

## Progressive Economics Network 2025

# Evolutionary leap of the European trade policy

**13 November 2025, 15:30 – 17:30**

At FEPS HQ, Avenue des Arts 46, 1000 Brussels, and online

Registration link: <https://feeps-europe.eu/event/evolutionary-leap-of-the-european-trade-policy/>

Zoom link: <https://feeps-europe-eu.zoom.us/meeting/register/xS6rSmWsSXiET60CIU8JQg>

Trump's trade policy has put into question many established understandings and practices in international trade. This upheaval, together with China's aggressive trade and industrial policies, makes the status quo untenable for Europe. At the same time, this shake-up allows the EU to think outside the box and devise a completely new trade policy of its own. This is a chance to advance an alternative, modern vision of trade policy for Europe, based on social justice and sustainability, and promoting EU's strategic objectives. Without its own vision, the EU falls into a very weak position of reacting to US and China policies. The EU needs to assume its agency and advance its own vision on trade.

This seminar will be devoted to the discussion of what the revamped European trade strategy should be. We will discuss:

- Who truly benefits from the EU's trade policy?
- From markets to citizens: a new vision for EU trade policy
- Well-being first: rethinking EU trade policy for people and planet

The seminar will start with a presentation by Werner Raza based on the draft policy brief, followed by a discussion among participants. Input from the discussion will feed into the final paper. In his paper, Raza critically examines the EU's current trade architecture, tracing its origins and evolution. Based on the concept of "defensive regionalism", he proposes a new vision that prioritizes the well-being of EU citizens, social justice, environmental sustainability, and the global common good. He also discusses the implications of this approach for the EU's trade relations with the US, China, and developing countries, as well as the type of trade agreements the EU should pursue in light of its evolving priorities and interests.

This seminar is part of the series of meetings within the Progressive Economics Network (PEN), co-organised by the Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS), the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) and Das Progressive Zentrum (DPZ). This meeting is organised in cooperation with the Austrian Federal Chamber of Labour (AK EUROPA).

*About the Progressive Economics Network*

The Progressive Economic Network (PEN) meets several times per year and aims to bring together senior economic advisors, leading researchers and decision-makers from across Europe and the United States. The network offers a space to strategise, exchange best practices, and form a progressive economic policy strategy on how to tackle some of the most pressing economic challenges in the areas of fiscal, monetary, trade, industrial and social policies.

## Agenda

15:30-15:40

### Welcome remarks

**Judith Vorbach**, Head of Office, Austrian Federal Chamber of Labour Representation in Brussels (AK EUROPA)

15:40 – 16:00

### Moving beyond neoliberalism in EU Trade Policy

Presentation by:

- **Werner Raza**, Director, Austrian Foundation for Development Research (ÖFSE)

16:00 – 17:25

### Discussion with in-person and online participants

First comments by:

- **Kathleen Van Brempt**, Member of the European Parliament and Vice Chair of the INTA Committee
- **Lucian Cernat**, Head of Unit, DG Trade, European Commission
- **Brando Benifei**, Member of the European Parliament and Chair of the Delegation for Relations with the United States (online)
- **Evelyn Regner**, Member of the European Parliament

Moderated by:

**Anna Kolesnichenko**, Policy Analyst, FEPS,

**Daniela Iller**, Policy Officer for Trade and International Cooperation, FES  
EU Office Brussels

17:25 – 17:30

### Closing remarks

17:30 – 18:30

### Reception

*\*Some speakers are to be confirmed.*



*This event is produced with the financial support of the European Parliament. It does not represent the views of the European Parliament*