



Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in TTIP

Ensuring Europe's smaller firms can make the most of TTIP

In this chapter, we want to make sure smaller firms across the EU – ones with less than 250 staff – can:

- sell to or import from the US more easily – something which thousands of them do already
- take full advantage of TTIP to help grow their businesses.

Reasons for negotiating SMEs

Europe's 20 million smaller firms – ones with less than 250 staff – form the backbone of our economy.

They:

- employ more than two thirds of people working in the private sector
- create far more new jobs than other parts of the economy – 85% of the total between 2002 and 2010.

Small firms face the same trade barriers as their large peers but they have fewer staff and less money to deal with them. So any progress we make in TTIP to

- remove customs duties
- simplify customs procedures
- reduce the cost of diverging standards
- improve protection of intellectual property rights

...will be particularly good for small business.

Small companies need extra help to make the most of the new trade and investment opportunities TTIP could create.

This is why we want to ensure smaller firms have: access to the information they need help with exporting or investing abroad a voice in implementing the TTIP agreement.

EU goals

In this part of the agreement, we want to:

- have a free US online helpdesk where smaller firms can find all the information they need to export to, import from or invest in the US, including:
 - customs duties
 - taxes
 - regulations and customs procedures
 - market opportunities.

The EU already has a similar online helpdesk for firms wanting to export to Europe.

- exchange best practices on helping smaller firms export or invest abroad; they already work together to on business networking and access to finance - we want to them to strengthen their cooperation in these and other areas

- give smaller firms a voice in implementing the TTIP agreement; we want to set up a committee to liaise with the small business community and convey its priorities and concerns to the EU and US trade authorities.

The European Commission has asked European smaller firms what problems they face when doing business in the US. Based on their feedback, we might propose more measures under TTIP to help them further.