

## **EMB-Position on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership - TTIP**

### **I TTIP negotiations have to stop**

The TTIP puts the EU at risk in its economical, ecological and social dimension. Sovereignty and social peace in the EU is dependent on its capability to produce sufficient safe, high-quality food within its borders and across its regions. With the TTIP, this capacity would be seriously compromised.

If the TTIP was implemented, there are serious concerns that the following consequences might arise, for example in the field of agriculture:

#### *I) Owing to high pressure on prices:*

- A large part of EU production would be relocated outside EU borders
- EU production would be concentrated in only a few regions - with the concomitant negative social and environmental consequences;

#### *II) A softening of standards would lead to:*

- Unfair competition due to different standards
- Lower product quality
- More food which is potentially hazardous to health in our supermarkets
- A drop in consumer trust in dairy and meat products.

There are numerous problems that would affect consumers in the EU. Healthy, safe and sustainable food cannot be subject to negotiations!

**Therefore the EMB's main demand is: TTIP negotiations must stop!**

## II The EMB's demands in detail:

The TTIP is not an insignificant detail but would have a major impact on the EU's economic, ecological and social situation.

### Transparency & Democracy

### Right to information and participation

1. Currently civil society has no access to information on the content of the negotiations. The public does not know what the EU's position is in the negotiation process and which objectives and whose interests are being pursued. The EU Commission negotiates behind closed doors in the name of its citizens - without any democratic legitimacy and without informing the citizens about the content of the negotiations. Only at the end of the negotiations can the EU Parliament, an elected institution, demand follow-up negotiations or a complete renegotiation. But the Parliament would also be excluded from these negotiations.

This is depriving citizens of their rights!

2. Moreover, the EU's negotiating position was drafted without respecting democratic practices. There are major concerns that only selected interests are defended.

In fact, the information that became publicly available is alarming: over 90 per cent of stakeholders in unofficial consultations with the EU Commission prior to the start of the negotiations came from large industry organisations or business associations.

Clientilism in politics harms the interests of EU society!

3. The planned approach **after** the adoption of the TTIP is also questionable. Certain provisions are to be drafted as delegated acts only after the adoption of the partnership agreement, without having to be confirmed or approved.

**Hence our demand: such negotiations may not take place behind closed doors.**

**There must be absolute transparency during all current and future negotiations and a democratic participation in the formation of the respective EU's position must be guaranteed. The possibility for the public to reject the agreement must be given and the possible rejection accepted.**

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### **No lowering of product and safety standards**

Safety and product standards play an important role: they protect consumers from food that is harmful to human health and ensure high product quality and adequate production methods. The recent food scandals have once again underlined the importance of such standards.

The precautionary principle is an important element in this regard. This principle provides for the obligation to prevent damage to human health and the environment, even if no certainty concerning the type, extent and probability of occurrence of that damage exists at that given moment. According to this principle, EU companies have to therefore prove that their products are safe.

In the US, this principle is not applied. Products can remain on the market until there is proof concerning their harmful effect. This approach poses risks to citizens and should by no means be used in the EU following the adoption of the TTIP.

### **Right to safe and high quality food**

If, through the adoption of the agreement, these standards are lowered, poor quality and potentially harmful food will be introduced onto the EU market.

Harmful products - such as hormone-treated or genetically modified food - would be freely sold in our supermarkets.<sup>1</sup>

This would not only apply to potentially harmful products imported from abroad. Due to the resulting competition, producers in the EU would be compelled to also lower the quality and safety of their own products. Those products would thus also be sold on our supermarket shelves.

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<sup>1</sup> For instance, several studies show that there are serious health concerns - in particular an increased risk of cancer - connected to so-called "hormone milk".

The usually low prices of these products do not reflect their real cost. It is the society that bears these external effects on human health and the environment - i.e. the negative consequences - separately.

Lower standards would also undermine important animal protection and sustainability criteria (it is a known fact that in the US animal protection, for example, does not play an important role).

### **No price war destroying production**

Low standards also imply a (at first glance) cheap mode of production and cheap end products. If products that have been produced in the US according to such standards are sold on the EU market, holdings that apply adequate standards will not be able to withstand the pressure on prices. Many holdings would thus disappear, including in the dairy sector. Production would be concentrated further in a few regions and be taken over almost exclusively by industrial farming. This would cause enormous environmental pollution and animal welfare problems in those regions.

On the other hand, in the regions where dairy farms would disappear, small businesses previously acting as subcontractors and suppliers of those farms would also be greatly affected. This would result in a substantial loss of jobs and depopulation due to emigration in many regions in the EU.

**Hence our demand: NO to lower product and safety standards!**

**EU border protection has to be maintained for agricultural goods, in particular for dairy products**

Milk production is a sensitive sector. Due to a high price volatility and chronicle overproduction, political measures are necessary to stabilise the market. When supply exceeds demand, prices drop too low and countermeasures need to be adopted. Be it the safety net or the intervention of a Monitoring Agency: all those measures cannot show the desired effect if in a crisis situation dairy products can enter the EU market without hindrance. Neither cutting back EU production nor public intervention through the purchase of milk can then achieve enough effect to stabilise prices. Import volumes have to remain adjustable.

**Hence our demand: import duties on dairy products need to remain an EU instrument!**

**ISDS  
Governments must not become susceptible to blackmail**

The Investor State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) plays an important role in the TTIP agreement. Under certain circumstances, companies can bring an action against governments if they believe that new legislation tampers the profitability of their investments. There is a risk that the ISDS in the TTIP limits national governments and reduces their capacity to act. The non-democratic structures of the ISDS severely affect national sovereignty.

**Hence our demand: an ISDS may in general not result in allowing industry to make pressure on governments, in a way that adequate regulations in the field of agriculture, environmental protection, labour law, animal welfare, sustainability etc. can no more be adopted! It has to be organised in a way that no violation of state sovereignty is to be feared. In addition, arbitration bodies need to have democratic legitimacy and be transparent.**