

TRADE DEAL UNDER FIRE FROM TEACHERS
LEAKED EU TTIP OFFER ON SERVICES OPENS DOOR TO PRIVATISATION

(Brussels – June 16, 2014) The organisation representing 11 million teachers and education workers in Europe is expressing deep concern over the European Union’s intention to include education services in a free trade deal being negotiated with the United States.

The European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE) - the European Region of Education International says the EU’s initial offer on services and investment in the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) that has been leaked to the press makes extensive offers in privately-funded education services that could lead to an influx of for-profit providers.

“With some minor exceptions, the EU is essentially opening the door wide open to for-profit American companies to provide education from primary school all the way to university,” stated ETUCE European director Martin Rømer. “And the rules of the TTIP will make it very difficult for Member States to effectively regulate these companies.”

To illustrate these concerns, Rømer noted the current controversy over the for-profit college sector in the United States.

“A U.S. Congressional investigation into the for-profit sector in 2012 found these colleges charged exorbitant tuition but produced abysmal student outcomes,” Rømer said. “Taxpayer dollars that subsidised the for-profits were spent mainly on marketing or pocketed as profit, and regulatory evasion was common.”

With the EU’s proposed offers on education services on the TTIP, private American education providers would have guaranteed market access into most Member States. Attempts to regulate the number of providers allowed entry into a market and rules developed to enhance stricter quality standards and accreditation procedures could be deemed to be in violation of the agreement.

“Furthermore, the EU’s wide-ranging offer on education services is not limited to the TTIP negotiations,” Rømer explained. “It equally applies to the Trade in Services Agreement that is being negotiated with a larger group of countries.”

The ETUCE has from the outset of negotiations raised concerns about the serious risks for educational policy, for educational institutions, and for teachers and students if education services are included in TTIP.

“We will continue to step up our lobbying efforts ahead of the next round of talks and make it clear that is unacceptable to include education and other public services in a commercial trade agreement,” stated Rømer.

The next round of TTIP negotiations will take place on 14-18 July 2014.

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For more information:

Read the [ETUCE statement on TTIP](#)

For more information about [education and TTIP](#)