



EUROPEAN UNION

DELEGATION TO BARBADOS
AND THE EASTERN CARIBBEAN

The Head of Delegation

23 December 2014

PRESS RELEASE

The European Union has made a \$20.9 million (8.33M euro) payment to Barbados as part of its continuing support of the country's Human Resource Development Programme. The assistance, which is part of the 10th European Development Fund, is the second payment of an overall contribution of BBD\$130 million (49.9 M euro). The financing is being made as Budget Support and as such will be paid directly to the State Treasury.

The overall objective of the Human Resource Development (HRD) Programme is to support the Government of Barbados in its efforts to increase competitiveness, promote sustainable growth and poverty alleviation. Specifically, the objective is to strengthen the country's human resource capacity, reduce unemployment and increase the productivity of the work force.

Head of the EU Delegation to Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean, Ambassador Mikael Barfod said: "The release of this tranche is particularly timely in view of the need to retool and retrain workers that have lost their jobs as a result of the current economic difficulties in Barbados."

Release of the third tranche under the Human Resource Development Programme will be subject to a review of Barbados' economic performance and as such will be linked to a reduction of the country's fiscal deficit and macro-economic stability.

Following the payment of the first tranche of BBD\$28.9 million (10.67M euro) a number of actions were undertaken that paved the way for the EU to commit further financial resources to the programme. These actions or indicators include further institutional assessments of government departments, the training of 600 public officers in human resource development, an increase in the number of government departments utilising the full human resource module of the Smart Stream application, a reduction in the time it takes educational providers to reregister, an increase in the number of persons accessing registered entrepreneurial training and an increase in the number of qualification programmes approved and operational.

The Human Resource Development Programme is being implemented by the Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Human Resource Development in close collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation. The programme consists of five pillars which are, providing an enabling environment for human capacity development, the establishment of a national qualifications framework, the development of a demand driven education system, the creation of a knowledge management system and the enhancement of research, innovation and entrepreneurship capacity within Barbados.

Further information: Wayne Lewis, EU Delegation, wayne.lewis@eeas.europa.eu