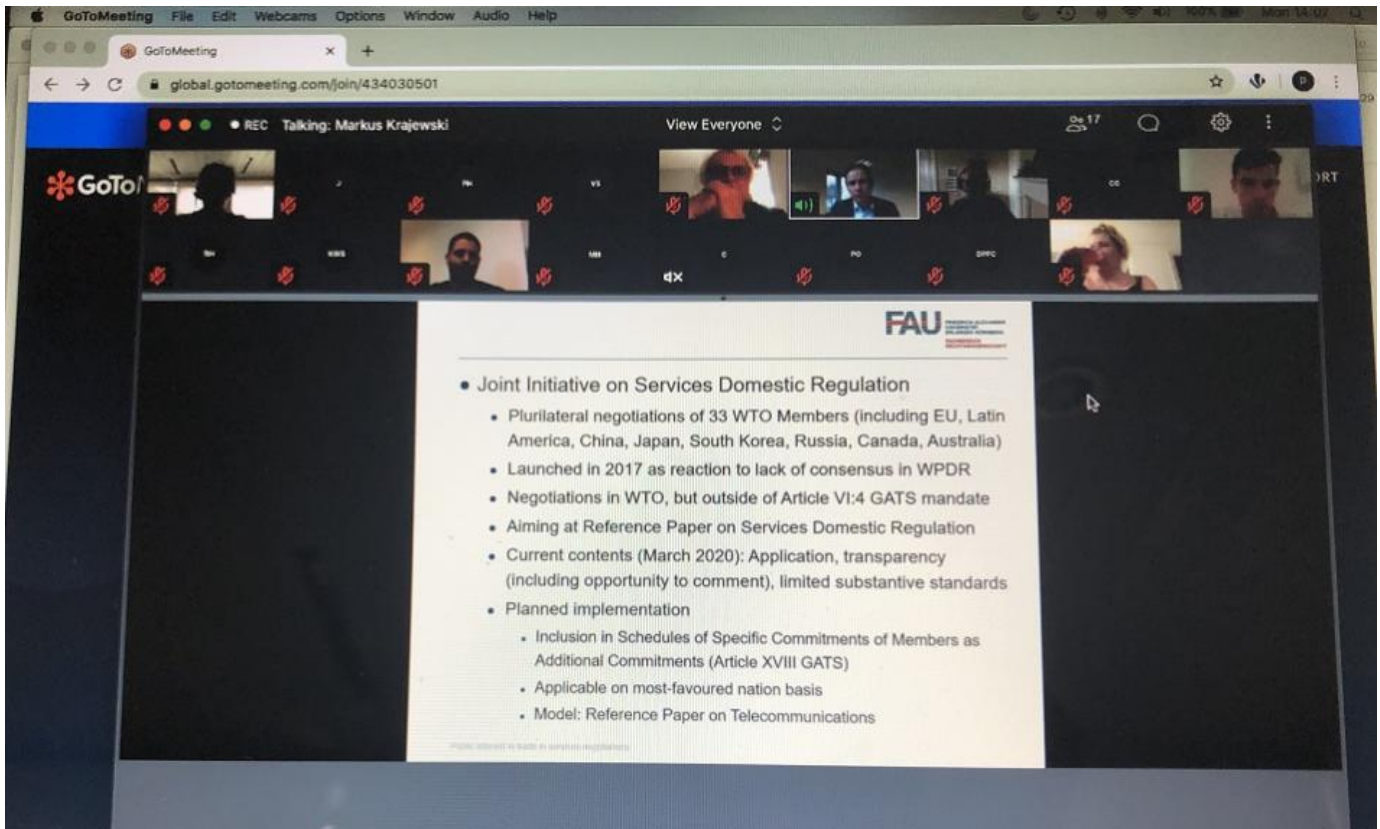


A public interest clause to rule them all



(16 June 2020) How can we secure the public interest in global trade in services negotiations? This was the theme of an on-line exchange organised on 15 June by EPSU, AK EUROPA and ÖGB Europabüro.

There are a number of initiatives taking place regarding the domestic regulation of services, in the World Trade Organisation (WTO), in plurilateral negotiations, and in bilateral trade negotiations. All of these have consequences for the way in which regulatory frameworks affect service provision and quality. Especially bilateral trade negotiations are a growing field of services regulation.

In the exchange professor Markus Krajewski presented the first outline of a paper (to be published later in the year) on the different types of disciplines and their potential impacts on public interest regulation (see ppt). A number of possible solutions / safeguards to address these impacts were discussed, as well as the proposal to include a public interest clause in services agreements. Such a clause can be seen as a parallel demand to the public services exclusion clause advocated

by EPSU and others, as it would help rebalance trade negotiations and curtail the dominance of narrow corporate interests.

Participants underlined that the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the urgent need to address climate change, are generating new debates about the importance for public interest regulation and greater flexibility in trade agreements. The European Commission's upcoming Trade Policy Review will be an opportunity to give translate these debates into concrete shifts of current trade policy.

Professor Krajewski's presentation and background information is available [on the EPSU website](#)

For information about [the European Commission's trade review](#)

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