

Cuba: Deepening Normalization



Project Terms of Reference

The Cuba Deepening Normalization Practicum assesses the normalization process so far; analyzes the opportunities and obstacles ahead; and develops strategies for anticipating and resolving challenges to the evolution of the healthy, mutually beneficial relationship that both countries seek.

KEY QUESTIONS

Cuba's transition from President Raúl Castro and what it means for bilateral relations, including business

- What is the Cuban model for change and to what extent will the Cuban transition differ from other historical cases?
- How will the April elections and leadership transition impact the political structure within the Cuban state?
- What policies is the new government likely to adopt? How can U.S. businesses anticipate new reforms and changes in the Cuban government's agenda?
- What role can exchanges, cooperation, and partnerships play to develop and support bilateral trust and engagement?
- What are the factors driving political and economic change within Cuba, and what actions or measures can U.S. businesses take to mitigate any policy changes which negatively impact bilateral trade and investment?

U.S. policy and its implications for trade and investment in Cuba

- What are the primary drivers behind the current administration's policy? Who are the primary architects of that policy, what are their primary influencers?
- What can we infer and anticipate from the changes in policy under Trump? Similarly, what can we infer about the Obama-era policy changes that stayed? What are the subsequent implications for future U.S.-Cuba political and business relations?
- What obstacles and opportunities can U.S. companies expect from U.S. and Cuban regulations if trying to enter the Cuban market? Which industries does the policy favor, which does it exclude, and are there any exceptions? What would persuade other businesses to overcome obstacles? What effect would this have on burgeoning relations?
- What are the implications for US business of President Trump's retaliatory actions like ordering the departure of Embassy staff, closure of consulates, halting issuance of visas, and travel warnings towards Cuba?
- Do people-to-people, artistic, sports, and other exchanges continue to develop bilateral trust and support engagement under the Trump administration, and what role can they play for bilateral trade and investment?

Cuban trade, investment, and infrastructural needs

- How can U.S. companies engage in partnerships with Cuban counterparts, specifically in agriculture, tourism, and infrastructure, which are mutually beneficial?

- What is the potential for U.S. firms to do business with Cuba through third-party states and entities? How can Puerto Rican expertise serve as a bridge towards the American market for the new thriving pharmaceutical and biotech sectors in Cuba?
- What are the main opportunities and challenges for trade between Cuba and the United States, including financial restrictions?
- What key American products and services might serve the interests of Cuban consumers and compete with those in European, Chinese, and Latin American markets?

GOALS

The Practicum team's goal is to produce actionable recommendations and useful research memoranda to assist the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in their 2018 policy priority of promoting business and other ties between the United States and Cuba. The U.S.-Cuba Business Council (USCBC) is the premier business advocacy organization dedicated to strengthening the economic and commercial relationship between the United States and Cuba, with the long-term objective of creating a barrier-free economic and commercial partnership between the United States and Cuba.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

In addition to researching published material, the team will consult with a broad range of government and non-government experts on Cuba, U.S. policy, and trade and bilateral investment opportunities and challenges. These include U.S. and Cuban government agencies, non-governmental entities, and other academic and regional NGOs in Washington D.C. and, if travel can be arranged, Havana.

PRODUCTS

The Practicum Team, divided into three working sub-teams (list attached), will develop and deliver products reflecting your expressed needs and interests, as outlined in this paper, including brief (1- to 2-page) page memos, background papers, oral briefings, and, if you wish, PowerPoint presentations.

OTHER CLIENTS

You are our principal client. While recognizing the sensitive nature of conversations surrounding the normalization process, we would like to offer briefings on our key findings to other entities and we welcome you to suggest individuals or organizations that should receive them as well.

TOPIC AREAS AND TEAM MEMBERS:

- 1) Cuba's transition from Raúl and what it means for bilateral relations, including business:
 - Garric Buzzard
 - Ivetta Stefancova
 - Bastien Andruet
 - Teresa Garcia Castro (Other areas: Culture, arts, academia, sports)
- 2) U.S. policy and its implications
 - Justine King
 - Zachary Libow

- Brandon Pless
- Teresa Garcia Castro (Other areas: Culture, arts, academia, sports)

3) Cuban trade, investment and infrastructural needs

- Adrian Rico Galindo
- Patricia Thomas
- Aime Silfa-Ramirez