

Why this Network?

In the past decade, issues of international trade have become increasingly contentious in the EU and its Member States, with tens of thousands protesting against major trade deals.

In the light of these developments, it has become important, for scholars and policy-makers alike, to understand the politics – and not just the policy – of international trade agreements.

What is driving these reactions? Why are some trade agreements reviled, and others ignored? What are the politics of trade?

Our Network of researchers is here to answer these questions.



The Jean Monnet Network brings together scholars from five universities, located on both sides of the Atlantic.



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Politicization of Trade Relations



Jean Monnet Network on Transatlantic Trade Politics

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Politicization of Trade Relations

Why are some trade agreements politically contested, but not others? What determines whether or not an initiative is politicized? And what happens once a trade initiative becomes contentious?

Within the Jean Monnet Network on Transatlantic Trade Politics, these kinds of questions – which are at the heart of our Network’s mandate — are examined in the module on *The Politicization of Trade Relations*.

Research conducted in this module has focused on reactions to the contestation of trade agreement. It has examined questions such as:

- ◆ Do governments respond to contestation by making trade policy more transparent or through policy change?
- ◆ Do business actors show a greater reliance on outside lobbying when trade policy is contested, or do they retreat?
- ◆ In the EU, do member state governments react by defending EU trade policy or by blaming the EU?

The aim is to find explanations of how and why different actors react to the contestation of trade policy. Understanding these reactions is important to anticipate future trade policy choices.

The work in this module provides important conceptual foundations for our other modules, and for researchers and analysts outside the Network.

Module workshops

- ◆ Reacting to the Contestation of Trade Policy in the Transatlantic Area I, University of Antwerp, November 2021
- ◆ Reacting to the Contestation of Trade Policy in the Transatlantic Area II, Paris Lodron University of Salzburg, May 2022
- ◆ **UPCOMING!** Contemporary Challenges to Trade and Trade Policy, Paris Lodron University of Salzburg, May 2024

Module publication



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Dirk De Bièvre is Professor of Political Science at the University of Antwerp. His research focuses on regulatory and judicial politics, interest group politics, and political economy in the EU and the World Trade Organization; it has been funded by the Volkswagen-Stiftung. In addition to his role as Co-Leader of this module, he is a member of the steering group of the ECPR Standing Group on International Relations, and member of the editorial boards of the *Journal of European Public Policy* and *Politics and Governance*.



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