

Foreword

As the world of higher education becomes more and more subject to global pressures, as we see the rise of multi-national higher education institutions, it becomes more and more important for the higher education community to become aware of and to understand the international context in which it now finds itself working. International trade agreements, once thought to be the concern of manufacturing and agricultural interests, now must become the concern of educators, as their “industry” is also impacted.

Recent discussions on this topic with higher education unions from Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries and developing countries alike, through the auspices of Education International, have made it clear that NEA and its affiliates and members need to have a basic background in international trade. NEA’s departments of International Relations and Membership and Organizing/Higher Education commissioned the Economic Policy Institute (EPI) to provide a primer on trade agreements, their history or background, and their potential impact on education. This report is a shortened version of the original written by Josh Bivens of EPI.