



The European Parliament and the TTIP

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Background

Talks between the EU and US on a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) could lead to the world's largest bilateral free-trade area. Increased market access and trading opportunities and the removal of unnecessary regulation and red tape could help boost economic growth and create jobs on both sides of the Atlantic. However, there are also concerns about possible adverse impacts.

As co-legislator on the EU's trade agreements, Parliament has taken on the responsibility of ensuring that the talks on TTIP are transparent and that the final outcome is a "good deal". As Parliament's TTIP-spokesperson and rapporteur, Bernd Lange (S&D, DE), puts it. "an agreement which respects European values stimulates sustainable growth and contributes to the well-being of all citizens".

As this is the most ambitious and wide-ranging trade deal the EU has ever negotiated it has a potential impact on many areas of EU public life. In the current review of the talks, led by Parliament's committee on international trade, 14 other parliamentary committees are working in parallel to produce opinions on the impact of TTIP in their respective subject areas.

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Background

The role of the European Parliament

Once the talks are completed the deal has to have the consent of the European Parliament, as well as the backing of EU member countries, before it can enter into force. The negotiations are conducted by the EU Commission. The mandate for the negotiators – setting out what has to be achieved and safeguarded during the talks – is adopted by the EU Council. Although Parliament only has the power to monitor the talks process while it is under way, it has the political clout, as one of the two final co-legislators, to influence the direction of the talks and sound the alarm if it considers that they are going in the wrong direction.

Background

TTIP talks opened up by the European Parliament

The trade negotiations currently under way between the EU and the United States are by far the most transparent trade negotiations ever conducted by the European Union. This is largely as a result of the demands made by Parliament, which showed back in 2012, when it rejected the Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA, the controversial intellectual property protection agreement), that it understands its substantial powers in trade and is not afraid to use them. As co-legislator, it has charged itself with ensuring maximum transparency for the public during the talk's process and providing a platform for a public debate with EU businesses and citizens, so that important concerns and interests can be taken on board.

Background

How does Parliament ensure the democratic transparency of the TTIP talks?

A) Monitoring group briefings

The EU Commission negotiators brief MEPs before and after each round of talks on its plans and the progress achieved. Parliament's TTIP monitoring group includes the trade committee chair, who is also Parliament's rapporteur on the deal and the shadow rapporteurs. The chairs and rapporteurs of the 14 other EP committees specializing in the areas potentially affected by the TTIP are also invited to join the meetings.

B) "Transparency initiative"

At the European Parliament's insistence, the European Commission agreed to publish [the EU position documents](#). It also decided to grant all MEPs access to the [restricted negotiating documents](#) with the use of a special "reading room". They are not allowed to share these documents publicly but they can get a real insight into the progress of the talks.

C) The mandate

Before the negotiations started in May 2013, Parliament, after consultations with EU stakeholders and citizens, [backed the opening of the talks](#) with conditions, containing both 'red lines' and 'offensive interests', that were taken into account in the negotiating mandate later adopted by the EU Council.

D) The "mid-term review"

The new Parliament is currently taking stock of the progress made so far after eighteen months of talks and following a change of legislators on both sides of the Atlantic. Eight rounds have been concluded so far.

Parliament's assessment will be contained in its recommendations to the EU negotiators. Parliament will adopt its final recommendations in a vote in May. The TTIP rapporteur Bernd Lange (DE, S&D) has [drafted a proposal for these recommendations](#) but the final text will also reflect the opinions of the 14 other committees involved and amendments tabled by MEPs. All the debates on the progress of the talks are taking place in public.

Scroll down to see the calendar of debates in all committees, see video recordings of debates already conducted and read the texts already adopted.

E) Hearings

As part of its stock-taking exercise on the impact of the future deal on all areas of EU public policy, Parliament holds public hearings and workshops attended by experts, stakeholders in different fields, businesses and citizen activists.

Background

The procedure: recommendations for the TTIP negotiators in the making

	Rapporteur	Consid. of WD	Consid. draft opinion/report	Deadline for amendments	Consid. amend.	Vote committee	Plenary vote
INTA	B e r n d L a n g e (S&D, DE)	21/01 Video	24/02 INTA Draft Report	26/03 12.00	14/04	06-07/05	18-21/05
AFET	M I L L Á N M O N F. J. (EPP, ES)		23/02 Video AFET Draft Opinion	26/02 18.00		23/03	
DEVE	L I E T Z A r n e (S&D, DE)		22/01 Video DEVE Draft Opinion	29/01 12.00 Amendments	24/02	24/02	
ECON	K O F O D J e p p e (S&D, DK)		26/02 DEVE D r a f t O p i n i o n	03/03 12.00	23/03	24/03	
EMPL	H A R K I N M a r i a n (ALDE, IE)		EMPL Draft Opinion			01/04	
ENVI	STAES Bart (Greens/EF A, BL)		21/01 Video ENVI Draft Opinion	27/01 12.00 Amendments		23/02	
ITRE	B U Z E K J e r z y (EPP, PL)	21/01 Video	24/02 ITRE D r a f t O p i n i o n	27/02 12.00		24/03	
IMCO	C H A R A N Z O V Á D i t a (ALDE, CZ)	05/02 Video	16-17/03 IMCO Draft Opinion		23/04	07/05	
TRAN	V A N D E C A M P W i m (EPP, NL)		29/01 Video TRAN Draft Opinion	04/02 12.00 Amendments	23-24/02	16-17/03	
JURI	V O S S A x e l (EPP, DE)		23/02 Video	01/04		16/04	
AFCO	G O N Z Á L E Z P O N S E. (EPP, ES)	20/01 Video	26/02 AFCO D r a f t O p i n i o n	27/02	05/03	17/03	
LIBE	A L B R E C H T J. P. (Greens/EF A, DE)		22/01 Video LIBE Draft Opinion	29/01 12.00 Amendments		31/03	
AGRI	D E C A S T R O P. (S&D, IT) N I C H O L S O N J. (ECR, UK)	21/01 Video	24/02 AGRI D r a f t O p i n i o n	27/02 12.00		23-24/03	
CULT	H e l g a T r ü p e l (Greens/EF A, DE)		26/02 CULT D r a f t O p i n i o n	09/03 12.00		16/04	
PETI	W A Ł Ę S A J a r o s ł a w (EPP, PL)		26/02 PETI D r a f t O p i n i o n			16/04	

Background

TTIP Public Hearings and Workshops

18 March 2015

INTA hearing "What's in it for the Europeans?"

24 February 2015

ITRE/INTA joint [hearing](#) "Impact of TTIP on ITRE policy area".

24 February 2015

JURI [hearing](#) on "Administrative procedures in the EU and US".

24 February 2015

IMCO/INTA joint [hearing](#) on "TTIP: Challenges and Opportunities for the Internal Market".

27 January 2015

JURI/INTA joint [hearing](#) held on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP): Regulatory Aspects and Investor-State Dispute Settlement/Arbitration ([Press release](#)).

2 December 2014

EMPL/INTA joint [hearing](#) held on Employment and social aspects of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP).

1 April 2014

INTA workshop held on Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) provisions in the EU's International Investment Agreements, including TTIP. See [Proceedings of the Workshop](#) and [Studies](#) related to this workshop.

18 March 2014

ECON public [hearing](#) held on the TTIP and Financial Services Regulation.

17 March 2014

IMCO public [hearing](#) held on the Impact of the TTIP on the Internal Market.

11 February 2014

JURI public [hearing](#) held on Regulatory coherence and the implementation of EU law in the context of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership.

14 October 2013

INTA public [hearing](#) held on Trade and Economic Relations with the United States. Title: 'The regulatory part in the TTIP negotiations'.

30 May 2012

INTA [workshop](#) held on Transatlantic Economic Relations. Title: 'Two heads are better than one'.