

# **ASSESS TiSA: Assessing the claimed benefits of the Trade in Services Agreement**



Joint EPSU / AK EUROPA / ÖGB Europabüro

Workshop

30 November 2017

**ASSESS TiSA: Assessing the claimed benefits of  
The Trade in Services Agreement**

For brief report of the Workshop and for the Final Report '**ASSESS\_TiSA:  
Assessing the claimed benefits of the Trade in Services Agreement (TiSA)**'  
click [here](#)

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We are pleased to invite you to take part in an exchange on **30th November** with Werner Raza and Bernhard Tröster on the new study “ASSESS TiSA: Assessing the claimed benefits of the Trade in Services Agreement”. The exchange will take place from **16h00 to 18h30 on 30 November** 2017 at the Permanent Representation of Austria to the EU (1st floor), Avenue de Cortenbergh 30, 1040 Bruxelles. While TiSA negotiations have come to a halt, this workshop offers an **opportunity to critically reflect on the economic underpinnings of the TiSA-project** and **to foster critical exchange on the future development** of the services agenda in EU’s next generation trade agreements.

If you would like to join the exchange with Werner Raza and Bernhard Tröster on the 30th November, please send an **email indicating your interest** to [michael.mayer@akeuropa.eu](mailto:michael.mayer@akeuropa.eu) **by 23th November**.

If you are not able to participate in the meeting but would like to receive a copy of the study “Assess TiSA”, please also let us know and we will send you the final report (the study is still work in progress).

### **Agenda:**

- 1) Welcome Coffee & Registration
- 2) Short Intro: TiSA – where are we now? (*Oliver Prausmüller, AK Vienna*)
- 3) Study Assess TiSA: Presentation of key findings (*Werner Raza / Bernhard Tröster, ÖFSE*)
- 4) Discussants: *Markus Krajewski* (University of Erlangen-Nürnberg), *Lucian Cernat* (Chief Trade Economist, EC), *Paul-Ugo Jean* (senior assistant to MEP Jude Kirton-Darling, S&D spokesperson on TiSA)
- 5) Questions & Answers / General Debate
- 6) Outlook: Pending issues & future challenges (*Penny Clarke, EPSU*)

### **Background:**

The impact of international trade agreements on **services regulation** and **public policy objectives** has been a controversial subject for a number of years. This holds especially true when it comes to recent attempts to move beyond the

level of the WTO trade in services agreement GATS. This so called **“GATS plus” agenda** covers sensitive areas like envisaged “enhanced regulatory disciplines” on domestic regulation as well as the wish for more offensive liberalization techniques and outcomes (as e.g. by using “ratchet” and “standstill” clauses). In this regard the TiSA-project shares with other **next generation trade agreements** the strong focus on potentially “burdensome” laws, administrative procedures, standards and regulations, or what in trade economics parlance has been tellingly termed „**behind-the-border barriers**“. While critics of this expansive trade agenda often emphasize the importance to protect socially desirable regulation against a **reframing as barrier to trade** proponents typically point to the **claimed economic benefits** of next generation trade agreements.

Against this background the issue of the economic treatment of regulations is relevant across a wide range sensitive public policy areas and lays the foundation for the claimed benefits of the next generation trade agenda. In this regard the **study „Assess TiSA“** takes the critical debate on the treatment of so called „NTMs“ (non-tariff measures) in next generation trade agreements as a starting point for an **alternative approach to the official economic assessments of the TiSA-project**. The aim is to provide a systematic critique of the **projected economics benefits of TiSA in EU’s policy discourse**. Bearing in mind the ambiguous figures which were presented to European Parliament already in 2016, a particular focus will be on the examination **TiSA’s official Sustainability Impact Assessment (SIA)** concluded in summer 2017 (watch out for detailed information above).

Therefore the **study „Assess TiSA“** initially aims to critically examine the beneficial claims of services trade liberalization and to lay open their methodological flaws and biases. Hence „Assess TiSA“ provides for a more balanced apprehension of the social costs as well as benefits of regulation in the services sector. In this regard it is conveniently overlooked that the benefits of de-regulation accruing to companies **must be balanced with the potential costs of de-regulation to society**. The second part of the study aims to (i) propose an alternative conceptualization of the economic role of regulation, taking into account the multi-dimensionality of its economic and social effects; and (ii) provide for **short case studies of the social and economic benefits of regulation** in the services sector that serve to illustrate the need to arrive at a more nuanced understanding of the role of regulation for public policy objectives as well as the

need to understand the importance of policy space and flexibility for effective regulation.

### Useful links for preparation:

*\*Background on the research work of **Werner Raza** and **Bernhard Tröster**:*

<http://www.oefse.at/en/about-us/staff/research-department/mr-werner-raza/>

<http://www.oefse.at/en/about-us/staff/research-department/bernhard-troester/>

*\*on the final **Sustainability Impact Assessment** on TiSA online:*

<http://www.trade-sia.com/tisa/final-tisa-report-now-online/>

*\*on the claimed economic benefits of TiSA ahead of the **TiSA resolution of the European Parliament in 2016**:*

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/headlines/world/20160201STO12242/tisa-parliament-s-recommendations>

*\*on the **stalemate** of the **TiSA negotiations**:*

[http://www.akeuropa.eu/en/tisa-at-a-stalemate---risks-to-regulations-in-the-public-interest-remain.html?cmp\\_id=7&news\\_id=3092](http://www.akeuropa.eu/en/tisa-at-a-stalemate---risks-to-regulations-in-the-public-interest-remain.html?cmp_id=7&news_id=3092)

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