

Trade and Sustainable Development

Semester: Fall semester - HS 2021

Root Number: 457079

ECTS: 3

Lecturers: Dr. Damian Raess & Dora Sari

Course Description

This course will primarily focus on the relationships between international trade and the social dimension of sustainable development. It asks: Is globalization good or bad for social development and the protection of labor rights. Is the level of labor protection a curse or a blessing for economic development? To answer these questions, the course will focus on the interlinkages and potential trade-offs between the economic and social dimensions of sustainable development – an issue that is also at the core of Sustainable Development Goal #8 on decent work and economic growth.

More specifically, the course will address the key avenues through which labor rights are governed and protected in the global economy. The main objective is to provide a better understanding of how international trade (and cooperation) can contribute to achieving the SDG #8, particularly to the promotion of decent work for all. The course will cover public and private approaches to protecting labor standards under globalization, as well as the role of the International Labour Organization. Specifically, it will outline and assess state strategies to link and enforce labor standards through trade agreements, voluntary codes of conduct by multinational enterprises (MNEs) governing labor standards in their supply chains, and the role of the ILO in setting, promoting and upholding international labor standards. Moreover, the course will cover the impact of COVID on workers in global supply chains, as well as refer to the governance, public and private, of the environment through trade.