

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3622/09
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to the Commission

Subject: Bilateral free-trade agreements, regional integration

Regional integration was a key justification of the EU's free trade agreement (FTA) strategy under 'Global Europe', with the promise that regional trade agreements will be a 'stepping stone' and not a 'stumbling block' to multilateralism. In the meantime, a number of regional trade agreement negotiations launched by the EU in the last years have been halted and several have been 'bilateralised' (with ACP countries, Andean countries, potentially with countries members of the ASEAN).

How will the Commission pursue the objective of regional integration in the aftermath of bilateral FTAs? Can the Commission guarantee that its bilateral FTAs will not bring forward 'regional disintegration' instead of 'regional integration'? What measures will the Commission take to this end?