



**Universiteit
Leiden**

North-South relations in the context of changing global alliances: transformation of EU-ACP trade relations

Applicants

Eligible proposals must have at least two applicants from Humanities, preferably with an interdisciplinary approach.

Supervisor Name	Discipline
Dr. Anne-Isabelle Richard	History
Dr. Vera Šćepanović	Political Economy

Project description

Provide a brief description of the project (max. 300 words)

Trade relations between the Global North and South lay at the heart of disagreements about power and development in international politics. Yet while these relations are indisputably marked by structural inequality, they are not all the same nor do they remain static over time. They take place in the context of changing global alliances that might alter the objectives and the bargaining power of the two sides.

In this project, we explore how the changing structure of alliances and the emergence of overlapping regional frameworks changed the balance of power and opportunities in a specific case of North-South relations: the relationship between the EU and the African, Caribbean, and Pacific Group of States (ACP). The ACP was an early attempt to “normalize” relations between the EU and its members’ former colonies, simultaneously institutionalizing certain colonial legacies, and acknowledging a responsibility for the development of the newly independent states. In the past two decades, however, changes in the EU’s composition and international ambitions, the revival of the African Union, China and the reconfiguring of the South-South connections all threaten to make the EU-ACP framework, and the ACP as an organization, obsolete. This has made the current renegotiation of the EU-ACP Cotonou agreement the most difficult to date.

In this project, we will map the changes in alliances that affected EU-ACP relations from the signing of the Cotonou Agreement in 2000 to 2020. We will focus on trade relations, asking how agreements with third parties altered the EU-ACP terms of trade. With the help of the Research Trainees, we will analyze the records of official meetings between the EU and the ACP to identify third party connections that led to disputes between the parties and the ways in which each side used these to change or preserve the existing relationship.

Research Trainee Profile

Each proposal requests two Research Trainees. Describe the general tasks of the research trainees, how these tasks are academically challenging to the research trainees, whether they need any preliminary knowledge (regarding the topic and/or research methods) and which skills the research trainees should have. Also specify which type of students are eligible to apply (3rd year Ba, Ma, ResMa).

The Trainees will work closely with the applicants to collect and analyse official exchanges between the EU and the ACP in the 2000-2020 period covered by the Cotonou agreement and identify

- a) intersecting cases of cooperation with third parties that caused tensions in the EU-ACP relations
- b) ways in which the two sides articulated the causes of these tensions and their preferred solutions.

The documents to be analysed include minutes of the Joint Council of Ministers meetings, meetings of the Joint Ministerial Meetings on Trade, ACP-EU subcommittee on trade cooperation, ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly (including plenary, regional meetings, and meetings of the subcommittee on Economic development, Finance, and Trade). All minutes are in principle in the public domain, but are not always directly available from the institutions' websites and must be collected via third-party repositories, contact with the relevant institutions etc. The trainees will be guided through a review of background literature on the historical emergence of EU-ACP relations, and receive hands-on training on data collection, analysis and research design. We will work with the Leiden Datamanagement team to make the collected documents easily accessible to the public via a database.

After the first stage of document collection and mapping, the Trainees will be asked to identify a smaller case study and prepare either a paper or an individual research proposal based on their preliminary findings. They will also contribute to an opinion piece linking the research to the outcome of the 2020 renegotiation of the Cotonou agreement. Finally, they will help with the preparation of a conference on the renegotiation of Cotonou to be organised by the applicants in Autumn 2020.

The Trainees will thus have a chance to experience various aspects of the research process, from the preparatory stages to the implementation, management, and dissemination of research, as well as developing key transferable skills that will be of use in any professional environment. The Research Trainees should have an interest in and a basic familiarity with either the history of Africa-Europe relations, economic history, the theories of regionalism or the principles of international trade, and demonstrated excellent writing skills. Both advanced BA and MA students are eligible to apply.

Collaboration

If applicable: Describe how your research improves collaboration and cross-pollination between the disciplines involved (max. 300 words)

Both applicants have ample experience of teaching and working interdisciplinarily (MAIR – European Union Studies track and working at the European University Institute Max Weber Programme). They aim to build on these experiences in this project where their respective expertise is highly complementary. Anne-Isabelle Richard is a historian whose research combines an interest in European and global history in the 20th century and alternatives to the nation state, such as federations and regional entities. Her Veni project, *Eurafrica, African Perspectives, 1917-1970* examines African civil society perspectives on the relationship between Africa and Europe during the colonial and post-colonial period. Vera Šćepanović is a political economist whose research focuses on the way transnational context alters developmental pathways of individual countries, the role of the EU as a development agent, and the politics of EU trade policy. Combining intellectual history and history of institutions with political economy will lead to a better understanding of the changing relations between Africa and Europe.

The applicants plan to use this research as a seed for a larger joint project on the development of trade relations between Africa and Europe since 1948 that examines both the influence of institutions and business lobbies. The Marshall Plan, where states and businesses met, can be seen as a first instance of coordinating

trade policy towards the European colonies in Africa in a global context of reconstituting trade links post-1945. This project will follow this development through the founding of successive European Institutions and, with Decolonization, of African institutions. The results of the project will shed new light on the ongoing EU-ACP trade negotiations and will contribute to a better understanding of Europe-Africa trade relations and global inequality. For such a research project an interdisciplinary approach is essential. This collaboration will also feed into the applicants' joint interdisciplinary teaching (see below).

Deliverables

Enumerate intended project results: papers, research proposals or otherwise. (max 200 words)

Each of the Research Trainees will produce one individual paper or a research proposal, depending on their own preferences and needs. They will contribute to a short opinion piece for a general audience about the background to the 2020 renegotiations of the Cotonou agreement.

With the help of the Leiden Datamanagement Team we will create a database that makes the documents scattered around the public domain easily accessible to the public.

The applicants will deliver one co-authored paper, which will be the basis for a peer-reviewed publication, and with the support of the trainees organise a conference on the renegotiation of the Cotonou agreement, to be held in Fall 2020. The conference will bring together academics and practitioners interested in Africa-Europe relations. A selection of the papers will be published.

Finally, the results of the project will contribute to a teaching collaboration within two existing and two new courses in the MA IR:

Regionalism in World Politics (existing)

EU External Economic Relations (existing)

a recently granted *Jean Monnet Module, From Multi- to Interdisciplinarity: Europe in the World* (new)

and in the Humanities Lab:

Africa and Europe, Entangled Pasts and Presents (new)

Planning

Provide a breakdown of the project into phases with tentative timing (max 150 words)

February - March 2020 – revision of background literature on EU-ACP relations, collection of documents and creation of a database with the support of the Leiden data management team.

April 2020-May 2020 – Document analysis and preparation of research notes, preliminary activities concerning conference organization, sending out the call for papers.

June-July 2020 – organizing the findings, writing up the final outputs.

The timeline includes monthly meetings to discuss progress.

Student Application

Provide information on how to apply e.g. required documents for application (resume, motivation letter etc.) and an email address where student applications should be sent to.

Interested students should send their applications to both v.scepanovic@hum.leidenuniv.nl and a.i.richard@hum.leidenuniv.nl.

The application should include a CV with a transcript of grades and a short letter of motivation outlining their reasons for applying to the research traineeship and prior experience with research and writing. Familiarity with the history of Africa-Europe relations, economic history, the theories of regionalism or the principles of international trade is an asset.