



European
Commission

Transatlantic Trade & Investment Partnership (TTIP) Advisory Group

Terms of Reference

Date: 27/01/2014

Trade

Purpose and activities

1. The purpose of the group is to provide EU TTIP negotiators with high quality technical and practical advice on areas under negotiation.
2. This may involve exchanging views on the issues at stake, examining difficulties and specific questions, and providing expert insight into the latest developments and challenges in specific areas which may require particular attention.
3. Members are expected to use their expertise and experience to represent a common interest shared by stakeholders in a particular area, rather than the interests of any specific organisation or individual. Members will therefore need to consult in an effective manner with stakeholders in the interest they represent, on the topics for which their expertise is sought.
4. The membership of the group is designed to be balanced between a range of interest groups, including business, labour, consumer, environment and health. It is therefore expected that the group will offer a plurality of views. The aim is not necessarily to reach consensus, but to shed light on issues of importance in the negotiations through frank and focused discussion of different perspectives.

Operation

5. Meetings of the group will be chaired by the EU TTIP Chief Negotiator. He will convene meetings on his own initiative, or at the request of a minimum of five members, with the Chair's agreement. Meetings will be held on Commission premises.
6. Meetings will generally take place in between negotiating rounds, currently envisaged to happen approximately once every two months.
7. If any member cannot attend a particular meeting, they may nominate an alternate with the agreement of the Chair, in order to maintain as far as possible the balance of interests in the group.
8. The Chair will draw up the agenda and share it with the group by email, no later than ten calendar days before the meeting. Members of the group may suggest topics to add to the agenda. The agenda will be adopted by the group at the start of the meeting.
9. Any other documents necessary for the meeting will be shared with the group no later than five calendar days before the start of the meeting, or in case of need, no later than two.

10. In agreement with the Chair, the group may set up temporary sub-groups to examine specific questions on the basis of the same terms of reference as the main group. These sub-groups shall report to the main group.
11. The Chair may invite experts from outside the group, with specific competence in a subject on the agenda, to participate in the work of the group or sub-groups. He may do so on his own initiative or at the request of a member.
12. Summary minutes of each meeting will be drafted and made available to the group for approval within a week after each meeting. The minutes shall include a list of participating members, but shall not mention the individual positions of members during the group's deliberations, unless the member explicitly requests it. The minutes will be published on the Commission Register of expert groups and on the Commission's TTIP website.
13. Should a conflict of interest arise in relation to any member of the group, they are responsible for declaring it, preferably in advance of meetings but at the latest at the beginning of a meeting. The Chair may choose to exclude the member from relevant parts of a meeting, the whole meeting, or from the group entirely. Conflicts of interest will be noted in the minutes.
14. All correspondence relating to the group will be handled by the secretariat provided by DG TRADE, via the dedicated mailbox trade-ttip-advisory-group@ec.europa.eu.
15. Any applications for access to documents held by or in relation to the group will be handled in accordance with Regulation (EC) No. 1049/2001¹ and detailed rules for its application.
16. All processing of personal data for the purposes of the group shall be in accordance with Regulation (EC) No. 45/2001².

¹ Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2001 regarding public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents (OJ L 145, 31.5.2001, p. 43).

² Regulation (EC) 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data. (OJ L 8, 12.1.2001, p. 1).

Duration

17. The group is expected to operate for up to two years, or until the end of negotiations for the TTIP, whichever is sooner. After two years, the group may take a decision in agreement with the Commission on whether to disband or to continue operating for a further period of time to be determined.

Confidentiality

18. The Chair will provide information about the TTIP negotiations at the group's meetings, in order to enable the members of the group to carry out their role as described in the Terms of Reference.
19. Members of expert groups and their representatives, as well as invited experts and observers, shall comply with the obligations of professional secrecy laid down by the Treaties and their implementing rules, as well as with the Commission's rules on security regarding the protection of EU classified information, laid down in the [Annex to Commission Decision 2001/844/EC](#). Should they fail to respect these obligations, the Commission may take all appropriate measures.
20. Certain information provided to the group by the Commission shall be treated as confidential. The Chair will make clear when this is the case. In particular, non-public EU documents related to the negotiations (including but not limited to negotiating documents) and non-public details about the negotiating positions of either party, shall be treated as confidential.
21. Members of the group agree to protect this confidential information, and to use their best efforts to prevent it being disclosed to any person outside the TTIP Advisory Group or the EU TTIP negotiating team, or from falling into the possession of others, or into the public domain.