

# EU-LATIN AMERICA RELATIONS

## Trade and Beyond

ONLINE SERIES FROM 22 SEPTEMBER TO 6 OCTOBER 2020

### SAVE THE DATE

Latin America and Europe are closely linked economically, culturally and historically through migration in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, trade and investment. The partnership is already called a strategic one and the further deepening of these ties seems to be a »natural« development.

At present, the EU has several agreements with Latin America: the Andean states of Colombia, Peru and Ecuador, Central America and the Cariforum. The modernization of the Global Agreement with Mexico has been finalized this year. Negotiations for an association agreement with MERCOSUR have been taking more than 20 years and the European Commission may present the final EU-MERCOSUR-Agreement to the Council of the EU and the European Parliament in autumn.

Yet, the Covid-19 pandemic has dramatically changed the context: Latin American countries are severely suffering from the sanitary and economic impact of the pandemic, aggravating structural problems like inequality and poverty.

What does this new reality mean for the EU-Latin America trade and political partnership? Is it wise and sufficient to continue business as usual? Or should there be a fundamental change in EU's policy towards Latin America? If we rethink EU's trade policy: What can we learn from existing trade agreements with countries in the regions? And would the global challenges of today – dwindling multilateralism, climate change, and democracy crisis – not demand an even closer cooperation, beyond mere trade?

Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung has invited its partners in Latin America to analyse the potential social, environmental, and political impacts of existing and future agreements. To present and discuss their findings Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung is delighted to invite you to this series of online round tables.



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### PROGRAMME

22 SEPTEMBER 2020, 4:00 PM – 5:30 PM (CEST)

#### # 1 | EU-ANDEAN FTA | RETURN TO PRIMARY COMMODITIES

The Free Trade Agreement with the Andean countries Colombia, Ecuador and Peru entered into force in 2013. Its trade and sustainability chapter should guarantee international environmental standards and labour rights. What are our partners' views on trade developments under the FTA? Is sustainability really guaranteed? Which impacts does the FTA have on the Andean states' economy, especially the agricultural sector which continues to play a key role? Given the changed economic context brought about by the Corona pandemic what lessons should be drawn from its implementation for future trade agreements?

24 SEPTEMBER 2020, 4:00 PM – 5:30 PM (CEST)

#### # 2 | THE EU-MEXICO GLOBAL AGREEMENT | JUST AN UPDATE?

Relations between the EU and Mexico have been governed by the 1997 Global Agreement which came into force in 2000. To reflect political and economic changes on both sides the EU and Mexico launched negotiations to update the first trade agreements in 2016 which were concluded in April 2020. Key elements are amongst others the removal of customs duties on trade in goods, provisions on environmental protection and corruption, as well as the protection of intellectual property, public procurement, and a stronger investment promotion. Even though negotiations took place behind closed doors and without civil society participation, there seems to be little criticism. But are the trade relations between the EU and Mexico really harmonious? Or are there any challenges? How does civil society assess the updated agreement? What is the significance of the EU-Mexico agreement compared to other trade agreements in the region?

29 SEPTEMBER 2020, 4:00 PM – 5:30 PM (CEST)

#### # 3 | EU-MERCOSUR-AGREEMENT | A STEP FORWARD IN TRADE, A STEP BACK IN SUSTAINABILITY?

Discussions on market access, quotas for agricultural products, national sovereignty on public and development policies, consumer protection, as well as concerns about environmental and social impacts, were among the contentious issues that have led to more than 20 years of negotiations. Why is an agreement with MERCOSUR so difficult to achieve? While on the one hand it is welcomed as a historic agreement because of its economic scope, on the other hand it has prompted severe criticism from civil society on both sides. What social and economic impacts can be predicted? Can the future agreement sufficiently guarantee sustainable development and environmental protection?

6 OCTOBER 2020, 4:00 PM – 5:30 PM (CEST)

#### # 4 | EU-MERCOSUR-AGREEMENT 2 | A PARTNERSHIP BEYOND TRADE

The MERCOSUR Agreement is not only a free trade treaty. Designed as an association agreement it also includes political dialogue and cooperation. While the EU and German discourses have been focusing on trade the whole agreement has so far received little attention in its full scope. However, it is precisely this far-reaching cooperation that offers a unique opportunity for both regions. What is the geopolitical significance of the EU-MERCOSUR agreement? Could a comprehensive EU-MERCOSUR agreement be an important signal for more multilateralism, international cooperation, and democracy, especially in these times?

*Interpretation English-German-Spanish will be provided for all events.*

### PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING TECHNICAL AND PROCEDURAL ASPECTS

- › Your confirmation will arrive via E-mail on the day before the online roundtable and include a link to enter the meeting room.
- › Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung uses the software of the US company Zoom for its online roundtables. Zoom's technical infrastructure is stored on US servers. FES does not store any data from webinar participants in the zoom system. Following the principle of data economy, it is also possible to join the online roundtable with an altered username (e. g. Jane Public). There is no obligation to use the audio, chat webcam function during the webinar session (<https://zoom.us/de-de/privacy.html>).
- › Zoom works well with PC, smartphone or tablet. You can find the app »Zoom Cloud Meeting« in the respective App Store. Otherwise, when opening your personalized entrance-URL, a free client program for PC, Mac or Linux is being installed. Please just follow the instructions.
- › The event will be recorded.