



Activity Title and Number: EU-China Seminar on Regional Trade Agreements A303-C1

Beneficiary: Shanghai University of International Business and Economics (SUIBE)

Location and Date: Beijing and Shanghai, 23-25 April 2014

Stakeholders: Development Research Center of the State Council (DRC)

Brief Activity Report

Relevance and Impact

The European Union (EU) is the most developed model of regional integration. It has more than 15 active bilateral negotiations underway that bring additional value to the European economy, especially in the area of trade in services and investment. China recently joined several bilateral or plurilateral free investment and trade talks in different regions of the world. Free Trade Agreements (FTA) offer a new platform to further open up China's economy while speeding up domestic reforms. China currently has 18 FTA partners and started investment talks with the EU in January 2014. China recently requested to join the Trade in Services Agreement (TiSA) talks. China's participation in TiSA would be an important stepping stone towards the future multi-lateralisation of TiSA and would opportunities for enhanced trade in services between the EU and China.

In order to generate dialogue between Chinese and European stakeholders on key services trade issues in regional agreements, EUCTPII organised a 3-day seminar to enhance China's policy-making skills and knowledge in the field of services industry and trade by learning from the EU economic integration and previous FTA negotiations. These seminars also incorporated general informal discussions about EU-China trade relations and TiSA negotiations.

Activity Description

About 100 officials from the Ministry of Commerce and other agencies such as the National Development Reform Commission, the People's Bank of China, the State Council Development Research Centre and high level academics from the Shanghai University of International Business and Economics participated in the seminars. To provide participants with background information on the China (Shanghai) Free Trade Zone, a Chinese scholar presented the link between investment liberalisation and negative list management from both a Chinese and international law perspective. A French academic showed the impact of European Union economic integration and enlargement on trade in services and competitiveness with practical examples of how internal trade and non-trade barriers within the European Union were lifted. A German researcher highlighted the lessons learnt from past EU regional agreement negotiations and outlook for agreements on trade in services. Chinese and European experts discussed the following topics: the market access potential of TiSA with and without China; new rules of TiSA; the implementation pre-requisites of 'deep integration'; General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) and Preferential Trade Agreements (PTA) achievements in services liberalisation followed experts' presentations.



European and Chinese experts at the seminar in Beijing, 23 April 2014

Results and Dissemination

- ✓ Chinese officials and academics in charge of trade in services and bilateral trade negotiations improved their understanding and knowledge of the impacts of the EU enlargement on trade in services.
- ✓ Provided a platform for Chinese officials and scholars and European Union experts to informally discuss critical issues in the current TiSA negotiation talks.