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Alternatives for a fair and sustainable partnership between the EU and Mercosur: scenarios and guidelines

A study commissioned by the Greens/EFA International Cluster

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FOREWORD

In 2019, we took office as MEPs as the EU had just reached a political agreement on a trade deal with Mercosur. This dinosaur deal disregarded the climate and social objectives of both the EU and the Mercosur region. Thanks to the mobilization of citizens, CSOs and progressive political forces, the deal was stopped in its tracks.

As the European cycle comes to an end, no real progress has been made to make this trade deal fall in line with the climate and social objectives of the EU and the Mercosur region. We know the reasons, and they are not going away. It is time for the next European Commission to endorse a new approach and regenerate the cooperation with our Mercosur allies.

To achieve our common goals under the Paris agreement, fight for social justice and strengthen our mutually beneficial partnership, the EU and Mercosur need to explore other avenues than the one that has been failing for almost 25 years.

We do need stronger cooperation with Mercosur. The EU-CELAC meeting of summer 2023 was long overdue. We fully endorse what EU-CELAC leaders stated when they affirmed that ”by working together as sovereign partners, we are stronger and better placed to face the multiple crises and challenges of our times”.

Let us indeed face today’s green transition challenges together. This trade deal is not the way to go: it will aggravate deforestation by increasing EU imports of forest-risk commodities. It will also put health at risk in both blocks, by increasing EU exports of pesticides, agrochemicals and combustion-engine cars to the Mercosur region and by driving up agricultural imports containing pesticides to the EU.

We also need to deliver on social goals together. Again, this trade deal is not fit for purpose. From creating unfair competition for both European and Mercosur farmers who are shifting to sustainable farming, to driving up indigenous land confiscation in Latin America and destroying decent jobs, this deal is set to heighten social inequalities and hinder human rights.

To work together as equals, the EU and Mercosur need to find a new way. One that takes into account the asymmetries between the two regions in terms of industrial development, not to exploit them, but to overcome them. And one that fosters value-added creation in the Southern bloc’s supply chains, securing a sustained increase of environmental and social standards.

It is clear to us that we need to pursue another partnership between the EU and Mercosur: a fair and sustainable partnership that puts people and the planet first.

How can we achieve this? What are concrete, untapped avenues for cooperation beyond this trade deal? We commissioned this study to open the discussion on a new, forward-looking approach, and a much-needed paradigm-shift. Trade can be part of the solution, but it must be fair, sustainable and promote a race to the top in terms of social, environmental and human rights.

Instead of worsening inequalities, the ecological crisis and the climate emergency, the EU needs to work with its Mercosur allies to pursue our common green and social objectives. This study proposes alternatives for the next Commission to explore.

Anna Cavazzini & Saskia Bricmont,

Greens/EFA Members of the European Parliament

- DOWLOAD THE STUDY (EN)
- **SUMMARY OF THE STUDY (in French) - RÉSUMÉ DE L'ÉTUDE (en français)**

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Responsible MEPs



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Attached documents

Study - Alternatives for a fair and sustainable partnership between the EU and Mercosur
Résumé de l'étude - Alternatives pour un partenariat juste et durable entre l'UE et Mercosur

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