

CONFERENCE CONCLUSIONS

TTIP – Increased Trade for Better Living?

European Policy Conference, 15-16 June 2015, Brussels

Participants of the conference “TTIP – Increased Trade for Better Living” agreed that the momentum on TTIP should be seized to promote a fairer and more sustainable EU trade policy. The ultimate aim should be to draft an alternative, fairer and more sustainable trade agreement template. Trade agreements should help - rather than hinder - fair and sustainable policy choices. More detailed conclusions from workshops and plenary are listed in this paper.

- There is no excuse for secrecy in the negotiations of new generation trade agreements in a democratic society. Citizens and their elected parliamentarians should be more informed and educated about the conduct and consequences of such negotiations and agreements.
- There is a need for a specific ‘sector by sector’ impact assessment on how TTIP will affect them.
- Instead of abandoning the sovereignty we hold over our product standards, we should improve and protect our process standards, providing good examples and best practice advice to trade partners (e.g. the farm to fork approach).
- Civil society discussions and initiatives such as [the Alternative Trade Mandate](#) have delivered good sets of aims for trade, in the future we need to turn them into more concrete proposals.

Agriculture should be excluded from TTIP, instead the following aims must be implemented in all trade relations:

- Emphasis should be placed on developing local and regional markets and food economies. Agricultural products are part of our culture. We should protect and support local and regional product identities, supporting the cultural differences across the EU.
- Trade agreements must enable trade partners to make sovereign decisions on the authorisation of imports of certain products based on the precautionary principle. Independent science must be used to assess chances and risks. Other relevant socio-economic and environmental impacts on agricultural production must be taken into account when making decisions.
- To ensure access to a wide range of open pollinated and traditional plant varieties and GMO free food for consumers, effective measures to avoid GMO contamination in imported goods must be in place
- There are substantial differences between the US and the EU in production systems and legislation which may result in unfair competition and may potentially lower standards. Increasing pressure from agribusiness may result in further intensification of animal farming, thereby potentially lowering existing animal welfare standards and threatening future improvements and adjustments of animal welfare law (‘regulatory chill’).



Event hashtag:
#TTIP4Food

[Demeter-EPHA Joint Press Release] TTIP – civil society raises concerns about impacts on Living – www.eph.org/6373

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Healthcare services are not ordinary services: the fundamental principle of universal healthcare in Europe is not negotiable. There is a need for an explicit carve-out of both publicly and privately funded health services from TTIP.

- Good intentions and political statements are not legally binding categories: if health services are included in the TTIP text, exact definitions are needed to avoid ambiguities. A positive list should offer clarity as to which services have been included in the list of committed sectors.
- TFEU article 168 which requires that health should be included in all EU policies should fully apply to the whole TTIP negotiations.
- Member States have different traditions of organising their healthcare systems. The subsidiarity principle and the subsequent responsibility of Member States for Healthcare services must not be undermined by any trade negotiations. Article 14 TFEU and protocol 26 TFEU recognise the special role of Services of General Economic Interest and the freedom of organisation of public authorities when providing Services of General Interest.
- Trade agreements must not force privatisation in the health sector, as there is no evidence that privatisation guarantees better health outcomes.

There is a risk that regulatory cooperation (in particular a proposed horizontal chapter in TTIP) may induce regulatory chill in the area of health if it is largely based on the assessment that regulations are irritants to trade. A clear distinction should be made between technical cooperation on the setting of standards and attempts to influence public interest policymaking.

- While there might be potential beneficial aspects to regulatory cooperation in some areas, the benefits cannot be based purely on the assumption that greater regulatory liberalisation is universally beneficial.
- It is questionable whether TTIP is needed to achieve technical cooperation as this already occurs independently in other international fora. The role of these European committees with established procedures for transparent consultation with all interested stakeholders has to be clarified in the context of regulatory cooperation within TTIP.
- The potential impacts of regulatory cooperation on quality insurance in health, medical devices, pharmaceuticals, complementary and alternative medicines (CAM) and antimicrobial resistance (AMR) as well as health related issues outside the health systems (health insurance under financial services, e-health/m-health services under ICT) should be further investigated before any legally binding agreements are made

ISDS undermines democratic policy development and therewith the sovereignty of societies; moreover it discriminates against local companies and should be excluded from TTIP. There are few economic arguments in favour of ISDS between economies with developed legal systems (especially OECD countries) and there is no evidence of systematic discrimination against foreign investors by domestic courts in the EU and US.



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