

CHEMICALS IN TTIP



WHY DOES IT MATTER TO CONSUMERS?

Harmful chemicals are found in many products consumers come in close, frequent and prolonged contact with. Examples include skin creams with parabens, perfluorinated compounds used in food packaging or bisphenol A in plastics. Scientists warn that this ubiquitous exposure may contribute to the raise in a range of chronic and severe diseases such as cancer, diabetes and infertility. Current U.S. and EU regulatory frameworks designed to manage chemical risks suffer from major flaws and progress on reducing human and environmental exposure to toxic chemicals is slow and insufficient.

Against this backdrop, the EU and the U.S. entered the TTIP negotiations with a focus on reducing non-tariff barriers and cutting trade-related costs for businesses. From a consumer perspective, it is crucial that a TTIP agreement under no circumstance acts to delay or compromise regulation of toxic chemicals. As negotiations stand, however, TTIP could potentially weaken existing protective standards and impede the development of new, stronger chemicals laws.

FACTS¹

- ✚ **Consumer well-being – rather than primarily economic considerations – must be at the heart of possible transatlantic free-trade agreement.** A chemicals annex to TTIP should aim to foster mutual learning and exchange of best practice in chemicals management. Improved exchange of scientific experiences could for example greatly facilitate the identification and reduction of chemical risks.
- ✚ **The lack of transparency raises concern for TTIP's possible impact on consumer safety.** The negotiating parties must urgently publish their proposals to enable citizens on both sides of the Atlantic to verify if verbal commitments are matched in the negotiating texts.
- ✚ **Improve consumers' access to information.** Consumers and the public have a right to be informed about chemicals risks. An obvious priority for transatlantic cooperation should be to extend current information disclosure obligations and strengthen implementation of existing consumer right-to-know laws. Businesses should not be allowed to claim data on environmental, human health and safety effects of chemicals as confidential.
- ✚ **Safeguard the right-to-regulate.** TTIP should not commit the EU and the U.S. to pursue particular regulatory outcomes or practices, such as obligations for transparent planning,

¹ A more detailed analysis is available in our [Resolution on better transatlantic cooperation on chemicals in light of the Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership \(TTIP\)](#)

impact assessments and retrospective evaluation of regulatory acts. It is likewise paramount that a TTIP agreement does not oblige parties to justify their decisions to target a chemical for regulatory scrutiny as this would lead to paralysis by analysis.

- ✚ ***Better transatlantic cooperation on chemicals needs to be voluntary.*** Consultation obligations, especially if linked to requirements for feedback within set deadlines, will delay implementation of ambitious measures to protect consumer health and safety. Transatlantic cooperation on chemicals should also provide for accountability towards stakeholders. But consultation processes need to be inclusive and representative to prevent abuse of commenting opportunities.
- ✚ ***TTIP should advance not delay regulation of new and emerging risks.*** Better transatlantic cooperation on endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDCs), mixture toxicity, and nanomaterials, is imperative. TTIP must support the development of necessary measures to tackle these largely unregulated risks, not erect trade-related barriers to regulation.