and improving citizens' welfare, among others, we then put forth our recommendation for the creation of a regionally-established and recognized support framework for MSMEs.

EPBN INTERVENTIONS

In line with its advocacies on ASEAN Integration, the EPBN has taken a number of measures and activities. Among which are the following:

The EPBN has had several initiatives with regard to Intellectual Property Rights. This includes engagements with stakeholders towards the fast tracking of the EU-ASEAN Free Trade Agreement, which provides for strengthened IPR protection. Furthermore, in a meeting with the Department of Agriculture organized by the EU Delegation on November 2017, the group had an exchange with regard to the promotion and protection of Geographical Indication (GI) products in the Philippines. An EPBN advocacy brief on GIs was also released, which outlines the country's status on GI protection in the ASEAN region and presents key recommendations in this regard.

From 2017 to 2018, the EPBN has had separate meetings with FDA Director General Charade Galang-Puno, DOH Undersecretary Enrique Domingo, and members of its Healthcare committee. These meetings discussed government and industry initiatives and updates with regard to ASEAN Harmonization, especially those concerning food standards and medical devices regulation.

In June 2017, the EPBN held its Euro-PH Customs Advocacy Forum, which revolved around discussions on enhancing trade facilitation through the development of customs procedures in the Philippines. Specifically, an update was given in respect of the development of the ASEAN Single Window. Atty. Dennis Reyes, consultant on Anti-Red Tape Technology Component Program of the Department of Finance, also talked about TradeNET, its objectives and current status. Subsequently, the EPBN published its advocacy brief on customs procedures, which highlighted the European business community's position and recommendations on customs facilitation.



ASSESSMENT OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Advocacy	Recommendations	Completed	Substantial Progress
Improve Trade facilitation	Remove Non-Tariff Barriers To Trade		
	Implement the ASEAN Single Window		
	Ease Existing Customs Procedures Across ASEAN To Facilitate Intra-ASEAN Trade		
Promote Protection of Investments	Protect IPR And Clamp Down On Illicit Trade		
	Implement Regional Harmonization Of Standards And Regulations		
Increase the Country's Competitiveness	Establish a support framework for the SMEs	<p>The Ease of Doing Business Act or RA 11032 was signed in May 2018. This law simplifies and streamlines business procedures, especially in terms of registration and issuance of documents, benefiting enterprises in all sectors and of all capital investments.</p>	

Some Progress	No Progress	Retgression
	International Conventions have yet to be concurred by the Philippine Senate.	
The implementation of TradeNet in the Philippines is a step towards the creation of a national single window and its integration with the ASEAN single window.		
Towards the completion of the CMTA IRR, the BOC has started conducting public consultations and drafted several Customs Administrative Orders to be published on a per-topic basis. As a result, several CAOs have already been issued from 2016 to 2017.		
The Philippines has taken measures to better fight against illicit trade, including increased cooperation and implementation of measures to combat counterfeiting.		
Several developments and initiatives have taken place in several ASEAN Member States. This includes the DOH AO 2018-002 on Medical Devices.		



EU-PHILIPPINES BUSINESS NETWORK



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