

**Question for written answer E-001315/2014/rev.1  
to the Commission**  
Rule 117  
**Oreste Rossi (PPE)**

Subject: Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership: implications for the health, agri-food and pharmaceuticals sectors

The proposed Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership between the European Union and the United States would create the largest free trade area in existence. The negotiations being conducted by the Commission are expected to be finalised by the end of 2014.

Numerous doubts have been expressed as to whether the agreement is really necessary and regarding disputes which may arise as a result, especially in view of the reciprocal obligations contained in the provisional agreement provided for in phase 3 of the memorandum of understanding which ended the WTO controversy regarding penalties for banning hormone-treated beef imports. It is not clear how possible future disagreements concerning the health, agri-food and pharmaceuticals sectors could be resolved since, according to the Commission communication, neither party has placed the harmonisation of standards on the agenda. Furthermore, health and plant health checks are the areas in which the biggest differences exist between the EU and USA regarding the application of international product traceability or risk evaluation standards. Priority should be given to the transparency of procedures, intellectual property, relations with third countries and the duties applicable in the above sectors, where the absence of harmonisation and the lack of uniform regulations are leading to duplication of procedures, creating an ongoing financial burden for companies, restricting their market access and undermining their competitiveness.

A number of uncompromisingly restrictive policies followed by the EU at the expense of economic growth, compared with the markedly liberal policies adopted by the United States (and Japan), are likely to widen the already substantial disparity between them in terms of industrial output.

In view of this:

Does the Commission intend to continue the negotiations seeking the mutual recognition and/or adoption of common international standards, particularly in the above sectors?