Innovating U.S. Public Diplomacy Around TTIP in Germany and Austria
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Executive Summary
Public support for the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership in Germany and Austria is at a record low. The national parliaments are reluctant to sign on to TTIP, in part due to concerns among the policymakers themselves and in part due to widespread disapproval among their constituents.

Our research included media content analyses, interviews with officials in Berlin, Vienna and Washington, and a study of public diplomacy around the NAFTA free trade agreement with Mexico and the ACTA anti-piracy treaty, which was rejected by the European Parliament.

We found that negative opinions about TTIP in Germany and Austria are rooted in a perceived lack of transparency in the negotiations and in deeper concerns about a democratic deficit in the European Union. Misperceptions about the United States and a declining appreciation of shared transatlantic values make matters more difficult. In order to move the needle of public opinion enough to ensure ratification of TTIP by the German and Austrian parliaments, we recommend:

• Engaging with national parliamentarians, who not only hold voting roles but who are the primary influencers of public opinion. This can include:
  o Ambassadors’ dinner series with expert speakers
  o Exchange programs to the United States (International Visitor Leadership Program/Voluntary Visitor Program)

• Engaging with professional groups opposed to TTIP, such as farmers, regulators and local/regional government officials, to counter misperceptions and improve the quality of information about U.S. standards. This can include:
  o Exchange programs to the United States (IVLP/Voluntary Visitor Program)

• Holding in-person and online listening events, such as town halls and Web chats, to make the public feel more like part of the process.

• Messaging on the economic merits is not advisable and does not resonate with the German and Austrian publics.