



Universität Stuttgart

Institut für Sozialwissenschaften

Abteilung SOWI | Prof. Dr. Patrick Bernhagen

Trade Competitiveness and Legislators' Attitudes Towards Trade Agreements

What explains legislators' trade attitudes? We argue that legislators from districts that are competitive in manufacturing and agriculture are more supportive of trade agreements than legislators from non-competitive districts. This is so because competitive economic actors lobby their legislators for trade liberalization, whereas non-competitive actors lobby for protectionism. We use data based on interviews with 3,808 legislators from 17 Latin American countries between 2006 and 2018 to test our expectations. These interviews captured legislators' attitudes towards (potential) preferential trade agreements with the United States, the European Union, the Bolivarian Alliance, and the Pacific Alliance. We measure competitiveness at the district level with an innovative combination of household survey data and trade data. The evidence shows that the competitiveness of the manufacturing sector, but not of agriculture, shapes the degree to which legislators support trade agreements. This finding holds for all four potential agreements and after controlling for legislators' partisanship, political ideology, and individual and constituency characteristics. Our results have implications for the literatures on trade attitudes, trade policy more generally, and representation.

**Prof.
Andreas Dür**

**Universität
Salzburg**

**Donnerstag, 5. Dezember 2019, 14:00 Uhr,
M 2.31 (Breitscheidstraße 2)
Alle sind herzlich eingeladen!**

