

EN
E-014788/2015
Answer given by Ms Malmström
on behalf of the Commission
(24.2.2016)

The Commission has protected public services in all EU trade agreements for many years now, as can be seen in the publicly available CETA text. TTIP will be no different. On 20 March 2015 EU Trade Commissioner Malmström and US Trade Representative Froman issued a joint statement clarifying that public services enjoy special protection on both sides of the Atlantic¹. More details on how the EU implements such protection in practice can be found on DG Trade's website². The Commission considers it its duty to consult widely, regularly and frequently so that it can be fully aware of the issues of concern. The Commission is in regular contact with a wide range of stakeholders from the public and private sector. Services contribute more than 70 per cent of our economy and EU Member States are the world's largest exporter of services.

While Europe is largely open to foreign providers of services, some of our trading partners are not and it is in our interest to have a strong chapter on services in our trade agreements which dismantles trade barriers facing European service providers. Therefore the Commission meets with representatives of the services industry to find out about their market access problems when operating outside the EU and also regularly meets with representatives of public services, both bilaterally and as part of the regular Civil Society Dialogue³. For TTIP, the Commission also set up an Advisory Group⁴ with representatives of wide range civil society representatives.

¹ http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2015/february/tradoc_153136.4.6%20Pesticides.pdf

² <http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/press/index.cfm?id=1115>

³ More information on the civil society dialogue: <http://trade.ec.europa.eu/civilsoc/meetlist.cfm#year-2015>

⁴ http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2014/january/tradoc_152102.pdf