

Pathways through Gridlock in International Economic Law: Resilience, Innovation, Agency

Abstract: Across many areas of global governance, international cooperation has become gridlocked in the face of long-term structural trends such as multipolarity, growing complexity, institutional inertia, and fragmentation. While these factors, which manifest to varying degrees across all areas of international economic law, are pervasive, and help explain a broad set of challenges facing the world economy, they are not necessarily determinative. Indeed, systematic pathways through and even beyond this gridlock exist, highlighting the ways in which global economic governance can be resilient and adaptive, and the conditions under which the agency of states and other actors can have meaningful impacts in spite of—or, sometimes, even due to—structural barriers to cooperation.