



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2014 - 2019

Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection

2014/2228(INI)

20.1.2015

DRAFT OPINION

of the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection

for the Committee on International Trade

on the recommendations to the European Commission on the negotiations for
the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP)
(2014/2228(INI))

Rapporteur: Dita Charanzová

PA_NonLeg

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection calls on the Committee on International Trade, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

Political priorities

1. Demands that the main outcome of the negotiations be an ambitious and comprehensive agreement, bringing a significant market opening for EU companies, including SMEs;
2. Is convinced, however, that TTIP should not only cut down barriers but also aim at promoting European high levels of consumer protection; observes that in most sectors EU and US standards and regulatory environments ensure this high level; considers, therefore, that approximating our regulations represents a unique chance to establish high-quality standards and laws for consumers which will be the de facto international standards;

Full and transparent access for EU service providers - no barriers to mobility of professionals

3. Insists, while respecting the freedom of governments to protect public services, that EU service providers must have full market access to liberalised services in the US, under transparent rules at both federal and sub-federal levels;
4. Calls for mutual recognition of professional qualifications between the Parties and for the abolition of work permit requirements for high-skilled workers in sectors covered by TTIP, so as to create maximum mobility of professionals between the EU and the US;

Fair and transparent procurement at all levels

5. Urges the Commission to ensure that European companies, including SMEs, are not discriminated against when tendering for public contracts on the US market at all government levels, and to ensure transparent access at a level equal to or higher than that applying to US companies today in Europe under the new EU procurement rules;

Transatlantic standards as global standards

6. Stresses that, while safeguarding the protection achieved by EU standards and regulations, TTIP should go beyond the WTO Technical Barriers to Trade Agreement, in areas such as conformity assessment, product requirements, or standards, as well as providing for transparency in the preparation and availability of technical regulations;
7. Calls for the setting-up of an ambitious and effective cooperation mechanism aimed at creating common standards where possible in existing procedures, and to ensure that there is no unintended divergence in future standards in key sectors; believes that EU-US common standards should be promoted in all international forums;
8. Emphasises that internationally agreed standards, where existing and up-to-date, should be adopted by the US and the EU, for example in the electronic devices sector;

Make technical barriers to transatlantic trade history

9. Recalls the aim to continue to guarantee a high level of product safety within the Union; considers that TTIP should not question this requirement, but should eliminate unnecessary duplication of testing that causes a waste of resources, in particular on low-risk products; demands the recognition by the US of self-declaration of conformity on products, where allowed by EU law;
10. Supports the establishment of a mandatory structural dialogue and cooperation between regulators, in complete respect of regulatory autonomy, in particular in the engineering sector, comprising electrical and mechanical machinery, appliances and equipment; stresses that this should involve early warning mechanisms and exchanges at the time of preparation of regulations; believes that regulatory divergences are the central non-tariff barrier (NTB) to trade, and that regulators should explore ways to promote compatibility, such as mutual recognition, harmonisation or alignment of requirements;
11. Considers that the recognition of equivalence of the greatest possible number of vehicle safety regulations would be one of the most important achievements of TTIP; stresses that this will require verifying that the EU and US regulations provide for a similar level of protection; believes that this must be a step towards full regulatory convergence for the sector; urges the strengthening of EU-US cooperation in the framework of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), especially regarding new technologies;

Customs and trade facilitation, in particular for SMEs

12. Stresses that SMEs are disproportionately affected by NTBs, which TTIP must seek to reduce or eliminate completely; urges that a coherent framework be established to allow SMEs to raise NTB issues with the appropriate authorities;
13. Expects the agreement to make it easier for SMEs to participate in transatlantic trade and reduce costs by modernising, digitising, simplifying and streamlining procedures, and by raising the de minimis threshold for customs duties and non-randomised controls;

Clear rules of origin for fair trade

14. Considers that the EU and the US need to establish common rules to define the origin of products, and that such rules should be clear and easily applicable and should consider current and future trends in production.