

Policy Recommendations

Crossroads Europe: The EU and the Global South

Workshop “Crossroads Europe: EU Trade Policy Between Values and Profit”, Tuesday, 18 May 2021, 17.00 to 20.30 (CEST)

Citizens’ Dialogue “Crossroads Europe: The Future of EU-Africa Relations”, Thursday, 20 May 2021, 17.00 to 18.30 (CEST)

The countries of the Global South are rarely in the focus of public interest in Europe. Yet they are closely intertwined with the EU, e.g. in the areas of trade, migration, investment or agriculture. At the same time, Europe still struggles to build a partnership of equals and to overcome colonial structures. Today, relations between the EU and the Global South are at the crossroads: What should they look like in the future? This question was the subject of two events organised by the Europa-Union Deutschland e.V. in cooperation with the European umbrella organisation, the Union of European Federalists (UEF), on 18 and 20 May 2021 under the heading "Crossroads Europe: The EU and the Global South". In the context of a summit between the European Union and the African Union planned for 2021, the negotiation of a new EU-Africa strategy and the controversial European trade policy, the following policy recommendations were formulated:

For a relationship of equals in trade relations between Europe and the Global South

- The EU must develop a critical awareness and realise that the heavily subsidised surplus production in European agriculture creates dumping prices with which agriculture in the Global South cannot compete. The EU must therefore take measures to establish a relationship of equals in trade relations with the Global South.

For a renegotiation of the Economic Partnership Agreements

- The Global South's room for manoeuvre is limited by the Economic Partnership Agreements with the EU. Import duties to protect their own market can only be levied to a limited extent. A renegotiation of the agreements is necessary.

For more labour and environmental protection in the Economic Partnership Agreements

- Labour and environmental protection must be given greater attention by the EU in future Economic Partnership Agreements with the Global South.

For ambitious supply chain legislation at German and European level

- The UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights have been in force since 2011, but have no legal binding force. Therefore, the planned supply chain laws at German and European level are urgently needed. However, these must be implemented promptly and include ambitious liability regulations for all steps of the supply chain.

For an increase in demand for fairly produced products in Europe

- A critical awareness of the often poor working conditions in the textile industry must be created among the European population in order to increase the demand for fairly produced products.

Raising awareness for local products in the Global South

- Educational work in the countries of the Global South is urgently needed to raise awareness for local products and thus also to stimulate demand.

More support for infrastructure development in the Global South

- The Global South must also receive greater support from the private sector in building infrastructure for the transport and processing of agricultural products. In this context, know-how, e.g. on poultry production, needs to be transferred from Europe to countries in the Global South such as Ghana.

For the promotion of the youth in the Global South

- Youth exchange programmes such as ERASMUS+ must also be extended to the African continent. European companies should also invest in training programmes in the Global South to strengthen the professional perspectives of the youth in their home countries.