

Trade-Development-Human Rights II



Context:

In its external action, the EU is at times pursuing conflicting goals. A typical pattern of conflict in this respect is between trade interests and respect for environmental standards as well as human rights. Often, trade interests ultimately are given priority, probably because they are more vocal and better organised in their lobbying. The need for civil society scrutiny is particularly huge in the case of Mercosur, which is still a very government-driven example of regional integration. The project therefore aims at sensitising and mobilising the public, multipliers, the media and political decision makers for the development and human rights

dimensions of the three components of the Interregional Association between EU and MERCOSUR: "political dialogue", "co-operation" and "trade". Thereby the EU shall be supported in promoting and implementing the leitmotiv of sustainable development as a cross-sectional task, by means of coherence, co-ordination and complementarity as well as active civil society participation. The project was a follow-up of an earlier initiative which already received EU funding in 2003-2005.

Partners:

- Heinrich Böll Foundation (various European and Latin American offices)
- Centre for Research and Documentation Chile-Latin America (FDCL), Berlin
- Transnational Institute (TNI), Amsterdam
- FASE (Brazil)
- REDES (Uruguay)
- FOCO (Argentina)

Objectives:

- Investigate the negative impacts of the free trade between the European Union and Latin America for the population and the environment in Latin America
- Raise awareness among the European and Latin-American general public for human rights issues as a normative framework to monitor trade policies
- Strengthen transnational civil society cooperation on the EU-Latin America relations

EU-LATIN AMERICA

EU: Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, Poland
LATIN AMERICA: Mercosur countries

Expected results:

- Raise awareness among the European public for the social, economic, environmental, development and human rights dimensions of the relations between the European Union and the Member States of the MERCOSUR and Mexico
- Promotion of broad and sustainable transnational network structures among civil society as well as the promotion of effective civil society participation within the EU-MERCOSUR & Mexico relations
- Civil society monitoring of coherence and sustainability in the areas of development and human rights in the EU-MERCOSUR relations

Activities:

- Publishing a series of reports about various themes such as gender and free trade, social and environmental standards in trade agreements or EU-Mercosur Development Cooperation
- Organise Conferences and Workshops in Europe and Latin America, including programmes for visitor groups from Mercosur countries
- Advocacy and Networking (Germany, Latin America and at the European level)

Target groups:

- Experts in NGOs and training sector
- Media representatives (daily newspapers, specialised publications)
- Political and economic decision-makers (national parliaments, European Parliament, business associations and interest groups)
- General public especially in Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands and Poland

Funding:

720.000 € (2006-2009)

Website:

<http://www.handel-entwicklung-menschenrechte.org/index.php?id=2&L=4>



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