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Committee on Petitions

2014/2228(INI)

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DRAFT OPINION

of the Committee on Petitions

for the Committee on International Trade

on Recommendations to the European Commission on the negotiations for the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP)
(2014/2228(INI))

Rapporteur: Jarosław Wałęsa

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SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Petitions calls on the Committee on International Trade, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

- having regard to the directives for the negotiations on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership between the European Union and the United States of America of 14 June 2013,
 - having regard to Articles 206 and 207 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,
 - having regard to its resolution of 23 May 2013 on trade and investment negotiations with the United States of America¹,
 - having regard to petitions 1221-13, 1635-13, 1960-13, 2694-13, 2721-13, 2859-13, 0149-14, 0184-14, 0195-14, 0242-14, 0589-14, 0706-14, 0722-14, 0738-14, 0783-14, 0949-14, 0973-14, 1032-14, 1122-14, 1336-14, 1575-14, 1649-14, 2062-14, 2143-14, 2268-14, 2314-14, 2328-14, 2647-14 and 0033-15,
 - having regard to the European Ombudsman’s investigation into the transparency of, and public participation in, the negotiations on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (OI/10/2014/RA),
- A. whereas the Commission is currently negotiating on behalf of the European Union a wide-ranging trade and investment partnership agreement with the United States (Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership – TTIP);
- B. whereas the objective of the TTIP is to increase trade and investment between the European Union and the United States;
- C. whereas the negotiations have attracted unprecedented public interest, given the potential economic, social and political impact of the TTIP;
- D. whereas the Committee on Petitions has received a number of petitions raising concerns about the EU-US trade agreement (TTIP); whereas the petitioners’ main concerns are related to risks regarding the quality of food imports, information allegedly collected by the US regarding natural and legal persons (the right of EU citizens to ‘digital self-determination’), transparency, economic impact, and protection of investors via the Investor-State Dispute Settlement mechanism (ISDS);
1. Underlines the importance of developing the trade relationship and bilateral investment between the European Union and the United States of America in order to help growth and employment and generate new economic opportunities;
 2. Welcomes the objective of reducing unnecessary regulatory incompatibilities between the EU and the USA in relation to goods and services, such as duplication of procedures,

¹ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2013)0227.

inconsistent product requirements and double testing;

3. Notes that regulatory compatibility is to be without prejudice to the right to regulate in accordance with the level of health, safety, consumer, labour and environmental protection and cultural diversity that each side considers appropriate;
4. Stresses the importance of the mobility package, considering the visa facilitation for European service and goods providers to be one of the key elements in taking full advantage of the TTIP agreement;
5. Welcomes the fact that the Commission has made real efforts to make the TTIP negotiating process more transparent, especially in the light of the publication of the European directives for the negotiation on the TTIP (1103/13 CL 1);
6. Suggests that a more proactive approach to transparency on the part of the Commission could make the negotiating process more legitimate in the eyes of citizens, and encourages the Commission to publish documents and make meeting information available;
7. Asks the Commission to ensure that the list of TTIP documents available on its dedicated trade policy website is comprehensive;
8. Considers that the TTIP must not undermine the right of EU citizens to digital self-determination or compliance with European legislation on data protection;
9. Highlights the sensitivity of certain areas of negotiation, such as the agricultural sector, where perceptions of genetically modified organisms (GMOs), cloning and consumer health are divergent between the European Union and the United States;
10. Emphasises that consumer protection and compliance with higher European quality standards for foods and products should be at the centre of the negotiations on the TTIP.