

Horizontal Issues

Work Packages 1 to 6 operate under a number of guiding principles which should be taken into account in the process of research: a number of common and horizontal themes and issues are defined which will be pursued across the board in order to enhance overall coherence, the latter being a prime goal of the NCCR. All WPs are directly or indirectly affected by these topics. They are required to deal regularly with these horizontal issues in research and in their workshops, and to take into account results produced in the field. Vice-versa, the results of WPs will allow to bring about a more complete assessment of these horizontal issues at the end of Phase II.

The horizontal themes are coordinated by Dr. Susan Brown and Prof. T. Cottier. They are defined as follows.

Multilayered Governance

Trade regulation operates on levels of domestic, regional and global law. It entails allocation of powers and functions with a view to the achievement of greater coherence and consistency. It entails considerations of vertical separation of powers and an overall balance of powers. All WPs face related issues and are encouraged to deal with them in a framework developed horizontally, based upon work effected in Phase I, as well as ongoing horizontal work.

Graduation and Progressive Regulation

Trade regulation is confronted with diverging needs among developed, emerging and developing countries. While some rules are suitable for all, others need differentiation. The work on Special and Differential Treatment of IP 3 in Phase 1 concluded that a doctrine of graduation and progressive regulation, linking rules and economic indicators, amounts to the most suitable path to address diverging needs. The topic appears in all WPs, while most prominently in WP 6 on impact assessment and WP 4 on Trade, Development and Migration. All WPs are encouraged to face the issue and assess options for graduation and progressive regulation in their respective fields, besides variable geometry, progressive liberalization and the option of plurilateral agreements within the WTO.

The Role of Private Actors

Private actors play a significant role in trade policy formulation and trade policy in general. Phase I mainly focused on state actors, and pledged to turn to private actors more systematically in Phase II. WP 1 does so in relation to corporations, in

particular the issue of Corporate Social Responsibility and the role of private standards. Within the horizontal issues package, the focus will be broader and include non-governmental organizations as well as the impact of civil society groupings, including corporations.

Gender-related Aspects of Trade Regulation

Trade regulation is not without impact on gender, i.e. the relationship of female and male sexes in the economy. The impact often is more indirect than direct, but may be found in all WPs alike. Researchers are encouraged to think about implications of existing and future regulation on gender, and to take into account, in particular, the impact on women and equality in the workplace. The emphasis of the horizontal task will be on methodology and gender-related research tools to be applied. Feedback will also be sought from different WPs on aspects relevant for gender research.