

WordPerfect, MSWORD, or text (.TXT) files. Supporting documentation submitted as spreadsheets are acceptable as Quattro Pro or Excel files.

Notifications submitted in response to this request will be placed by the U.S. Co-Chair in a USTR file open to public inspection pursuant to 15 CFR 2003.5. All public documents shall be available for public inspection in the USTR Reading Room. The USTR Reading Room is open to the public, by appointment only, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon and from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. An appointment to review the file must be scheduled at least 48 hours in advance and may be made by calling (202) 395-6186. General information concerning the Office of the United States Trade Representative may be obtained by accessing its Internet Web site (<http://www.ustr.gov>).

Christopher A. Padilla,

Assistant U.S. Trade Representative for Intergovernmental Affairs and Public Liaison.
[FR Doc. 03-21261 Filed 8-19-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3190-01-M

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE

Request for Public Comment on the Market Access Implications for U.S. Trade in Services of the Accession to the European Union of Austria, Finland and Sweden

AGENCY: Office of the United States Trade Representative.

ACTION: Request for comment.

SUMMARY: The Trade Policy Staff Committee gives notice that the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) requests written submissions from the public concerning the market access implications for U.S. trade in services of the 1995 enlargement of the European Union to include Austria, Finland and Sweden. On July 10, 2003, the European Communities and its Member States (collectively, the EC) transmitted a "Notification Pursuant to Article V:5 of the GATS—Accession of Austria, Finland and Sweden to the European Communities" (S/C/N/231), notifying the WTO Council for Trade in Services of their intention to modify or withdraw Specific Commitments. It stated that previous GATS schedules of specific commitments and lists of MFN exemptions will be replaced by new commitments as from April 30, 2004. The existing schedules and lists are accessible through the WTO's Services Database Web site, <http://tsdb.wto.org/>

wto/WTOWHomepublic.htm. From that site, click on "Pre-defined Reports" and then "All Sectors in Each Country."

On August 6, 2003, the United States indicated its claim of interest in the modification or withdrawal of specific commitments and requested negotiations with the EC pursuant to GATS Article XXI with a view to reaching an agreement on any necessary compensatory adjustment. The United States also requested that the EC clarify the legal and procedural basis for any modifications in the GATS Article II MFN exemptions of the EC or its Member States that may be included in the EC's consolidated list of GATS Article II MFN exemptions, reflecting changes in the EC's WTO obligations resulting from the 1995 enlargement. USTR and other agencies are currently engaged in an assessment of the potential impact on U.S. services trade of the 1995 enlargement of the EC and in particular of what compensation the EC may owe to the United States under WTO rules; comments from the public in response to this notice will be incorporated into that assessment.

DATE: Submissions must be received on or before noon, 30 days after publication.

ADDRESSES: Submissions by Electronic Mail: FR0091@ustr.gov. Submissions by facsimile: Gloria Blue, Executive Secretary, Trade Policy Staff Committee (TPSC), Office of the USTR, at (202)395-6143.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For procedural questions concerning public comments, contact Gloria Blue, Executive Secretary, TPSC, Office of the USTR, 1724 F Street, NW., Washington, DC 20508, telephone (202)395-3475. Substantive questions concerning this review should be addressed to Mark Mowrey, Deputy Assistant U.S. Trade Representative for Europe and the Mediterranean, telephone (202)395-3074.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

1. Background Information

A. The 1995 Enlargement

On January 1, 1995, the EC grew from 12 to 15 Member States, with the accession to the Union of Austria, Finland and Sweden effective that date. With respect to WTO rules related to trade in goods, the United States entered into compensation negotiations with the EC under General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) Articles XXIV and XXVIII. Those negotiations took place in 1994 and 1995, yielding a bilateral agreement on compensation which

entered into force on July 22, 1996 (effective from December 30, 1995).

Despite repeated requests from the United States and other WTO members, the EC failed in the period subsequent to the 1995 enlargement to notify WTO Members of its proposed modification or withdrawal of commitments as the result of this enlargement as required under GATS Articles V:5 and XXI. However, on July 10, 2003 the EC provided its proposed consolidated GATS schedule for the EC 15 and formally notified its intent to modify or withdraw commitments as a result of its enlargement. Pursuant to GATS Article XXI, the EC is required to enter into negotiations with any WTO Members who believe they may be affected by the proposed modification or withdrawal of specific commitments with a view to reaching agreement on any necessary compensatory. On August 6, 2003 the United States notified the EC that it did desire such negotiations.

B. The EC Notification of 2003

On July 10, 2003, the EC transmitted a communication to the WTO Secretariat presenting its consolidated schedule for the EC 15 of specific commitments under the GATS, and its consolidated list for the EC 15 of GATS Article II MFN exemptions.

(1) Specific Commitments

The EC's Communication stated that pursuant to Article V:5 of the GATS and in accordance with the terms of GATS Article XXI:1(b), the EC was notifying the WTO's Council for Trade in Services of its intention to modify or withdraw a number of specific GATS commitments. The EC presented a summary list of these modified commitments, which is paraphrased below:

a. Horizontal Commitments

- Market access entry: the EC limitation with respect to public utilities services being subject to public monopolies or to the granting of exclusive rights to private operators is extended to Austria, Finland and Sweden.

- National treatment limitations on subsidies—mode 3: the limitations on subsidies on mode 3 inscribed in the EC's schedule now apply also to Austria, Finland and Sweden.

b. Sectoral commitments

- Rental/Leasing services without operators—relating to aircraft: the EC's limitations under mode 2 and mode 3 are extended to Austria.

- Services incidental to manufacturing: the commitment included in the schedule of Austria is withdrawn.