

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3618/09
by Jens Holm (GUE/NGL)
to the Commission

Subject: Bilateral free-trade agreements, non-tariff barriers, non-tariff measures

Non-tariff barriers (NTBs) or non-tariff measures (NTMs) are becoming more and more important in the EU's trade policy. However, a consistent and internationally accepted definition of NTBs/NTMs seems to be lacking.

On which elements does the Commission base its definition of NTBs/NTMs, which determine its negotiating position? Does or can the REACH Directive fall under this definition? Is the Commission pursuing a 'negative list' approach towards NTBs/NTMs in its free-trade agreement (FTA) negotiations? How can the Commission guarantee that the discussion on NTBs/NTMs through FTA negotiations will not open a Pandora's box, where legitimate domestic industrial, social or environmental policies will be up for negotiation and potentially made illegal?