

d.i.e

Deutsches Institut für  
Entwicklungspolitik



Years | 1964 – 2014

German Development  
Institute



## Call for papers

International Conference

### "The political economy of international investment agreements"

Hosted by the German Development Institute/Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE),  
in co-operation with the I3: International Investment Initiative of the World Trade Institute (WTI)

8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> December 2014, German Development Institute /  
Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE), Bonn

### Conference theme

It is a commonplace by now to say that the international investment regime – consisting of more than 3000 international investment agreements (IIA) – is in a deep legitimacy crisis. As a result of the sharp increase of investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) cases in recent years, a growing number of governments and civil society groups in both industrialised and developing economies are questioning the process and substance of IIAs. In addition, the central premise of the international investment regime is being questioned, namely that IIAs lead to more foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows promoting economic development in the process.

As a consequence, a number of developing country governments are shifting their relationship with the IIA regime by terminating their IIAs or by withdrawing from the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes. Others, including industrialised country governments, have started to re-think their IIA approaches. The days of the simple, 'one size fits all' IIA seem to be numbered. As the number of newly negotiated IIAs has declined in recent years, more complex investment rules are increasingly integrated in preferential trade and investment agreements (PTIAs) among larger groups of countries. These treaties typically combine more balanced rules in the post-establishment phase – that aim at recalibrating the rights and obligations of both investors and host states – with market access rules for investment.

In contrast to the voluminous legal literature on IIAs, comprising thousands of articles and books, economists and political scientists have only fairly recently started to investigate the political economy and the effects of IIAs. In light of the recent changes in the international investment regime, the main aim of this conference is bringing together economists and political scientists in particular, as well as legal scholars, who apply empirical methods in political economy – quantitative as well as qualitative – to study the effects of IIAs and the shifts in governments' stance towards them.

We invite contributions on questions including, but not limited to:

- What are the effects of different IIA designs on the size of aggregate FDI flows, as well as its sectoral composition? What alternative methodological approaches – beyond standard econometric analysis – are available to assess these effects?
- Can rigorous empirical analysis help to examine the effects of IIAs on host countries' policy space? In particular, to what extent do IIAs and ISDS cases lead to 'regulatory chill' effects and how much policy space have host countries left to regulate FDI?
- Why are investment rules increasingly integrated in PTIAs? Does the broader negotiation framework – standalone IIA or investment chapter of a PTIA – have an effect on the contents of investment rules?
- How does a political economy perspective help us to understand the different responses of developing and developed countries to the above-mentioned legitimacy crisis? In particular, why are some countries terminating their treaties while others are re-negotiating their terms or even continuing their traditional treaty practice? What is the likely impact of the new actor-constellation and distribution of power within the European Union on its ongoing investment treaty negotiations (including the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership) and on the EU's overall IIA regime?
- What can be said from a political economy perspective about the changing international investment regime, given the existing distribution of power and institutional setup? Is one or other 'reform path' more likely? Is one or other outcome more likely? Some are calling for a new multilateral agreement on investment – is this needed now? What can we learn from past efforts (successful or failed) to create an MAI, or otherwise transform the international investment regime?

### Submission deadlines

We call for submissions of paper abstracts using political economy and/or empirical methods on the above mentioned – and related – questions. Abstracts should be up to 500 words in length and should be submitted no later than 5 September 2014 to the following email address: [IIAconference@die-gdi.de](mailto:IIAconference@die-gdi.de). Paper abstracts should include a working title of the paper and should describe the paper's main research questions, *methodology* and data. The authors of paper abstracts will be informed at the end of September 2014 about the acceptance of their proposals. The full-length papers should be submitted no later than 28 November 2014 to the following email address: [IIAconference@die-gdi.de](mailto:IIAconference@die-gdi.de).

### Conference details

The conference will take place at the German Development Institute / Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE), Bonn, Germany, on 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> December 2014. Hotel and other logistical details will be announced in due course.

***Please understand that we will not be able to provide any travel or other financial assistance to conference participants.***

For questions related to the conference please contact: [Axel.Berger@die-gdi.de](mailto:Axel.Berger@die-gdi.de).

German Development Institute / Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE)  
Tulpenfeld 6, D-53113 Bonn

Telephone +49 (0)228-94927-0 | Fax +49 (0)228-94927-130  
[www.die-gdi.de](http://www.die-gdi.de) | [www.facebook.com/DIE.Bonn](https://www.facebook.com/DIE.Bonn) | <https://plus.google.com/> | [www.youtube.com/DIEnewsflash](http://www.youtube.com/DIEnewsflash)