

## Münster against TTIP\* Alliance

The Münster against TTIP\* Alliance is an association of political organizations, groups and committed individuals in Münster, Germany.

Our aim is to bring together the various protest groups campaigning against the so-called free-trade agreements such as TTIP, CETA and TiSA. We aim to develop networking amongst the different participants in the struggle against the agreements and the threatening dismantlement of democracy.

We see ourselves as part of an international resistance movement. If we work together, we can stop TTIP, CETA and TiSA.

## Donations

Our campaigns, protest marches and activities cost money. We finance everything via donations. Thus, we appreciate financial support.

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## Future Expectations

In spite of negative experiences, such as NAFTA, a consortium of corporations, lobbyists and politicians still is keen on introducing TTIP. According to the opinion of experts such as Dr. Heinz-J. Bontrup, an economics researcher, there is "neither a growth effect nor an effect on employment. These are not even intended by those in favor of the free-trade agreement. Their aim is to increase the distribution of income benefiting revenue from capital gains and also to pressure the democratically elected politicians, as well as, in a further step, to dismantle the welfare state and democracy."

## Our Demands

1. An immediate cessation of negotiations on TTIP and TiSA
2. An immediate halt to the ratification of CETA

## What can you do?

**Find out more for yourself** and for others – pass on our flyer.

**Join our alliance.** We meet each first and third Tuesday of every month at 7.30 pm at ITP, Friedrich-Ebert-Str. 7 (across the courtyard at the back), 48153 Münster. Everyone is welcome. You will find information, planned dates, petitions and more on our website [www.muenster-gegen-ttip.de](http://www.muenster-gegen-ttip.de)

**Follow us at** [www.facebook.com/MuenstergegenTTIP](https://www.facebook.com/MuenstergegenTTIP) and [www.twitter.com/msvsttip](https://www.twitter.com/msvsttip)



**Against** TTIP, CETA and TiSA agreements and their consequences.

**Against** the exploitation, oppression and destruction of the environment.

**For** a dignified human life for everybody.

**For** fair and sustainable world trade.

## What is the Meaning of TTIP\*?

TTIP (Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership) is a so-called free trade- or protection of investment agreement, which, at the moment, is being negotiated between the USA and the European Union. CETA is a similar agreement being negotiated between the EU and Canada. The focus of both negotiations is not the reduction of customs duties but the reduction of “non-tariff barriers”. This concerns social, cultural and environmental standards which are an obstruction to an unrestricted opening of the markets. Minimum wage, bans on fracking and product labeling regulations are regarded as trade restrictions.

## Dismantling of Democracy

Even at this stage, the negotiations regarding TTIP are extremely non-transparent. Negotiations take place without public review. Even members of parliament only have limited access to information. In contrast, economic lobbyists have had influence on the content ever since the beginning of the negotiations.

In addition, TTIP is setting up an indisputable parallel justice system lacking democratic legitimation. The right to file actions is limited to corporations. They can file for compensation against governments if trade obstacles such as regulations regarding the protection of our environment or consumer protection threaten their expected profits. TTIP plans courts of arbitration (or alternative parallel jurisdictions), in which private legislative chambers would make judgments not open to public review which would be binding and not open to appeal. The existing courts would be undermined by an authority lacking democratic legitimation.

Therefore, an obvious and predictable consequence of TTIP would be, that governments would at all costs be forced to avoid the implementation of non-tariff barriers. National parliaments surrender their sovereignty to TTIP. In this way, we as citizens also lose our voting rights – if our elected representatives are no longer free to make decisions, it doesn't really make any difference who we elect. What corporations consider to be trade restrictions are in fact our social achievements, such as for example minimum wage, environmental protection standards and consumer protection.

## Environment and Climate Protection in Danger

Under TTIP, the law against fracking, the ban on imports containing genetically modified organisms, the ban on certain substances (e.g. pesticides) and regulations concerning climate protection would be considered to be trade restrictions. It would no longer be possible for national parliaments to introduce new standards on sustainability. Thus, the goals in regards to climate change, which we achieved in Paris in 2015, would be eroded in the long-term.

## Water is a Human Right

Utilities in this country are still largely in public hands. Under TTIP, areas such as education, social housing, public regional transport, but also the water and energy supply as well as health services would have to be opened to market competition. Governmental representatives then would no longer have any influence on quality standards, in fact just the opposite would happen: the global corporations' greed for profit would stand in direct opposition to public interest.

The planned TiSA agreement is about the complete, irreversible privatization of all services, especially of those publicly funded. The nineties saw numerous privatizations in regards to the supplying of water and energy - for instance in Berlin (which led to a loss of 3000 jobs) and Portugal (where the cost of water rose by 400%). These were later reversed to public ownership due to massive mismanagement and broken promises.

## Loss of Cultural Diversity

Germany views the preservation of its cultural diversity as one of its primary obligations. Measures to protect and enhance this diversity, such as the fixed book-price-law or the funding of museums, theaters and cultural initiatives would be considered an obstruction to trade.

## Consumers without Protection

The USA and Canada both practice the post- cautionary principle. This means, that a product has to be authorized if it has not been scientifically proven to be harmful. The pre-cautionary principle, which is implemented in the EU, only authorizes products proven to be harmless. This could be re-interpreted as a trade barrier! Protective measures regulating genetically modified plants and animals, as well as the labeling requirement for such products would be considered a trade barrier under TTIP and would therefore be at risk. In the future, it could be difficult for us as citizens to purchase food free of genetic modifications. Small farmers are threatened by TTIP. If customs duties and protection regulations are dropped, they would not be able to compete with the giant agricultural corporations in the USA. Further expansion of consumer protection would practically be impossible and would be threatened by legal action.

## No Protection in the Workplace

Today, our parliament can still independently implement workers' rights and labor standards in cooperation with the unions. The redefinition of these long fought for social achievements as free trade barriers exposes them to dispute settlements. And any expansion of these achievements would be impossible. There is a great risk of existing standards being scaled down and gradually abolished due to increased competitive pressure. In the USA, there is evidence of an increasing number of developments aimed at taking power away from the unions. While the industrial associations welcome the agreements as a way to boost the economy and point to the creation of new jobs, the IFO Institute for Economic Research predicts a miniscule growth of only 0.05% per year. The NAFTA trade agreement, which has been in effect since 1994, provides ample evidence of this. In contrast to the promises that were made, workers' standards and real wages dropped and over 300,000 jobs were lost.