

Trade in Services Agreement (TISA) Leaks: More Evidence of Concerted Attack on Democracy

"This leak exposes the corporate aim to use TISA to further limit the public interest regulatory capacity of democratically elected governments."

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The Trade in Services Agreement "responds to major corporate lobbies' desire to deregulate services," says global trade expert. (Photo: [GGAADD/flickr/cc](#))

One day after it leaked a trove of documents related to the [massive, pro-corporate](#) Trade in Services Agreement (TISA), WikiLeaks on Thursday published another four chapters of the proposed 52-nation trade deal, covering key areas ahead of the next negotiating round on Monday.

As with Wednesday's documents, Thursday's batch of texts reveals "a concerted attempt to place restrictions on the ability of participating governments to regulate services sectors, even where regulations are necessary to protect the privacy of domestic populations, the natural environment or the integrity of public services," WikiLeaks declares.

Combined with Wednesday's revelations, this week's leaks underscore how TISA "responds to major corporate lobbies' desire to deregulate services," trade expert Deborah James, of the Our World Is Not For Sale (OWINFS) network and the Center for Economic and Policy Research, [wrote](#) on Thursday. "This leak exposes the corporate aim to use TISA to further limit the public interest regulatory capacity of democratically elected governments."

The annexes leaked Thursday—each published alongside expert analysis—relate to regulation of financial services, e-commerce, telecommunication, and maritime transport. As WikiLeaks puts it, the regulations together create "international legal regime which aims to deregulate and privatize the supply of services—which account for the majority of the economy across TISA countries."

The analyses suggest that TISA would have sweeping implications—from rolling back financial regulations to lowering seafarers' wages to infringing on privacy rights and internet freedoms.

"As governments around the world implement the lessons of the 2008 financial crisis by re-regulating financial firms to prevent another crisis, the leaked TISA rules could require countries—including the world's largest financial centers—to halt and even roll back financial regulations," said Ben Beachy, research director at Public Citizen's Global Trade Watch and author of the analysis on the leaked Financial Services annex.

"Indeed," he continued, "TISA would expand deregulatory 'trade' rules written under the

advisement of large banks before the financial crisis, requiring domestic laws to conform to the now-rejected model of extreme deregulation that led to global recession.”

OWINFS, which has been advocating against TISA and other so-called “free-trade” deals for years, calls the section covering e-commerce “perhaps the most explosive.”

Public Citizen lawyer Burcu Kilic, who co-authored the Electronic Commerce annex analysis, said the leak “once again demonstrates that trade negotiations are playing an important role in shaping the future of internet governance. Because these negotiations are closed, they are a poor forum for making internet policy, leading to policy that naturally favors businesses with major lobbying operations in Geneva and Washington, D.C., rather than the sort of open and multi-participant forums deciding issues on the merits we would prefer.”

The WikiLeaks e-commerce analysis shows how TISA threatens both net neutrality and personal data privacy.

“Privacy is a fundamental human right central to the maintenance of democratic societies,” Kilic said. “TISA includes requirements that could damage privacy protections. TISA should be debated publicly, in order to ensure that adequate, express privacy safeguards are included.”

The 52 nations currently negotiating TISA account for two-thirds of global GDP. Those nations are the United States, the 28 members of the European Union, and 23 other countries, including Turkey, Mexico, Canada, Australia, Pakistan, Taiwan, and Israel. According to WikiLeaks, TISA “is the largest component of the United States’ strategic neoliberal ‘trade’ treaty triumvirate,” which also includes the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) and the TransAtlantic Trade and Investment Pact (TTIP).

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