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Institutional Mechanisms of Political Interaction between the European Union and Latin America in the Context of the Transformation of the Global Order

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ABSTRACT

Ongoing changes in the global order and the growing competition among major international actors have significantly affected the ways in which supranational entities shape and implement their external policies. In this environment, the European Union has increasingly relied on institutional and political instruments to strengthen its engagement with strategically important regions, including Latin America. Global Gateway initiative reflects this shift by bringing together political priorities, investment instruments, and infrastructure cooperation within a single framework of external partnership. The purpose of this article is to examine the institutional mechanisms that underpin political interaction between the European Union and Latin America, with particular attention to the role of Global Gateway in contemporary international relations. The study focuses on how EU external policy towards the region is formulated and coordinated through the interaction of key supranational institutions. The analysis highlights the role of the European Council and the Council of the European Union in defining strategic orientations, the coordinating function of the European External Action Service, and the practical involvement of the European Commission in implementing partnership initiatives, notably through the NDICI – Global Europe instrument. Attention is also given to the role of the European Parliament in providing political oversight and democratic legitimacy to the EU's external engagement. The article argues that Global Gateway should be viewed not merely as an investment or connectivity initiative, but as part of a broader transformation of the European Union's external policy model. Its implementation contributes to deeper political interaction with Latin American countries by combining the EU's normative foundations with pragmatic instruments of international influence and by creating institutional conditions for long-term strategic partnership.



KEYWORDS

European Union; Global Gateway; Latin America; EU foreign policy; institutional mechanisms; interregional interaction; international relations.



Інституційні механізми політичної взаємодії Європейського Союзу з Латинською Америкою в умовах трансформації глобального порядку

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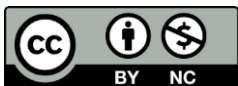
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Трансформація глобального порядку та посилення конкуренції між провідними міжнародними акторами зумовлюють перегляд підходів до формування та реалізації зовнішньої політики наднаціональних утворень. У цих умовах Європейський Союз послідовно розширює інституційні та політичні механізми взаємодії з регіонами, що мають стратегічне значення для його глобальної присутності, зокрема з країнами Латинської Америки. Запровадження ініціативи Global Gateway стало відображенням цього процесу, оскільки вона поєднала інвестиційні, інфраструктурні та політичні інструменти в єдину рамку зовнішнього партнерства ЄС. Метою статті є аналіз інституційних механізмів політичної взаємодії Європейського Союзу з Латинською Америкою з акцентом на місце та функціональну роль ініціативи Global Gateway у сучасній системі міжнародних відносин. У роботі розглянуто особливості формування політики ЄС щодо регіону, а також механізми координації між ключовими наднаціональними інституціями, задіяними у її реалізації. У результаті дослідження проаналізовано роль Європейської Ради та Ради Європейського Союзу у визначенні стратегічних орієнтирів політики, координаційну функцію Європейської служби зовнішніх дій, а також практичну участь Європейської Комісії у впровадженні програм і проєктів у межах Global Gateway, зокрема через механізм NDICI – Global Europe. Окрему увагу приділено значенню парламентського контролю та політичної легітимації зовнішньої діяльності ЄС з боку Європейського парламенту. Зроблено висновок, що Global Gateway слід розглядати не лише як інструмент інфраструктурного або інвестиційного характеру, а як складову трансформації зовнішньополітичної моделі Європейського Союзу. Її реалізація сприяє поглибленню політичної взаємодії з країнами Латинської Америки, поєднуючи нормативні засади ЄС із прагматичними механізмами міжнародного впливу та формуючи інституційні передумови для розвитку довгострокового стратегічного партнерства.



КЛЮЧОВІ СЛОВА

Європейський Союз; Global Gateway; Латинська Америка; зовнішня політика ЄС; інституційні механізми; міжрегіональна взаємодія; міжнародні відносини.

1. Introduction

Global political processes of the early twenty-first century increasingly clearly testify to the change in established models of international interaction. The strengthening of multipolar trends, the growth of competition between states and supranational entities, as well as the fragmentation of global governance mechanisms, are creating a new environment in which international actors are forced to adapt their own foreign policy strategies. Under these conditions, the European Union is gradually rethinking its approaches to its external presence, giving greater importance to institutional forms of political interaction with regions outside Europe, among which Latin America occupies a special place.

Political interaction between the European Union and Latin American countries is multi-level and institutionally complex. It is formed within the framework of the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy, complemented by the activities of specialized supranational institutions and implemented through an extensive system of interregional and bilateral mechanisms. In this context, the ability of the European Union to combine a value-based approach with pragmatic interests, adapting public policy instruments to the conditions of growing competition from other global actors, is of particular importance.

The emergence of the Global Gateway initiative was a tangible shift in the European Union's approaches to the implementation of foreign policy and international partnerships. Unlike previous cooperation programs, this initiative combines political priorities with investment and institutional instruments focused on infrastructure development, supporting the green and digital transitions, and strengthening the EU's strategic autonomy. In relations with Latin American countries, Global Gateway is seen as an opportunity not only to intensify investment interaction but also to rethink the format of interregional cooperation in a broader political context.

The relevance of the study of institutional mechanisms of political interaction between the European Union and Latin America is aggravated by the complexity of internal political processes in the region and the uneven socio-economic development of individual countries. Such circumstances complicate the practical implementation of value-based approaches to EU foreign policy and, at the same time, require a more flexible use of institutional and political instruments. In this regard, the analysis of not only the formal framework of cooperation, but also the specific mechanisms through which the European Union implements its strategic initiatives in the regional dimension is of particular importance.

2. Literature Review

The study of the political interaction of the European Union with Latin American countries has traditionally been developed within the framework of a broader scientific discourse devoted to EU foreign policy, interregional relations and mechanisms of multi-level governance. In modern scientific works, the European Union is considered not only as an economic integration project, but as a complex foreign policy actor capable of combining normative influence with practical management tools on a global scale [1; 12].

An important place in literature is occupied by the concept of external governance of the EU, within the framework of which institutional mechanisms for the dissemination of political norms and management practices outside the Union are analyzed. Studies by S. Lavenex and F. Schimmelfennig [14], as well as by T. Börzel and T. Risse [1] focus on the multi-layered nature of EU foreign policy, where supranational institutions, Member States and partners from third countries interact. This approach is methodologically important for the analysis of EU policy towards Latin America, as it allows taking into account the institutional complexity of decision-making and implementation processes.

A separate area of research is devoted to the institutional coordination of the external action of the European Union. T. Karjalainen [13] emphasizes that the effectiveness of EU foreign policy depends to a large extent on the coherence between different levels of government and the ability of institutions to ensure political coherence. In this context, the European External Action Service plays a special role as a coordinator between strategic decisions and their practical implementation, which is repeatedly emphasized in modern analytical studies [7; 9].

The issues of transformation of the EU's foreign economic and infrastructure policy are reflected in the works dedicated to Global Gateway initiative. M. Furness and N. Keijzer [10] see this initiative as an attempt to reconcile development policy with the EU's geostrategic interests, while S. Tagliapietra [17] focuses on its importance for the renewal of the Union's external economic governance. In the study

by J. Bossuyt and A. Sabourin [2], Global Gateway is analyzed through the prism of institutional coordination and interaction with partners, which is particularly relevant for the interregional dimension of cooperation with Latin America.

A significant contribution to the formation of the analytical base of the study is made by official documents and reports of the institutions of the European Union. The European Commission's communications on Global Gateway [3; 5], the materials of the European External Action Service [7], the conclusions of the European Council [6] and the resolutions of the European Parliament [8] make it possible to trace the evolution of the EU's political priorities in relations with Latin America and to understand the institutional framework for the implementation of this initiative.

Analytical studies by leading European and international centers, in particular EPRS [9] and Bruegel [11], complement the academic literature with assessments of the geopolitical and managerial dimension of the Global Gateway. They draw attention to the growing role of this initiative in shaping the EU's long-term partnerships with regions of the Global South, including Latin America. Additional regional context is provided by OECD [15] and UN ECLAC [18], which allows considering the socio-economic specifics of the countries of the region.

Thus, the analysis of scientific publications, official documents and analytical reports indicates the presence of a solid theoretical basis for studying the foreign policy of the European Union, at the same time, reveals the need for an in-depth study of the institutional mechanisms for the implementation of the Global Gateway initiative in the context of the EU's political interaction with Latin America. This makes it expedient to further analyze the role of key EU institutions in the formation and implementation of this initiative in the context of the transformation of the global order.

3. Problem Statement

Modern changes in the configuration of international relations associated with the intensification of global competition and the transformation of the world order necessitate a rethinking of the instruments of the European Union's foreign policy. Under these conditions, the EU's political interaction with Latin American countries acquires new importance, as it goes beyond the traditional diplomatic dialogue and increasingly relies on complex institutional and governance mechanisms. This issue is of relevance in connection with the introduction of Global Gateway initiative, which is positioned as a key instrument of the EU's foreign public policy in strategically important regions of the world.

Despite the availability of scientific works on the foreign policy of the European Union and the development of interregional cooperation formats, the institutional dimension of the EU's political interaction with Latin America remains fragmentarily highlighted. Most studies focus either on the regulatory framework of the European Union's activities or on the economic and trade aspects of cooperation, while the issues of coordination of supranational institutions in the process of implementing new strategic initiatives are considered indirectly.

In this context, Global Gateway initiative needs a separate scientific understanding not only as an investment or infrastructure program, but as a tool reflecting the change in the European Union's approaches to foreign policy interaction. The analysis of its institutional content allows us to trace how the EU's strategic priorities are transformed into specific political and programmatic decisions in relations with Latin American countries.

An additional factor of relevance of the study is the heterogeneity of political and socio-economic processes in Latin America, which complicates the application of universal approaches in the foreign policy of the European Union. Internal crises and asymmetries in the development of individual states in the region require the EU to have more flexible institutional mechanisms capable of combining value guidelines with pragmatic interests in interregional interaction.

In this regard, the article is aimed at a comprehensive analysis of the institutional mechanisms of political interaction between the European Union and Latin America in the context of the transformation of the global order, with a special emphasis on Global Gateway initiative as an instrument of foreign policy and interregional interaction of the European Union. Achieving this goal involves determining the place of Global Gateway in the EU foreign policy system, analyzing its institutional support, as well as assessing the role of this initiative in the formation of a modern model of interregional political interaction.

4. Methods and Materials

The methodological basis of the study is an integrated approach to the analysis of institutional mechanisms of political interaction between the European Union and Latin American countries, which combines elements of institutional, structural-functional and comparative analysis. This approach allows us to reveal the peculiarities of the formation and implementation of the EU's foreign policy within the framework of a multi-level system of public administration, as well as to assess the role of new strategic initiatives in the transformation of interregional cooperation.

Within the framework of the institutional analysis, the structure and functional role of the key supranational bodies of the European Union involved in the formation of policy towards Latin American countries, in particular the European Council, the Council of the European Union, the European Commission and the European External Action Service, are considered. The analysis focuses on the practical aspects of the interaction of these institutions in the process of developing and implementing policy decisions related to the implementation of Global Gateway initiative. This approach made it possible to trace how the EU's strategic priorities and institutional mechanisms for their implementation are coordinated within the framework of interregional political interaction [13; 17].

The structural-functional approach in the study is used to analyze the relationship between the strategic guidelines of the European Union and the tools for their practical implementation in foreign policy. In this context, the subject of the analysis was the program and strategic documents of the European Commission and the European External Action Service, which determine the framework and directions for the implementation of Global Gateway initiative in relations with Latin American countries [3; 7; 14]. This made it possible to outline the logic of transition from all-Union political goals to specific managerial decisions within the framework of interregional cooperation.

The comparative analysis was used to compare the established approaches of the European Union to political interaction with partner regions and the new mechanisms formed within the framework of Global Gateway initiative. This approach made it possible to identify changes in the EU's foreign policy practice, particularly a gradual transition from a predominantly normative influence to a more comprehensive model combining political, economic and geostrategic components of cooperation [10; 13].

The empirical basis of the study was formed by the official strategic and program documents of the European Union, particularly the communications of the European Commission, the materials of the European External Action Service, as well as scientific publications and analytical reports of European research centers devoted to the problems of interregional interaction and foreign policy of the EU. Special attention is paid to works that analyze the institutional and managerial aspects of the implementation of Global Gateway in global and regional dimensions [2; 9; 11].

The combination of institutional, structural-functional and comparative approaches creates methodological prerequisites for a holistic analysis of the institutional architecture of the political interaction of the European Union with Latin America. The applied methodology allows us to reveal the specifics of the functioning of the EU's foreign policy mechanisms in the context of the transformation of the global order and to assess the place of Global Gateway initiative in the modern system of interregional relations.

5. Results and Discussion

The European Union's policy towards Latin America is formed within the framework of an institutionally branched system, which combines elements of strategic prioritization, intergovernmental interaction and supranational governance. This system is characterized by a clear differentiation of decision-making levels, when common political guidelines are set at the highest level, and their implementation is carried out through specialized institutions and instruments of EU foreign policy. The launch of Global Gateway initiative had a significant impact on the functioning of this model, as it contributed to the inclusion of investment and infrastructure solutions in the broader context of external public administration of the European Union [10; 16; 17].

The definition of the strategic foundations of the EU's policy towards Latin America takes place primarily at the level of the European Council, which forms political guidelines in accordance with the long-term interests of the Union in the field of global presence and interregional partnership. It is within this institutional level that Global Gateway is consolidated as a component of the EU's overall foreign

policy strategy, which gives the initiative political weight and determines the directions of its further implementation [6; 10].

Further specification of strategic decisions is carried out through the mechanisms of the Council of the European Union, with the participation of specialized formats and working groups responsible for the Latin American direction. In this process, the positions of the Member States are coordinated, joint approaches are developed, and practical steps of cooperation are coordinated. Within the framework of the implementation of the Global Gateway, such mechanisms play an important role in combining supranational goals with the national interests of the Member States, which makes it possible to form a coordinated political line of the EU in relations with Latin American countries [13; 17].

Ensuring coherence between political decisions and their practical implementation at the regional level is entrusted to the European External Action Service, which performs a coordination function in the system of foreign policy of the European Union. In relations with Latin American countries, the EDIS combines diplomatic instruments, political dialogue and management of interregional cooperation formats, contributing to the implementation of EU strategic initiatives, in particular the Global Gateway, in specific policy and program decisions [7; 14].

The introduction of Global Gateway has significantly expanded the coordination functions of the European External Action Service, as this initiative requires synchronization of actions between the European Commission, Member States, financial institutions and regional partners. It is the EDIS that ensures the political coordination of investment and program decisions with the general foreign policy priorities of the EU, adapting them to the specifics of the Latin American region and the peculiarities of the interregional dialogue [7; 13].

Through the network of European Union delegations in Latin America, the European External Action Service constantly monitors political processes, coordinates the implementation of joint initiatives and maintains dialogue with regional organizations. Within the framework of the Global Gateway, this activity is aimed not only at technical support of projects, but also at ensuring their compliance with the EU's strategic goals in the field of sustainable development, energy transition and digital transformation. Thus, the EDIS plays the role of an institutional "translator" between political decisions at the EU level and practical tools for their implementation in partner countries [9; 14; 16].

An important feature of the participation of the European External Action Service in the implementation of Global Gateway initiative is the involvement of this institution in multi-level coordination mechanisms, within the framework of the Team Europe approach. Within this format, the EDIS ensures the coordination of actions of supranational institutions and Member States, which makes it possible to combine the political priorities of the European Union with national initiatives in the field of foreign policy. For the Latin American direction, this is of fundamental importance, as it helps to reduce the fragmentation of approaches and increase the coherence of the implementation of Global Gateway projects in the region [2; 9].

In the context of the European Union's relations with Latin American countries, the European External Action Service acts as an institutional intermediary between strategic decisions taken at the political level and practical mechanisms for their implementation. Its activities include coordination of political dialogue, interaction with regional partners and ensuring that investment and policy decisions are in line with the EU's overall foreign policy objectives. Thus, the EDIS forms an institutional coherence between the strategic objectives of the European Union and the external public administration tools used within the framework of Global Gateway initiative.

In view of this, the place of the European External Action Service in Global Gateway implementation system should be considered as a central coordination element of the institutional architecture of the EU's policy towards Latin America. Generalized characteristics of the role and functions of the key institutions of the European Union within the framework of this initiative are presented in Table 1, which allows systematizing their contribution to the formation and implementation of interregional political interaction.

The European Commission plays a key role in transitioning strategic political decisions of the European Union into their practical implementation in relations with Latin American countries, concentrating financial and program instruments of foreign policy in its activities. Within the framework of Global Gateway initiative, it is the Commission that is responsible for transforming common foreign policy guidelines into specific cooperation programs, investment projects and tools to support sustainable development in the region [3; 4; 17].

Table 1. Institutional mechanisms for the formation and implementation of EU policy towards Latin America within the framework of Global Gateway initiative

EU institution	Key function in policymaking	Management tools	Contact Global Gateway Initiative
European Council	Determination of strategic guidelines of the EU's foreign policy and priorities of interregional cooperation	Conclusions of the European Council, strategic declarations	Consolidating Global Gateway as an element of the EU's global strategy and an instrument of strategic autonomy
Council of the European Union	Coordination of Member States' Positions and Political Decision-Making	EU Council decisions, working groups (including COLAT), political consultations	Ensuring a coherent approach of Member States to the implementation of Global Gateway projects
European External Action Service (EEAS)	Coordination of foreign policy activities and political dialogue with partner regions	Diplomatic missions, political dialogue, and interregional platforms	Institutional coordination of the implementation of Global Gateway in relations with Latin America
European Commission	Implementation of cooperation programs and financial support of foreign policy	NDICI – Global Europe, Investment and Software Tools	Financing and practical implementation of infrastructural, digital and green projects of Global Gateway
European Parliament	Political legitimation and democratic control of EU foreign policy	Resolutions, parliamentary hearings, inter-parliamentary assemblies (EuroLat)	Regulatory support and political support for Global Gateway's strategic priorities

Source: Compiled by the author based on [2; 9; 13; 14; 16; 17].

The key instrument of the European Commission in this process is the NDICI – Global Europe program mechanism, which provides funding for the EU's external activities in the period 2021-2027. The use of this tool within Global Gateway allows integrating infrastructure, digital and environmental projects into a broader system of external public administration aimed at strengthening the EU's strategic presence in Latin America [4; 13].

A feature of the European Commission's participation in the implementation of Global Gateway is the combination of financial instruments with policy and regulatory approaches. This approach enables not only supporting individual projects but also creating stable preconditions for deepening the economic and institutional interaction between the European Union and Latin American countries. In this sense, Global Gateway initiative is integrated into the broader management system of the EU's external partnerships, within which financial instruments, political dialogue and regulatory standards function in an interconnected format [8; 9].

The European Commission's participation in the implementation of Global Gateway also has an impact on strengthening coordination between the supranational and national levels of EU foreign policy, within the framework of the Team Europe approach. This creates conditions for harmonizing the investment initiatives of the Member States with the all-Union strategic priorities and contributes to a more rational use of financial resources in cooperation with Latin American countries [2; 8].

As a result, the activities of the European Commission provide practical content for Global Gateway initiative and consolidate it as an instrument of external public administration of the European Union. The combination of the Commission's program and financial mechanisms with the coordinating role of the European External Action Service forms the institutional basis of the modern model of interregional political interaction between the EU and Latin American countries.

In this context, the European Parliament acts as an important element in ensuring the democratic legitimacy of the European Union's foreign policy, exercising political oversight over the activities of supranational institutions and compliance with the values declared in the EU strategic documents.

In the context of the implementation of Global Gateway initiative, the role of the European Parliament is not to directly manage projects, but to provide political oversight, regulatory support and the formation of public discourse on the strategic directions of the EU's external action [8; 9].

Through the adoption of resolutions, parliamentary hearings and debates, the European Parliament determines the framework of political acceptability of EU external initiatives, including those implemented within the Global Gateway. These tools allow the parliament to influence the content and priorities of foreign policy, paying attention to the issues of respect for human rights, sustainable development, transparency of financing and compliance of investment projects with the strategic goals of the Union [2; 8].

The parliamentary dimension of the European Union's foreign policy acquires special importance in interaction with Latin American countries, taking into account the political heterogeneity of the region and the presence of internal crisis processes that complicate the implementation of a common value approach. Under such conditions, the European Parliament performs the function of institutional deterrence and coordination, combining the normative principles of EU activities with the practical needs of foreign policy interaction. It is within the framework of parliamentary control that a public assessment of the feasibility and effectiveness of the European Union's participation in regional initiatives, including infrastructure and financial projects implemented within the framework of the Global Gateway, is formed [8; 14].

One of the key channels of influence of the European Parliament on the development of interregional political dialogue is its involvement in inter-parliamentary formats of cooperation, in particular within the framework of the Euro-Latin Parliamentary Assembly (EuroLat). The functioning of this platform contributes to the consolidation of regular political communication between the European Union and Latin American countries, as well as creates conditions for discussing issues of democratic development, social cohesion, climate policy and digital transformations in the interregional dimension. In combination with the implementation of Global Gateway, such mechanisms strengthen the political component of interregional cooperation, complementing investment and program instruments with elements of democratic control [2; 9].

Political legitimation on the part of the European Parliament is also manifested in the process of budgetary control, since it is the Parliament that participates in the approval of the financial framework for the EU's external action, in particular, the programs implemented through NDICI – Global Europe. This provides the Parliament with the opportunity to indirectly influence the scope and direction of funding for Global Gateway projects, ensuring that they are in line with the strategic and regulatory priorities of the European Union [4; 8].

In this context, the European Parliament's activities are crucial to ensure democratic legitimacy and political oversight of the implementation of Global Gateway initiative. Parliamentary oversight complements the executive and coordination functions of other institutions of the European Union, in particular the European Commission and the European External Action Service, creating a balance between the effectiveness of external governance and compliance with the normative and value principles of EU policy in relations with Latin American countries.

The overall results of the analysis indicate that the institutional model of the formation and implementation of the European Union's policy towards Latin America within the framework of Global Gateway initiative is characterized by multi-level and clear functional delimitation of powers. Strategic guidelines are determined at the level of the European Council and the Council of the EU, institutional and diplomatic coherence of interregional cooperation is ensured by the European External Action Service, while the European Commission is responsible for the financial and programmatic content of the initiative through the NDICI – Global Europe instruments. In turn, the European Parliament exercises political legitimation and democratic control over the Union's external activities. This configuration allows integrating Global Gateway into the EU's external public administration system, combining normative guidelines with practical mechanisms of influence and creating institutional conditions for deepening political interaction with Latin American countries in the context of the transformation of the global order.

6. Conclusions

The results obtained indicate that the political interaction of the European Union with Latin American countries is developing in the context of changes in the global order and increased competition between key international actors. Under such circumstances, the EU is gradually moving from fragmented formats of cooperation to the use of more complex institutional and governance

mechanisms aimed at consolidating its strategic presence in the region and expanding interregional political ties.

In this context, Global Gateway initiative has become an important element of the transformation of the European Union's foreign policy, as it has brought together investment, infrastructure and software tools within a single management logic. Compared to previous approaches to interaction with partner regions, Global Gateway is focused not only on declaring value principles, but also on their practical combination with mechanisms for implementing political decisions, which increases the adaptability of EU foreign policy to the conditions of a multipolar environment.

The analysis of the institutional architecture of the formation of the European Union's policy towards Latin America allows us to conclude that its functioning is based on a multi-level system of distribution of powers. Strategic guidelines are determined at the level of the European Council and the Council of the European Union, coordination of foreign policy actions and diplomatic support are provided by the European External Action Service, while the European Commission is responsible for the financial and programmatic content of the initiative through the NDICI – Global Europe instruments. At the same time, the European Parliament performs the function of political legitimation and democratic control of the Union's external activities. This configuration creates conditions for combining supranational priorities with the national interests of the Member States and contributes to the coordinated implementation of the Global Gateway.

Special attention should be paid to the coordinating role of the European External Action Service, which, within the framework of this model, provides a link between strategic decisions taken at the EU level and practical mechanisms for their implementation in Latin America. Combined with the Team Europe approach, this helps to reduce the fragmentation of EU foreign policy and increase the effectiveness of interregional cooperation.

At the same time, the results of the study show that the heterogeneity of political processes in Latin American countries, the presence of internal crises and different development models create additional challenges for the implementation of universal approaches of the European Union. This necessitates further adaptation of the institutional mechanisms of Global Gateway to regional specifics and strengthening the interaction between political, financial and regulatory instruments of the EU's foreign policy.

Thus, Global Gateway initiative can be considered as a key tool for the transformation of the external public administration of the European Union, which creates institutional prerequisites for deepening political interaction with Latin American countries and strengthening the role of the EU as an influential actor in the modern system of international relations.

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