



A Social Democratic Redesign of International Trade and Investment

11 March 2019, 4.30pm-6.30pm
Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Berlin, Hiroshimastr. 28, Room 6.01

As a result of the financial crisis the liberal paradigm of open international markets and the free movement of capital and goods has come under pressure to prove its legitimacy. Initially this only applied to the financial markets themselves but now the international trading regime is also under fire. It has become evident that free trade by no means benefits everyone. On the contrary, free trade produces both winners and losers. Political decisions such as wage restraint, social cuts, and tax competition, which are sold as necessary in the interest of open markets and international »locational competition« for trade and investment, fuel growing inequality. It is high time to put away with the steadfast belief in the self-regulating forces of the market.

What is needed is a redesign of trade policy, one which rebuilds trust, strengthens democracy and the rule of law, and enforces justice. Trade policy must be based on fair multilateral rules and incorporate all aspects of sustainability, particularly social and environmental sustainability.

A fair and democratic trade regime is one in which the goods that are traded on our markets are produced under fair social and environmental conditions and human rights are respected; in which the development prospects of our trade partners in the global South are safeguarded and improved; in which trade strengthens rather than undermines rights; in which the government's capacity to provide public services, both in Europe and in partner countries, is not restricted; and in which multilateral approaches are given precedence.

In two recent papers, social democrats in Germany and Europe have presented ideas and guidelines on how to reform international trade and investment policies: [Fair Play in World Trade. Towards a Social Democratic Redesign of Trade Policy](#) (Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 2018) and [For the Many, Not the Few: Towards a Progressive Model for International Trade and Investment](#) (Global Progressive Forum/Foundation for European Progressive Studies, 2018).

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Programme

4.30 pm Welcome and introduction

Jochen Steinhilber, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung

Lisa Kastner, Foundation for European Progressive Studies

4.40 pm Presentation of ideas for progressive trade and investment policies

Thorsten Schäfer-Gümbel, Dep. Chairman of the Social Democratic Party of Germany

Bernd Lange MEP, Chair of the Committee on International Trade in the European Parliament

5.00 pm Panel discussion: A Social Democratic Redesign of International Trade and Investment

Panelists:

Stephany Griffith-Jones, Professor at Columbia University

Marion Jansen, Chief Economist at International Trade Centre

Bernd Lange MEP, Chair of the Committee on International Trade in the European Parliament

Thorsten Schäfer-Gümbel, Vice-Chairman of the Social Democratic Party of Germany

Evita Schmieg, Senior Researcher at Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik

Moderator:

Jochen Steinhilber, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung

6.30 pm Snacks / finger food

Simultaneous translation into German and English will be provided.