

Volcano ash crisis highlights impact of trade disruption for ACP countries

23/04/2010

Over the last week, the Icelandic volcano ash cloud crisis caused major disruption in air traffic, not only for passenger transport but also for freight carriers. 19% of EU imports are carried by air. In a globalised economy that relies heavily on 'just-in-time' deliveries, trade disruptions can hamper developing countries' economies and perishable goods are the most affected. In fact, topping the list of the most heavily affected import sectors is cut flowers from ACP (African, Caribbean and Pacific) countries such as Kenya and Ethiopia, and fresh agro-food products from South Africa, all benefiting from preferential access in the EU. The disruption indirectly highlighted the degree of interdependence of markets, for which the EU is committed to negotiating and concluding EPAs that enhance such preferential regimes to promote development.

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