

World Trade Institute (WTI)

History and Mandate

The World Trade Institute (WTI) was established in 1999 with the aim of bridging a gap in the university education system: offering academic programmes, research opportunities and tailor-made courses focusing on the regulation of international trade and investment. As a centre for excellence at the University of Bern with an international, interdisciplinary focus, the WTI explores the interconnections between the fields of law, economics and political science.

Vision:

- We aim to **shape public policy** so that international economic governance yields tangible benefits for society
- We strive to be the **world's leading academic institution** for studies, teaching and research in **international trade and investment regulation** and **economic globalisation and sustainability**

Mission:

- We are a **centre of excellence** at the University of Bern
- We contribute to a better understanding of **the legal, economic and political framework governing globalisation and sustainable development**
- We provide **cutting-edge research** and **scholarly outputs** on frontier topics
- We attract **top graduate students from around the world** and give them the knowledge and skills to become tomorrow's leaders in the field of international economic governance

Research

Research takes place mainly within the Swiss National Centre of Competence in Research on Trade Regulation (NCCR), which the WTI has hosted since 2005. The NCCR puts the WTI at the core of a global research network connecting our students to researchers, practitioners and its own alumni in the field. Its purpose is to develop innovative policy recommendations, which reflect a better balance between economic and other regulatory objectives. NCCR researchers address regulatory challenges through different research projects which are organised into six thematic work packages: trade governance, new preferentialism in trade, innovation and competitiveness in trade governance, trade and the diffusion of migration policy, trade and climate change and impact assessment and international trade regulation.

New research developments since 2014 include a six-year project on Employment Effects of Different Development Policy Instruments within r4d - the Swiss Programme for Research on Global Issues for Development and the EU-funded PRONTO project on non-tariff measures.

Academic Offering

The WTI's flagship Master's Programme in International Law and Economics (MILE) has been offering expert training since the year 2000. Almost 500 MILE alumni are now working around the world in ministries, international organisations, non-governmental organisations and law firms.

In addition to the Master's Programme, the WTI offers:

- Weekly courses – selected modules of the MILE programme can be attended on a weekly basis
- Doctoral programme – open to Master's-level graduates in economics, political science and law
- Summer Academy – five weeks of training in trade and investment in Bern

Facts and Figures

Home Institution: University of Bern

(The WTI is formally assigned to the Faculty of Law and interacts with the Faculty of Business, Economics and Social Sciences.)

Established: 1999

Managing Director: Prof. Joseph Francois (joseph.francois@wti.org)

Deputy Director: Prof. Manfred Elsig (manfred.elsig@wti.org)

Funding

The Institute is funded by the University of Bern for its infrastructure and for approximately one-fifth of its running expenses. Approximately four-fifths of the budget comes from external and project-based funding (research grants, teaching fees, consulting, and training activities).

Employment

Around 40 researchers from over 20 different countries – including professors, post-doctoral researchers, doctoral students and junior research fellows – plus a dozen administrative workers.

Resident MILE students: 22