

# **CALIBRATING THE WEALTH AND HEALTH OF NATIONS: TRADE, HEALTH, AND FOREIGN POLICY AFTER THE WTO'S FIRST DECADE**

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## **ABSTRACT**

*One of the most important themes to emerge from the relationship between trade and health in the first ten year's of the WTO's existence is the challenge of achieving policy coherence. This task is a foreign policy challenge for WTO Members, which requires looking at the relationship between trade and health against the backdrop of the making and implementing of foreign policy. Policy coherence has generally become a major concern for foreign policymakers because post-Cold War trends, such as accelerating globalization, seriously challenge traditional foreign policy assumptions, practices, and institutions. Part of this new context for foreign policy involves the rise of health as a foreign policy issue. The trade-health relationship in the WTO is embedded, thus, in a broader range of policy coherency questions affecting all the governance functions served by foreign policy.*

*Considered against these broader frameworks, policy coherence concerning trade and health breaks down into external and internal contexts. External policy coherency considers the extent to which States balance their national interests in trade and health in their anarchical interactions. This balancing analysis focuses attention on rules of international law, such as WTO agreements, which States have devised to calibrate their national interests in trade and health. Internal policy coherency examines whether States have domestically organized their policymaking to ensure that both trade and health sectors contribute synergistically*

*to the formulation of the national interest. As between external and internal policy coherency, more effort by States is required internally; and the article proposes an approach called "trade epidemiology" to foster better internal policy coherency.*

*Improving policy coherency for trade and health externally and internally faces, however, significant obstacles, including the possibility that more pressing foreign policy, trade, and health problems subordinate the trade-health coherence objective on the foreign policy agendas of States.*

**KEYWORDS:** *policy coherency; foreign policy; public health; World Trade Organization; World Health Organization*

## **I. INTRODUCTION: THE IMPORTANCE OF POLICY COHERENCY AFTER TEN YEARS OF TRADE AND HEALTH WITHIN THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION**

The tenth anniversary of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2005 served as the occasion for many reflections on the past, present, and future of the WTO.<sup>1</sup> Given the broad impact of the WTO on international relations in an era characterized by economic globalization, the reflections on the WTO's first decade ranged across many issues and subject areas. Many of the reflective analyses on the WTO's first decade did not expressly consider the relationship between trade and the protection of human health.<sup>2</sup> This relationship has, however, become significant in terms of the WTO's role in the governance of world politics. The focus of this *Journal* recognizes, for example, the interdependence of trade and health in the early 21st century. For the inaugural issue of the *Journal*, this article focuses lessons learned about on the relationship between trade and health during the first ten years of the WTO's operations.

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<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., PETER SUTHERLAND ET AL., *THE FUTURE OF THE WTO: ADDRESSING INSTITUTIONAL CHALLENGES IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM* (2005) [hereinafter *THE FUTURE OF THE WTO*].

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*