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News | 07.12.2011

Free Trade Agreements

EU-India and Human Rights



Negotiations on a European Union - India Free Trade Agreement (FTA) began in 2008. Such an FTA would cover more than 20 percent of the world's population and thus have an enormous impact not only on the lives of people in India, but on trade in general.

The EU hopes to conclude this agreement soon and sees the forthcoming EU-India Summit early next year as the last moment to strike a deal before the much quoted "window of opportunity" closes, as India enters its election season. However, different "levels of ambition" exist in the EU and India in relation to trade in goods and trade rules in general, and these are still far from being settled.

Free Trade Agreements go far beyond the dismantling of tariffs concerning goods, also tackling trade rules on services, government procurement, intellectual property rights and investment.

A Sustainability Impact Assessment, commissioned by the EU has failed to give adequate information on the impact of the FTA on civil society both in the EU and India.

While Free Trade Agreements always have serious consequences for domestic European policy and economy, Greens are particularly concerned about the effects of Free Trade Agreements with an emerging economy with huge pockets of poverty, such as India, particularly on

- restricted policy space in terms of environmental and social legislation
- effects on agriculture, in particular small peasants, retailing sector, health, informal employment
- human rights in their wider sense, and in particular the right to food.

This final aspect will be at the centre of the conference [Human rights and the EU-India Free Trade agreement](#) on Thursday December 8, 2011. Green MEP Ska Keller will discuss the EU-India Right to Food Impact Assessment with representatives of Misereor, the Heinrich Böll Foundation, Glopolis, Anthra and TWN in the context of the different chapters of the foreseen agreement. The event will be streamed live from the European Parliament in Brussels and the full agenda can be found [here](#).

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