

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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Jean Monnet Network on Transatlantic Trade Politics



Hosted by the
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The European Union (EU) is the largest trading block in the world. In 2022, it exported goods worth €2.6 trillion, and imported goods worth €3.0 trillion. The EU is also a global leader in international trade in services, as well as inbound and outbound investments. It has concluded more than 40 trade agreements with other countries or trading blocks in the world.

A lot of the EU's trade occurs with transatlantic partners, including the United States (US)—the most important destination of EU exports—and Canada.

When do trade agreements become controversial?

Trade used to be considered a rather dry affair, and most citizens were content to leave the negotiation of tariffs and quotas to the government and bureaucracy.

By the beginning of the 21st century, things have changed. Tens of thousands took to the streets while the US and the EU negotiated the proposed Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), and Canada and the EU negotiated the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA). CETA was successfully concluded, while TTIP failed.

Around the same time, the EU concluded another large trade agreement with Japan, which generated little public interest. Why? And what do these patterns of contestation mean for world trade going forward?

The Jean Monnet Network

The Jean Monnet Network on Transatlantic Trade Politics brings together leading scholars on European and international trade politics to answer those questions. We produce research that can be used by policy-makers in planning trade initiatives, by civil society seeking to understand current events, and by business leaders looking to navigate the dynamics of trade policy.

In addition to scholarly research, the Network organizes summer schools on transatlantic trade relations that bring together European and North American students; creates educational materials; facilitates opportunities for students and scholars to conduct research on either side of the Atlantic; and works to advance knowledge of trade politics by hosting workshops for scholars and policy-makers.

Publicly-accessible material is available at our website: www.carleton.ca/tradenetwork.

Four modules

Activities of the Jean Monnet Network are structured into four thematic modules which address distinct aspects of transatlantic trade politics.

The first module, *Politicization of Trade Relations*, studies the questions at the heart of our mandate: Why are some trade agreements politically

contested, and others are not? What determines whether or not a trade initiative is politicized? And what happens once an initiative becomes contentious?

The second module, *Transatlantic Trade and Global Trade Challenges*, situates transatlantic trade within a global context. The trade relationship linking North America and the EU is but a part of both polities' foreign policies. How do pressures from the outside—Russia's invasion of Ukraine, China's more assertive stance in global affairs; regulatory standardization between various partners—affect the transatlantic bond?

The third module, *Reconfiguration of Transatlantic Trade after Brexit*, studies the repercussions of the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union. How does Brexit affect the patterns of transatlantic trade? How are the EU and the United Kingdom redefining themselves as trade actors in the wake of Brexit?

The fourth module, *Trade Policy and Climate Change*, addresses the environmental crisis, whose effects will only grow in the coming decades. How will climate change affect global trade, both as it changes possible paths of travel and as it becomes a political consideration? How will major climate change initiatives, such as the European Green Deal in the EU and the Inflation Reduction Act in the US, influence trade policy and politics?



To stay up-to-date with our publications, interviews, and events, visit:

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