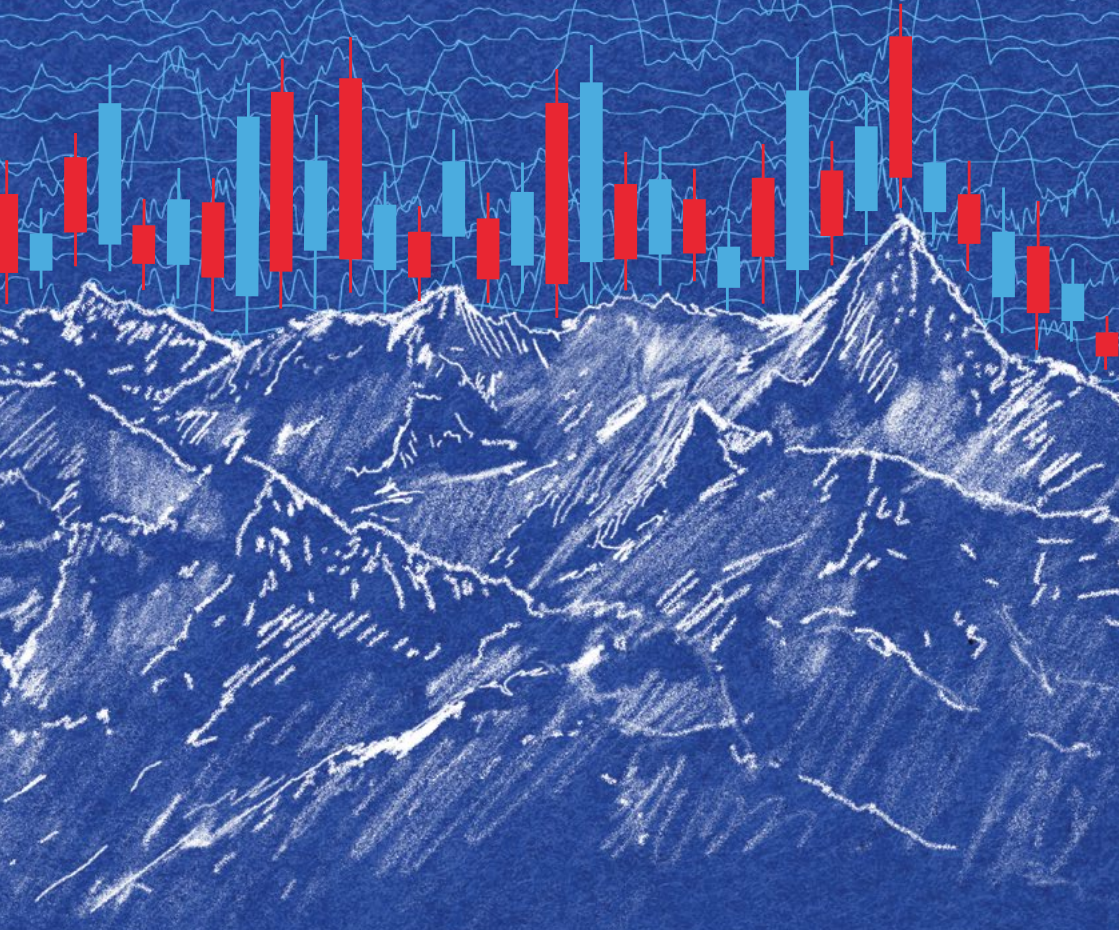




world
trade
institute



ANNUAL REPORT

20 25

Coeficiente de variación

usado para comparar variaciones de 2 muestras con escalas \neq o medidas de medida \neq

$$CV = \frac{Sx}{\bar{x}} \times 100 \quad \text{ó} \quad CV = \frac{\text{Desv estándar}}{\text{Promedio}}$$

*¿g% del promedio es la desv estándar?

- convierte la dispersión en % . a mayor CV mayor variabilidad relativa.
- permite comparar peras con naranjas.
- ✓ a mayor CV mayor son # de variables los datos

Indice
numeros

nos permiten comparar el valor de una variable a su valor base en un periodo. Además sirve para medir crecimiento, inflación.

→ permite comparar como ha cambiado un precio respecto de su año de referencia.

Formula: $\frac{\text{Precio año actual}}{\text{Precio año base}} \times 100$

Indice de Paasche y Laspeyres

Laspeyres	Paasche
cantid: años base	cantid: año actual
Preg: ¿cuanto cuesta la canasta vieja hoy?	Preg: ¿cuanto costaría la canasta nueva ayer?
Tendenc: sobre-estima inflac	Tendenc: subestima inflac
uso com: IPC	uso com: otros indices
$L = \frac{\sum (\text{precios de hoy} \times \text{cant año base})}{\sum (\text{precio año base} \times \text{cant año base})}$	$P = \frac{\sum (\text{precios hoy} \times \text{cant hoy})}{\sum (\text{precios año base} \times \text{cant})}$

¿como quitarle la inflación a los números?

→ convertir valores nominales a reales

valor real: $\frac{\text{Valornominal}}{\text{Indice}} \times 100$

Quantiles

divide datos en 4 partes de igual magnitud.
 - if the # of observations is odd, there is one clear median → dato que queda en el medio.
 - if the # of observations is even, the median is the arithmetic of the 2 middle values

Requires at least ordinal level of measurement
 1, 2, 4, 6, 8 → median → 4
 1, 3, 4, 7 → 3, 4 → (3+4)/2 = 3.5

Quantiles

location measures that divide data into q groups of about equal sizes → $q \times q$? Para ver como se dividen los datos. Partir datos en pedacitos iguales para ver como se

- Different kinds of quantiles

- Percentiles
- Quintiles
- deciles
- Quantiles

→ like for the median, it requires at least ordinal level of measurement

→ quantil es un valor que divide un conjunto de datos ordenados en partes iguales



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Thoughts and reflections from the World Trade Institute's Managing Director



“A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty.”

Winston Churchill

Dear colleagues,

2025 has been a year of transformation. We have witnessed an erosion of international law principles. The multilateral trading system, as we know it, has been shacking to its grounds. New frameworks of thinking become fashionable, and countries and firms attempt to navigate an increasingly complex economic, legal and political environment. The role of institutes, like ours, become even more important in these turbulent times to provide knowledge through core research and interdisciplinary teaching to better understand the past and shape the future.

We see the impact that our network of alumni and students make day by day. We can put some numbers to our impact in the annual report, as we are pleased to share information about this year's activities, including highlights and achievements of our students, alumni and doctoral candidates.

What will 2026 hold for our Institute? Our plan for the World Trade Institute is clear: we want to stay highly relevant as a hub for educating the next generation of trade and investment professionals. In 2026, we are focusing on strengthening our existing academic collaborations, reaching out to new academic partners to facilitate trade expertise all around the world. We are working with further embedding political science in the elements of our programs to enhance our multidisciplinary approach to world trade, as we see that geopolitics and geoeconomics play an important role in international economic law and international investments. On the research front, we strive to provide together with PhD students and postdoctoral fellows science-based insights to the emerging and overlapping shifts and shocks that characterize our times.

We also look forward delivering tailor-made courses supporting long-standing partners and friends.

A highlight for 2026 will be the upcoming World Trade Forum in September 2026 in Bern. The Forum has established itself over the years as a premier platform for science-policy interfaces and engaging with our stakeholders and alumni.

Finally, we extend our gratitude and thanks to Prof. Joe Francois for his 10 years of service as the Managing Director of the WTI. He remains at the WTI as a Director, with a focus on emerging issues in the governance of space-based commerce as part of newly established initiative, Swiss Hub for Air and Space Law and Economics (SHALE) here at the Institute.

With genuine gratitude,

Manfred Elsig

Board of Directors



Manfred Elsig



Isabelle Van Damme



Joseph Francois



Michael Hahn



Jeanne Tschopp



Susan Emmenegger



Quynh Nguyen



Maximilian von Ehrlich



Doina Radulescu



Members of the Advisory Board



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Arancha González



Bernard Hoekman



Marion Jansen



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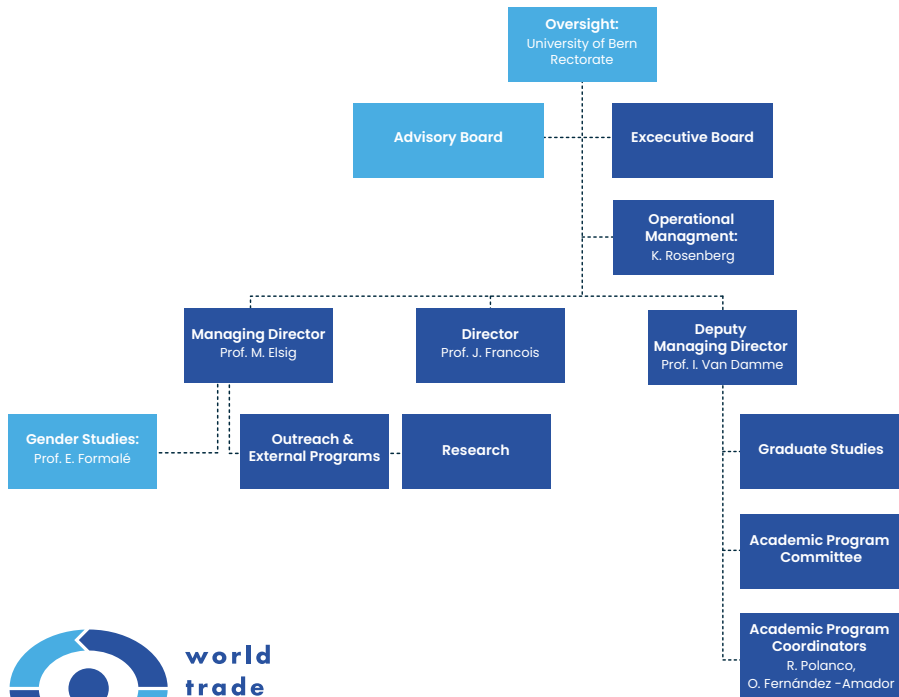
Victor do Prado



Werner Zdouc

WTI Governance Structure

Established in 1999, the World Trade Institute (WTI) is dedicated to advancing education and research in international trade and investment regulation. It integrates graduate-level teaching with interdisciplinary research across law, economics, and political science. In addition to academic programs, the WTI offers specialized advisory services and fosters a diverse, inclusive environment by recruiting globally. This commitment to excellence in training future practitioners and researchers underpins its mission to enhance research capacities and global understanding of trade and investment governance.



Administration, Staff and Research



Karin Rosenberg
Head of Administration



Prof. Dr. Elisa Fornalé
Gender Coordinator



Dr. Rodrigo Polanco
Academic Coordinator



Dr. Octavio Fernández-Amador
PhD Coordinator



Nadine De Angelis
Finance Officer



Sandra Joseph
Human Resources officer



Samantha Suarez
Communications Officer



Pamela Beglinger
Master's Program Administrator

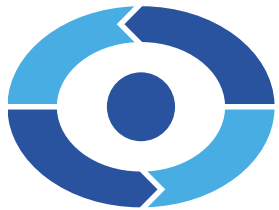


Christian Steiger
IT Manager



Aline Lehnerr
Librarian

Graduate Programs



In 2025, the WTI had a total of **16 students from 14 different countries**. The MILE program welcomed seven students from six countries, continuing its tradition of attracting a diverse and dynamic group of students. This year, the TRAIL+ program welcomed six new students from six countries. This international diversity fosters a distinctive learning environment in which students benefit not only from the expertise of leading academics and practitioners, but also from the rich cross-cultural perspectives of their peers and allows for engaging with world-class lecturers and professors in a collaborative manner, combining languages and cultures.

Master of Advanced Studies in International Law and Economics (MILE)

The World Trade Institute (WTI) has offered the Master of Advanced Studies in International Law and Economics (MILE) since 2000. Students learn from the world's leading trade and investment experts from top universities, think tanks, international organizations, policy research institutes and law firms. Over the years, the **MILE** program has established itself as a pathway for professionals aiming for impactful careers in international organizations, government institutions, academia, multinational corporations, and internationally focused law firms.

The **MILE** program continues to be a critical cornerstone of the WTI's mission to advance knowledge and innovation in international trade and investment, preparing the next generation of global leaders.

Considering ongoing trade turbulence, the WTI Directors have strategically decided to further incorporate trade politics into our flagship program. In 2026, **MILE** will transform into Master of International Law, Economics and Politics.

MAS in Trade and Investment Law & DAS in International Law and Economics (TRAIL+)

TRAIL+ Program

The **TRAIL+** program, launched in 2017, is offered in cooperation with the Faculty of Law at the University of Bern. This advanced interdisciplinary program combines the Master of Advanced Studies in Trade and Investment Law (LL.M.) with a Diploma of Advanced Studies (DAS) in International Law and Economics, offering students

a unique academic experience that blends legal and economic education tailored to the field of international trade and investment.

The **TRAIL+** program places a stronger focus on the legal dimensions of international trade and investment, providing participants with in-depth expertise in these areas while integrating critical economic and political perspectives. This specialized focus prepares graduates for impactful careers as legal practitioners or scholars in international trade and investment law.

The **TRAIL+** program continues to attract motivated professionals and students seeking to build a robust foundation for their legal careers, reinforcing its role as a key offering within the WTI's portfolio of advanced educational programs. We look forward to celebrating the 10 year anniversary of the TRAIL+ program in 2027.

WTI Academy

Winter and Summer Academy

The WTI's Winter - and Summer Academies provide intensive, week-long courses designed to deepen understanding of the law, economics, and politics of international trade, investment, and sustainable development. Each course consists of 20 hours of focused instruction, making these academies an attractive option for professionals and policymakers seeking specialized knowledge.

- The **Winter Academy**, held in January and February, comprises of four courses
- The **Summer Academy**, held in June and July, comprises of 11 courses

These courses are integral components of the MILE, TRAIL+, CAS ILE, and DAS ILE programs but are also open to students studying at the University of Bern and external participants, including government officials and private-sector professionals.

In 2025, the academies saw robust participation, with 31 external participants attending Winter Academy courses and 64 external participants taking part in Summer Academy courses. These numbers underscore the ongoing demand for WTI's expertise in the dynamic fields of international trade and investment and opportunities for continued education.

To learn more about these courses, visit:
<https://www.wti.org/study/wti-academy/>

Certificate and Diploma of Advanced Studies in International Law and Economics

The World Trade Institute (WTI) provides professionals with flexible learning opportunities through its Certificate of Advanced Studies (CAS) and Diploma of Advanced Studies (DAS) in International Law and Economics. These programs offer intensive, week-long courses that enable participants to deepen their understanding of international economic governance, trade, and investment.

Designed for professionals from the public and private sectors, as well as civil society, the CAS and DAS programs are open to individuals who completed an undergraduate degree. Participants can choose from a diverse selection of specialized courses that provide cutting-edge insights into global trade and economic policy. In 2024, five students are actively pursuing the CAS in International Law and Economics.



To learn more about these programs, visit:
https://www.wti.org/study/further-education_CAS_DAS/

Course Catalog

The Law on Border Measures and Trade Facilitation	Sara Núñez-Évora, Roy Santana	January 20 – 24, 2025
The Law on Anti-Dumping and Safeguard Measures	Edwin Vermulst, Fernando Piérola	January 27 – 31, 2025
The Law on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures	Luca Rubini, James Flett	February 3 – 7, 2025
The Law and Policy of Trade in Services	Jan Bohanes, Pierre Sauvé	February 10 – 14, 2025
Econometric Analysis of Trade Policy	Octavio Fernández-Amador	June 30 – July 3, 2025
Space Law	Dr. Ingo Baumann, Dr. Merve Erdem Burger, Mr. Riccardo Loschi	June 30 – July 3, 2025
International Law and Litigation to Tackle Climate Change	Dr. Elena Cima, Prof. Dominic Coppens, Nicolas Lockhart	June 30 – July 3, 2025
International Contracts Regarding Cross-Border Trade and Investment	Réka Papp, Benjamin Gottlieb	July 7 – 10, 2025
Geopolitics and the Securitization of Global Trade	Iryna Bogdanova, Fernando Martin Espejo, Leandro Urbano, Cristian Rodriguez-Chiffelle	July 7 – 10, 2025
Introduction to Input-Output and Applied General Equilibrium Models	Patrick Tomberger	July 7 – 11, 2025
Sustainable Development and Industrial Policy	Arthur Appleton, Tetyana Payosova	July 14 – 17, 2025
Trade Compliance	Hevin Demir, Philipp Weber-Lortsch	July 14 – 17, 2025
Policy	Eddy Bekkers	July 14 – 17, 2025

WTI Academy Summer Session 2026

June-July 2026	Econometric Analysis of Trade Policy
June-July 2026	Trade Compliance
July 2026	Introduction to Input-Output and Applied General Equilibrium Models
July 2026	Space Law: International and National Dimensions
July 2026	General Equilibrium Modeling of Trade Policy
July 2026	Geopolitics and the Securitization of Global Trade
July 2026	Digital and Artificial Intelligence Regulation
July 2026	Cooperation or Confrontation?: EU/China Economic Relations in 2026

You can apply for all WTI Academy courses here:

<https://www.wti.org/study/wti-academy/>

WTI Graduate School of Economic Globalization and Integration

In 2025, 7 new PhD students were accepted to the WTI Graduate School of Economic Globalization and Integration (EGI) to start their PhD research in law under Prof. Dr. Isabelle Van Damme and political science under Prof. Dr. Manfred Elsig. Six students graduated, three in economics, two in political science, and one in law. In total, the WTI Graduate School EGI has 35 PhD students. 18 are law students, 12 are economics and 5 are political science. We congratulate the following doctoral graduates listed below.

Essays in Computational Econometrics: Applications of Bayesian Statistics and Probabilistic Programming
by Dr. Martin Jehli

Essays in International Environmental Macroeconomics
by Dr. David Baumann

Essays on International Trade
by Dr. Samuel Rosenow

From Design to Effects: The Limits of Democracy Promotion in Preferential Trade Agreements
by Dr. Marine Roux

Strategic Norms or Normative Strategy? Balancing Interest and Ideals in the Design and Implementation of Democracy-Related Provisions in EU Trade Policies and Agreements
by Kirthana Garneson

International Trade and Disaster Risk Governance: Evaluating the Policy Space available to WTO Members under the WTO Agreement and GATT 1994
by Dr. Hugo Cahueñas Muñoz

Doctoral Colloquia

PhD candidates benefit from annual presentations at doctoral colloquia, where they receive peer feedback and guidance from supervisors and other PhD students. Held at least twice a year, these sessions provide the venue for an exchange of ideas and support a platform to practice thesis defenses. Active participation, including attending colleagues' presentations, strengthens research skills, allows for supervisor feedback regarding guidelines and direction – enriching the doctoral journey.

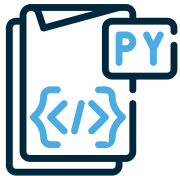
Current Dynamics and Challenges of Contemporary Trade Policy and Regulatory Frameworks: PhD Retreat at Schloss Köniz

In December 2025, the World Trade Institute hosted a PhD retreat at the castle in Köniz, Bern led by PD Dr. Octavio Fernández-Amador of the World Trade Institute, University of Bern.

The workshop, titled Current Dynamics and Challenges of Contemporary Trade Policy and Regulatory Frameworks aims to analyze evolving dynamics and the challenges they pose to contemporary trade policy and regulatory frameworks. It also seeks to foster critical reflection among students on how this shifting political landscape might affect their own research agendas.



Spatial Methods for Economists Using Python



Offered by the Center for Regional Economic Development (CRED), University of Bern and co-hosted with the World Trade Institute at the University of Bern

In recent years, spatial data has become a cornerstone of empirical economic research, with applications spanning urban and real estate economics, development and environmental economics, labor and public economics, economic history, and international trade. Spatial data allows economists to address “where” questions in economics, uncovering insights into how geography and space shape economic behavior and outcomes.

Economists use spatial data to explore how location, geography, and spatial relationships influence economic outcomes. Spatial data enables analysis of variations across regions, the influence of proximity or distance, and the role of geographic features in shaping economic activity.

Recognizing the importance of these tools, CRED launched the course “Spatial Methods for Economists Using Python”, designed to equip participants with the skills to effectively utilize spatial data in economic analyses.

Objective and Scope

The course provides a systematic workflow for extracting, structuring, and analyzing spatial data to address complex economic questions. Participants learn to automate key tasks such as:

- Importing and handling various spatial data formats
- Projecting data to standard reference systems
- Defining spatial structures and relationships
- Selecting and merging data based on spatial criteria
- Performing spatial statistics and exporting results

To enhance usability, the course integrates these processes with statistical software like R and Stata, bridging the gap between spatial data processing and econometric modeling. This approach ensures participants can efficiently manage spatial datasets and incorporate spatial insights into broader economic research workflows.



Lecturer

The course was led by **Olivier Schöni**, Associate Professor at the Swiss Graduate School of Public Administration (IDHEAP), University of Lausanne. His expertise in spatial data and economic analysis provides participants with both theoretical knowledge and practical guidance.

Unilateralism in International Law: Regulation, Responsibility and the Rule of Law

This course examines the growing use of unilateral regulatory measures by States and their implications for the international legal order. It explores how such measures—particularly those with extraterritorial effects, such as unilateral sanctions—both operate within and challenge existing multilateral rules and institutions. The course analyses these developments through three key legal lenses: the international law of jurisdiction, which seeks to limit extraterritorial regulation; State responsibility, including questions of breach, exceptions, and countermeasures; and the broader role of unilateral measures as tools for enforcing international law in contexts where collective mechanisms are weak or absent. Together, these perspectives highlight both the rule-of-law justifications for unilateral action and the significant legal and normative challenges they raise.

Lecturers

The course was delivered by Professor **Kimberly Trapp** and Professor **Alex Mills**. Professor Trapp and Professor Mills are both Professors of Public International Law at the University College of London in the Law Department. As internationally recognized scholars with an extensive record of research and publication in core areas of public international law, including jurisdiction, State responsibility, sanctions, and the enforcement of international legal obligations. Their combined expertise and academic leadership ensure that the course is grounded in rigorous scholarship and reflects the most significant contemporary developments in international legal theory and practice.



General Equilibrium Modelling in a Complementarity Format

The World Trade Institute also offered advanced training in quantitative trade analysis through two complementary courses on general equilibrium modelling. “Introduction to Input-Output and Applied General Equilibrium Models” familiarized participants with the quantitative tools used to analyze international trade in multi-country, multi-sector economic frameworks. The course introduced input-output analysis and explained how these data structures can be extended into a Social Accounting Matrix (SAM), which forms the empirical foundation for applied or computable general equilibrium (AGE/CGE) models.

Building on this foundation, “General Equilibrium Modeling of Trade Policy” provided a practical introduction to using CGE models to analyze trade policy. Participants reviewed the basics of AGE/CGE modelling and engaged in hands-on exercises simulating the economic effects of policy changes and global shocks using established modelling frameworks such as those developed by the Global Trade Analysis Project (GTAP).

Together, the courses equipped participants with the analytical tools needed to quantitatively assess the economic impacts of trade policies and international economic developments.



Lecturers

The two courses were taught by **Patrick Tomberger** and **Eddy Bekkers**, both specialists in quantitative trade modelling. Tomberger, a postdoctoral researcher affiliated with the University of Innsbruck and previously with the World Trade Institute, works on international trade, global value chains, and input-output analysis, and has contributed to projects funded by organizations such as the World Bank, the European Union, and the Swiss National Science Foundation. Bekkers, an economist at the WTO, focuses on computable general equilibrium (CGE) modelling and its application to trade policy and global economic analysis. Through their combined expertise, the courses provided participants with both the methodological foundations of input-output and CGE modelling and practical insights into how these tools are used to evaluate trade policy and global economic shocks.

Doctoral candidates' presentation and papers in 2025

Presentation of Paper at 11th Conference of the Austrian Society for Political Science (ÖPGW)	Noah Wheatley
Presentation of Paper at First Swiss-Taiwan IPE & Law Research Workshop	Noah Wheatley
Presentation of survey experiment at World Trade Forum (Florence, 10.-11.10.2025)	Julia Grubler
Conference of the Postgraduate and Early Professionals/Academics Network of the Society of International Economic Law 2025. Amsterdam, 9.24 2025	Renru Ma

Navigating the World of Artificial Intelligence with Institutional Support from the Faculty of Law

Blind Faith versus Analytical Reasoning

In text- and argument-driven disciplines such as law, politics, and economics, the risk of AI is not merely limited to traditional plagiarism, but cognitive outsourcing: students may rely on AI to generate arguments instead of developing analytical reasoning themselves. AI, in this framework, can serve as a scaffold—supporting brainstorming, structural refinement, or feedback—but it cannot replace intellectual engagement. As Noah Wheatley summarized, “AI literacy means understanding both the capabilities and the limits of these systems and never placing blind faith in automated outputs.”

Generative AI and Publishing

The initiative also addresses the rapidly evolving norms of academic publishing, a major topic of conversation for the academic community. Major publishers such as Cambridge University Press, Springer Nature, and other journals have introduced policies clarifying that AI systems cannot be credited as authors and that researchers remain fully responsible for the accuracy, originality, and integrity of their submissions. At the same time, publishers are developing proprietary AI tools to support literature discovery, manuscript screening, and editorial workflows—innovations that promise efficiency but require careful governance to preserve trust, credit, and expertise in scientific research.



Trade and Generative Artificial Intelligence

“Through these interactive workshops, we hope to see the impact of how participants developed a more nuanced understanding of AI — not only as a tool, but as a structural force reshaping research, publishing standards, and editorial practices,” says Professor Isabelle Van Damme, Deputy Managing Director and Director of Academic Studies at the World Trade Institute.

Because AI technologies change rapidly, training must remain dynamic, regularly updated, and aligned with pedagogical methods and assessment designs. Looking ahead, Beichen and Noah envision the workshops as potential to evolve and become embedded in the university. Their broader ambition is not simply to teach tools, but to cultivate a research culture that uses AI thoughtfully, transparently, and strategically. “I’d really like to see a university-wide workshop series that provides a deeper understanding of how AI works and its practical applications,” says Noah Wheatley.

For the WTI—an institution positioned at the intersection of law, economics, and global governance—this initiative signals a forward-looking commitment: preparing the next generation of trade scholars to navigate a world in which AI is not peripheral, but foundational to economic and regulatory transformation.

WTI-CWS Joint Academy on International Trade Law and Policy in India



The annual WTI-CWS Joint Academy was established by the World Trade Institute and the Centre for WTO Studies of the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade in 2014. Its objective is to enable law students and legal professionals to increase their knowledge of and exposure to issues pertinent to international trade regulation and economic governance. To date, more than 200 Indian law students have been trained in the past decade.

The eleventh edition of the Joint Academy on International Trade Law and Policy took place from 2 to 27 June 2025 at the premises of the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT) in New Delhi. The Academy is jointly organized by the World Trade Institute and the Centre for WTO Studies. For the second time, besides the four-week law program (Joint Academy on International Trade Law and Policy), a two-week economics program (Joint Academy on International Trade Law and Economic Policy) was integrated for a more comprehensive learning experience.

Thirty-six students from different law schools and schools of economics from all over India as well as legal and economic professionals participated in the program in 2025.

The Academy consisted of courses on Essentials of WTO Law and Policy, Investment Law, Trade and

Intellectual Property Rights, Trade in Services, SPS and TBT, Trade and Sustainability, Trade and Security, Agreement on Agriculture, the Law and Policy of Trade Remedies, Digital Trade, Introduction to Economics of Trade, Economics and Practice of Global Services Trade, Trade and Environment, and Preferential Trade Agreements. In some of the courses, law and economics students were taught jointly. Every week faculty members gave Trade Talks in the evenings that were open to the public.

As in previous years, the Embassy of Switzerland in India hosted an event during the Academy for students, alumni and the trade com-

munity in Delhi. H.E. Ambassador Maya Tissafi inaugurated the event with a welcome speech. This was followed by a panel discussion on 'Tariff Turmoil and the Future of the Rules-Based Trade Order' with Prof. Isabelle Van Damm, WTI Director of Studies, Prof. Pritam Banerjee, Head of the Centre for WTO Studies, Prof. Em. Thomas Cottier, Former WTI Managing Director, Prof. Anirudh Shingal, Professor of Economics at S.P. Jain Institute of Management & Research, Mumbai and WTI alumnus.

The panel was moderated by WTI alumnus Mr Arpit Bhutani, COO at Circular Innovation Lab.





“I was delighted to host the 2025 cohort and WTI alumni at the Swiss Residence for a thought-provoking discussion on “Tariff Turmoil and the Future of the Rules-Based Trade Order.” In an age where trade is increasingly shaped by geopolitics, digital disruption, and climate imperatives, the Academy offers more than just education – it offers collaborative foresight.”

H.E. Maya Tissafi, Ambassador of Switzerland to India and Bhutan.

Outreach Activity in Mumbai: Discussion on trade, TEPA, geopolitics and sustainability – highlighting the importance of collaboration

The Consulate General of Switzerland in Mumbai hosted an event with Prof. Dr. Isabelle Van Damme, Director of Studies at the World Trade Institute (WTI), University of Bern, and Ms. Urvi Tembey, International Trade Lawyer and Policy Advisor, and alumna of the WTI on 17 June 2025. The topic of the dialogue was ‘the Switzerland-India Trade Partnership in an evolving geopolitical framework’ and explored the intersections of trade agreements, geopolitics and sustainability. The Swiss-Indian bilateral cooperation under the Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA) was discussed, highlighting collaboration and shared responsibility. The WTI is grateful to the Consul General of Switzerland in Mumbai and his team for organizing such an insightful event, and for bringing together members of the Indo-Swiss business community in Mumbai, WTI alumni and professionals with a passion for international trade and policy.



World Trade Institute's Fellows

The World Trade Institute (WTI) at the University of Bern continues to strengthen its global network through its WTI Fellows program. Appointed by the Executive Board, WTI Fellows are chosen for their demonstrated commitment to advancing the intellectual and institutional objectives of the Institute. This program represents more than an honorary affiliation: it is a platform for meaningful collaboration and reputational alignment with one of the leading centres of excellence in international economic law and governance.

By contributing expertise, expanding networks, and advancing joint initiatives, WTI Fellows play a critical role in shaping the Institute's long-term impact. At its core, the fellowship is a strategic instrument for extending WTI's research and teaching networks worldwide. Fellows serve as ambassadors within their respective academic and professional communities, actively collaborating with WTI professors and senior researchers on research initiatives, teaching activities, and partnership development.

"Our WTI Fellows come from around the world, and we're proud to support academic exchange in these dynamic times for global trade. Our non-resident WTI Fellows also regularly visit the Institute in various capacities and participate in teaching programs. They are also encouraged to publish in the WTI Working Paper Series and to supervise and mentor students. In doing so, our Fellows contribute to the Institute's vibrant academic life," says Managing Director, Professor Manfred Elsig.

"Together, they reinforce WTI's standing as a globally connected, research-driven institution committed to addressing the most pressing challenges in world trade and sustainable development," says Deputy Managing Director and Director of Academic Programs, Professor Isabelle Van Damme.

Learn more about how we appoint our WTI Fellows

The WTI Fellows are exclusively appointed by the WTI Board.

The Fellowship is designed as a selective and renewable three-year appointment, with the aim to recognize distinguished scholars and practitioners whose work aligns with the World Trade Institute's research focuses on international trade regulation, economic governance, and sustainable development.



Achim Vogt



Amrita Bahri



Anirudh
Shingal



Cédric
Dupont



Charlotte
Sieber-Gasser



Doris
Oberdabernig



Eddy Bekkers



Frank van
Tongeren



Gabriele
Spilker



Gabrielle
Marceau



Iliaria Espa



Iryna
Polovets



Jesus Crespo
Cuaresma



Kathleen
Claussen



Maarten
Smeets



Malebakeng
Forere



Marion
Panizzon



Nicolas
Albertoni



Nicolas
Lockhart



Peter Van
den Bossche



Pierre Sauv 



Roberto
Echandi



Simon
W thrich-Bovet



Sufian Jusoh



Thomas
Cottier



Victor do
Prado



Werner Zdouc

Research

WTI researchers are active in the fields of economics, political science, law and explore multidisciplinary approaches. Our research uploads the highest standards of research quality and integrity. It aims to be both relevant, and our research portfolio addresses some of the most pressing concerns relating to challenges of international economic cooperation and governance. This includes the move towards increasingly nationalistic economic policies on a national level, visible backlash against globalization, climate change, migration and sustainable development.

Many of the research projects at the WTI are transdisciplinary in nature: research questions are developed and inspired by the latest debates in many disciplines. The scientific approaches are guided by a multitude of research methods and our researchers are encouraged to formulate policy recommendations based on their research findings.

The World Trade Institute (WTI) conducts innovative research at the intersection of economics, political science, and law, addressing critical global issues such as climate change, migration, nationalism in economic policies, and sustainable development. Guided by rigorous standards of quality and integrity, WTI researchers employ transdisciplinary approaches, drawing from diverse methods and contemporary debates to ensure relevance and impact. Research findings are not only academic but also practical, with a strong emphasis on developing actionable policy recommendations to inform international economic cooperation and governance.

In 2025

Project	Funding/Lead (L) /Co-Lead (CL)	Time period	Responsibility	Project budget
Trade and Democracy (TRADEM)	SNF	2021-25	Manfred Elsig	CHF 599,132
ID Grant	UNIBE	2021	Manfred Elsig	CHF 89,500
MATS	EU, H2020	2021-24	Manfred Elsig /Christian Häberli	€ 157,100
BATMODEL	EU, H2020	2020-24	Joseph Francois	€ 290,000
Economic Globalization Under Threat (seed money)	SNF (SERI)	2021	Manfred Elsig	CHF 27,420
Gender Equality in the Mirror (GEM): Clothing the Invisibility of Women's Participation at International Level	SNF	2021-23	Elisa Fornalé	CHF 346,000
GEE metrics	SNF	2022-26	Fernandez-Amador	CHF 184,049
Policy Uncertainty and Market Access in Services	SNF	2022-27	Joseph Francois	CHF 466,018
Practices of Human Right Justification	EU, SERI	2023-26	Elisa Fornalé	CHF 644,736

Research projects overview: 2020-2025



CLIMTRADE

Increasingly, trade policy instruments are mobilized to address climate policy goals. Climate-provisions in free trade agreements have increased exponentially, and trade-related climate policies such as carbon taxes at the border, green subsidies or sustainable supply chains are topics of discussion at the WTO and beyond. The SNSF-funded CLIMTrade project analyses how trade and climate change are linked in different venues, focusing on the multilateral system, minilateral settings such as preferential trade agreements, and unilateral trade measures integrating climate policy goals. The project strengthens the empirical basis of the discussion surrounding the linkage of trade and climate change, develops new theoretical arguments and concepts, and tests existing ones.

One of the project's key milestones in 2025 was the development and launch of an expert survey with an embedded conjoint experiment. So far, the role of experts and their preferences in the design, negotiation, and implementation of trade-related climate policy solutions have been understudied. The CLIMTrade survey assesses international trade and climate policy experts' views on the trade-climate nexus. In the experimental part of the survey, experts are asked to evaluate different policy proposals linking trade and climate change and rank their preferred solu-

tions. Data collection started in September 2025 and will run until March 2026. The data collected will allow the research team to gain insight into how experts deal with trade-offs between different aspects of climate-related trade policies and identify where trade and climate communities align or differ in their preferences. In this context, the research team also attended several key international conferences on trade and climate, such as the WTO Public Forum, the UNCTAD Ministerial in Geneva and COP30 in Brazil, engaging with experts and collecting survey responses.

Once data collection is completed, the CLIMTrade research team will analyze the results from the survey and embedded experiment, to identify where the trade and climate expert communities agree or disagree on how to link trade and climate. This way, the project intends to contribute to existing scholarship on the role of expert preferences in policymaking at an international level. Especially at the intersection of different topics, policymaking is characterized by trade-offs and careful weighing of evolving objectives. A more accurate picture of preferences and common conceptions of trade-related climate policies will help both decision makers and academics better understand the multi-dimensional aspects of the trade-climate nexus.



The Electronic Database of Investment Treaties (EDIT), is a systematic and comprehensive database on international investment agreements, including available texts in one language (English) and format (XML). During the implementation of the SNIS-funded project "Diffusion of International Law: A Textual Analysis of International Investment Agreements" (2015–2017), treaty texts were collected, and digitized and non-English texts were translated through machine translation software. Articles and paragraphs of the agreements were categorized using different techniques (automated labelling and based on a keyword dictionary, as well as on manual annotation).

GEM

The pandemic made it clear how current structures of power risk perpetuating gender inequality and that the underrepresentation of women is no longer sustainable. Instead, it is imperative to understand the normative implications of participatory rights, how affirmative actions can foster and/or undermine participation, and how institutional practices still prevent equal participation by creating de facto inequality between men and women. The GEM project's overall aim

is to put forward a two-dimensional approach (internalization/externalization) to investigate potential 'building blocks of women's participation' at domestic and international level by making plain the need to strengthen their complementarity.

HRJust

HRJust aims to develop a theory of HRJ and a process for Systematic Ongoing Civil Society Engagement as a tool for a gender and intersectional inclusive Civil Society engagement. HRJust is to identify gaps in human rights regulations and protection, serving as underpinning data for our recommendations to EU in support of a multinational human rights system and promotion of transnational democratic governance. HRJust will also identify geopolitical elements that influence States' use of HRJ. This will be done through 5 countries: Sweden, Finland, Taiwan, India and Ukraine, through three actions: human rights dialogue, inclusive democratic participations, and protection of human rights defenders, and operationalised through three themes: Covid, Migration and Climate.

GEE

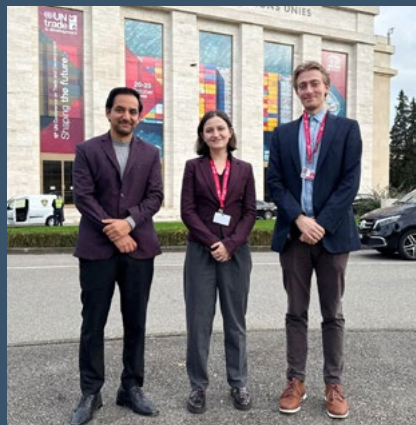
General equilibrium econometrics and modeling for sustainable development (GEE-metrics) Policy Uncertainty and Market Access in Services

This project aims at improving the estimates of the parameters governing the dynamics of multi-country, multi-sector general equilibrium models used in the analysis of energy and climate change policies to obtain more reliable predictions of the effects of such policies. The project uses advanced econometric modeling to estimate the parameters targeted and incorporates the estimates obtained to a multicountry, multi-sector general equilibrium model. The expected output will be (i) a new dataset of energy usage disaggregated at the level of country and sector; (ii) a new set of parameters estimates governing the energy and carbon emissions accounts in a general equilibrium model which are key to policy experiments related to energy and carbon dioxide emissions; and (iii) a quantification of the economic, environmental and social effects of the implementation of a carbon border adjustment mechanism on developed and developing economies.

TRADEM

Trade and Democracy

The TRADEM project studies the interconnections between trade agreements and democracy. We ask principally: how do trade agreements affect democratic institutions and processes? The project's main objective is to develop new, and test existing arguments, related to the types of outside-in effects through trade agreements that lead to positive or negative effects for various types of democracy parameters. The project studies the conditions under which treaties are democracy-enhancing and compare these to conditions that are democracy-hindering. Providing better data and exploring and testing more nuanced causal relationships will help policymakers better understand the observable democratization effects of trade agreements.



The World Trade Institute Network

The WTI cooperates with leading universities and institutes through memoranda of understanding and collaborative projects, carrying out joint research and teaching programs. Students of partner universities benefit from a preferential tuition fee for the MILE and TRAIL+ programs.

In 2025, we initiated three memorandums of understanding with leading universities and institutes.

- China Data Law Lab
- University of International Business and Economics
- Shanghai International Studies University

Capacity Building Programs

Teaching and capacity building programs

The WTI organizes tailor-made courses and workshops for policymakers and government officials. These programs range from individualized consultative workshops up to practice-oriented courses on applied trade regulation or policy and academic seminars on trade policy modelling and principles.

In this section of the Annual Report, you find an overview of all the courses, workshops and other external facing events that have been organized and attended by the WTI team.

Outreach

'New Directions in EU Trade Law and Policy' Seminar given at the College of Europe (Bruges)	Spring semester 2025 (in person)	Prof. Dr. Isabelle Van Damme
'What is trade law' Paper presented at Workshop on 'Oxford Handbook on Comparative Trade Law', organised by the Georgetown University Law Center and the Swiss Institute of Comparative Law	17 March 2025 (online)	Prof. Dr. Isabelle Van Damme
'The Bigger Picture' Paper presented at Joint Anniversary Law Conference on 'The Limits of EU Integration Through Law? The Foundations Revisited' organised by the College of Europe and the European Law Review (College of Europe, Bruges)	27 and 28 March 2025 (in person)	Prof. Dr. Isabelle Van Damme
'View from practice: CJEU Opinion Procedure' Guest lecture given at the University of Lund (Lund)	2 April 2025 (online)	Prof. Dr. Isabelle Van Damme
'Jurisdiction and international dispute settlement' Paper presented at conference on 'Mixity and the Court – Jurisdiction in manifest and blurred mixity' organised by the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (Brussels)	7 April 2025 (in person)	Prof. Dr. Isabelle Van Damme
'Protecting EU Interests: Unilateral Turn in EU Trade and Investment Policy' Lecture given at the University of Luxembourg, Luxembourg Centre for EU Law (Luxembourg)	8 May 2025 (in person)	Prof. Dr. Isabelle Van Damme
'The administration and enforcement of EU sanctions' Guest lecture given at Bocconi University (Milan)	16 May 2025 (in person)	Prof. Dr. Isabelle Van Damme
'The WTO Palm Oil Disputes – Policy Space of WTO Members to Take Climate Change Measures' Guest lecture given at the University of Lugano (Lugano)	22 May 2025 (in person)	Prof. Dr. Isabelle Van Damme
'Trade and Sustainability' Guest lecture given at the WTI-CWS Joint Academy on International Trade Law and Economic Policy (Delhi)	13 June 2025 (in person)	Prof. Dr. Isabelle Van Damme
'Tariff Turmoil and the Future of the Rules-Based World Trade Order' Paper presented at panel discussion organised by the Swiss Embassy in India (Delhi)	13 June 2025 (in person)	Prof. Dr. Isabelle Van Damme
'Trade and National Security' Guest lecture given at the WTI-CWS Joint Academy on International Trade Law and Economic Policy (Delhi)	16 June 2025 (in person)	Prof. Dr. Isabelle Van Damme
'TEPA and the sustainability agenda' Paper presented at an interactive panel organised by the Swiss Consul General of Switzerland (Mumbai)	17 June 2025 (in person)	Prof. Dr. Isabelle Van Damme

'Trade in Semiconductors' Paper presented at the Ninth SIEL Biannual Conference (Taipei)	9 July 2025 (in person)	Prof. Dr. Isabelle Van Damme
'The reshaping of the rules-based system trading system – challenges for Europe and the United States' Lecture given at the University of Luzern, invited by the Stiftung Professor Heinrich Kronstein Stipendium (Luzern)	6 October 2025 (in person)	Prof. Dr. Isabelle Van Damme
'Paneldiskussion Schweizerische Aussenwirtschaftsbeziehungen und -politik' Paper presented at panel discussion during workshop on 'Die Schweiz in Europa under der Welt', organised by Prafer Dreifuss and the University of Bern (Bern)	9 October 2025 (online)	Prof. Dr. Isabelle Van Damme
'EU sanctions implementation and enforcement: where do we stand?' Paper presented at workshop on 'Economic Sanctions Implementation and Enforcement', organised by the Faculty of Law, Economics and Finance of the University of Luxembourg (Luxembourg)	28 October 2025 (in person)	Prof. Dr. Isabelle Van Damme
'Understanding the WTO dispute settlement mechanism: current developments and implications for Indonesia' Lecture given at the Transnational Business Law Department of the Faculty of Law of the University of Padjadjaran	13 November 2025 (online)	Prof. Dr. Isabelle Van Damme
'Careers in international trade' Paper presented at the UK Government's Legal Advisors Conference (London)	9 December 2025 (in person)	Prof. Dr. Isabelle Van Damme
'Remarks on the European Union's economic security strategy' Paper presented at the trade counsellor meeting organised by the Delegation of the European Union to Switzerland and the Principality of Liechtenstein (Bern)	15 December (in person)	Prof. Dr. Isabelle Van Damme
"Digital Trade in CPTPP and the EU: Looking for a Common Ground", at the EU-CPTPP Track 1.5 Dialogue, Jacques Delors Institute and Paris School of International Affairs, Sciences Po, Paris	9-10 December (in person)	Dr. Rodrigo Polanco
"Introducing Comparative Trade Law: A New Framework for Understanding Domestic Trade Policies", 2025 Annual Meeting, American Society of Comparative Law, McGill University, Faculty of Law, Montreal, Quebec	17 October (in person)	Dr. Rodrigo Polanco

"Artificial Intelligence and the Judiciary", X Jean Monnet Network Seminar – Bridge Watch "Digital Transformation and Innovative Solutions", organized by University of Chile and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, Santiago, Chile	2 October 2025 (online)	Dr. Rodrigo Polanco
"International Economic Law and Non-Governmental Actors", Webinar, Swiss Institute of Comparative Law	1 October (in person)	Dr. Rodrigo Polanco
"International Investment Law: A Constraint, an Enabler, or Irrelevant to Overcome the Digital Divide?", at SIEL 2025 Ninth Biennial Global Conference: Navigating New Horizons: International Economic Law in a Changing World, Taipei, Taiwan, 9-11 July 2025.	9-11 July (in person)	Dr. Rodrigo Polanco
"Latin America Trade, Investment, and Strategic Outlook", organized by the Latin American Chamber of Commerce Youth Committee and the World Trade Institute, Bern, 16 June 2025.	16 June (in person)	Dr. Rodrigo Polanco
Speaking to EFTA delegation on US trade policy (GENEVA)	28-Jan	Prof. Dr. Manfred Elsig
Speaking at UNCTAD seminar on the challenges to the global economy, Geneva	9-Apr	Prof. Dr. Manfred Elsig
Visting Uni Groningen (Enlight partner)	19-21 May	Prof. Dr. Manfred Elsig
Participation at IISD Roundtables on Green Industrial Policies, Geneva	28-May	Prof. Dr. Manfred Elsig
Keynote at Schweizer Energierat GV, Bern on US tariff policy	18-Jun	Prof. Dr. Manfred Elsig
Forum UNI und Gesellschaft (Die Exportnation Schweiz zwischen Chinesischen und Amerikanischen Markt)	22-Nov	Prof. Dr. Manfred Elsig

Policy Research

The WTI conducts applied research for a range of public and private institutions in the fields of international trade and investment law. The WTI experts are actively engaged in providing advice on topics such as impact assessments of preferential trade agreements, gap analyses of investment laws and policies, WTO reform and accession – among many other topics. Researchers at the WTI contribute every year to various reports that address salient topics, such as:

Engaging with Policy and Practice

In 2025, WTI researchers were actively engaged in shaping discussions on trade and international economic law. By contributing to policy debates, participating in national and international events, and engaging with the media, the WTI shared its latest research with diverse audiences around the world.

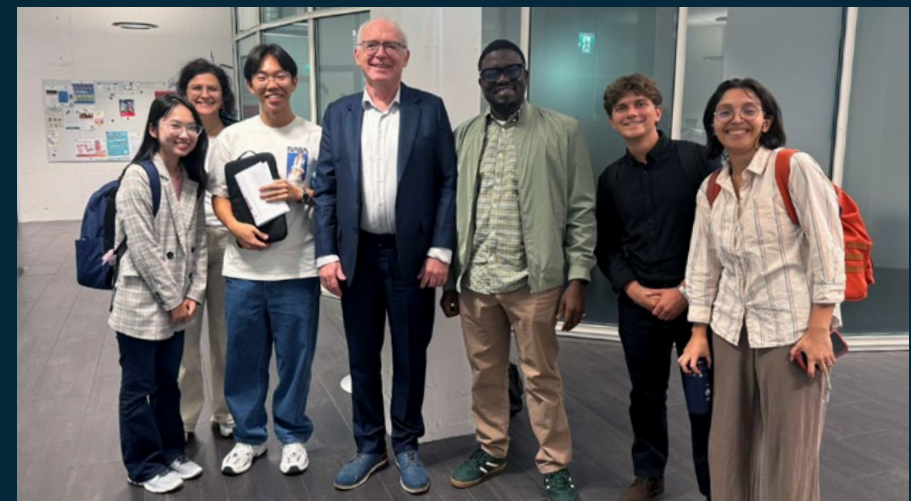
The events listed below illustrate the breadth of these activities and reflect WTI's ongoing commitment to fostering informed dialogue and exchange.

EU Climate Aid and Trade Interests: Strategic or Byproduct of Closer Ties?	Dec. 16, 2025	Brown Bag Seminar, Organized by Beichen Ding, PhD candidate in Law and Noah Wheatly, PhD candidate in Political Science under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Manfred Elsig
Chart Your Trade Career: An Interactive Online Panel with WTI Voices	Dec. 15, 2025	Panel discussion organized by Dr. Rodrigo Polanco and Prof. Dr. Isabelle Van Damme
Strategic Ambiguity as a Governance Instrument in the Trade-Climate Nexus	Dec. 2, 2025	Brown Bag Seminar, Organized by Beichen Ding, PhD candidate in Law and Noah Wheatly, PhD candidate in Political Science under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Manfred Elsig
Fossil Fuels beyond the ICJ Climate Advisory Opinion Roundtable on the Implications for International Trade and Investment Law	Nov. 24, 2025	Roundtable organized by Beichen Ding, PhD candidate in Law and Wafaa Saadeh, PhD candidate in Law
What future for international trade and investment adjudication in a fragmented world?	Nov. 19, 2025	Distinguished Lecture organized by Prof. Dr. Isabelle Van Damme
From Global Standards to Local Compliance: Implementation Heterogeneity in Cocoa Certification in Indonesia	Nov. 18, 2025	Brown Bag Seminar, Organized by Beichen Ding, PhD candidate in Law and Noah Wheatly, PhD candidate in Political Science under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Manfred Elsig
Charting Global Trade Careers: Interactive Panel with WTI Alumni and Experts	Nov. 17, 2025	Panel discussion organized by Dr. Rodrigo Polanco and Prof. Dr. Isabelle Van Damme
Understanding the WTO Dispute Settlement Mechanism: Current Developments and Implications for Indonesia	Nov. 13, 2025	Brown Bag Seminar, Organized by Beichen Ding, PhD candidate in Law and Noah Wheatly, PhD candidate in Political Science under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Manfred Elsig

International trade and disaster risk management: Assessment of the political scope of action of WTO members within the framework of the WTO Agreement and GATT 1994	Nov. 12, 2025	PhD seminar of Hugo Cahueñas Muñoz organized by Prof. em. Dr. Peter Van den Bossche, Prof. Dr. Michael Hahn
Price Instability and Volatile Intra-National Trade Costs: Evidence from South Sudan's Market Network	Nov. 11, 2025	Brown Bag Seminar, Organized by Beichen Ding, PhD candidate in Law and Noah Wheatly, PhD candidate in Political Science under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Manfred Elsig
Aid, Lending, and TRIPS	Nov. 4, 2025	Brown Bag Seminar, Organized by Beichen Ding, PhD candidate in Law and Noah Wheatly, PhD candidate in Political Science under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Manfred Elsig
Future Flight Governance: Socio-legal, Environmental and Economic Approaches to Emerging Air Technologies	Oct. 28, 2025	Brown Bag Seminar, Organized by Beichen Ding, PhD candidate in Law and Noah Wheatly, PhD candidate in Political Science under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Manfred Elsig
US trade and investment policies from the perspective of middle-sized open economies	Sept. 23, 2025	Panel discussion organized by Prof. Dr. Manfred Elsig
Latin America: Trade, Investment, and Strategic Outlook	June 16, 2025	Panel discussion organized with Dr. Rodrigo Polanco
WTI Alumni Get-Together	May 26, 2025	WTI Alumni Get-Together organized by Corinne Karlaganis
The role of the UN International Law Commission of the UN in the 21st century	May 21, 2025	Distinguished Lecture organized by Prof. Dr. Isabelle Van Damme

Market Power and Fossil Fuel Subsidy Reforms: A CGE Approach with Endogenous Markups	May 20, 2025	Brown Bag Seminar, Organized by Beichen Ding, PhD candidate in Law and Noah Wheatly, PhD candidate in Political Science under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Manfred Elsig
Democratic Social Bargaining in Trade: Preserving Environmental Justice	May 6, 2025	Brown Bag Seminar, Organized by Beichen Ding, PhD candidate in Law and Noah Wheatly, PhD candidate in Political Science under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Manfred Elsig
Navigating Switzerland's New Space Law: Legal Frameworks for a Growing Industry	April 30, 2025	Panel discussion organized by Dr. Rodrigo Polanco and Prof. Dr. Joseph Francois
Switzerland and the New Tariff War	April 17, 2025	Webinar organized by Prof. Dr. Manfred Elsig and Prof. Dr. Michael Hahn, moderated by Samantha Suarez-Maier
The law of international transfer of technology: conceptualising and comparing legal arrangements in international economic agreements	April 15, 2025	Brown Bag Seminar, Organized by Beichen Ding, PhD candidate in Law and Noah Wheatly, PhD candidate in Political Science under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Manfred Elsig
From Economic Growth to Sustainability, with Ambassador Benjamin Rothen	April 9, 2025	From Economic Growth to Sustainability, with Ambassador Benjamin Rothen, organized by Samantha Suarez-Maier under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Joseph Francois
My House, My Rules: Birth Regions and the Placement of Chinese Infrastructure Projects in Protected Areas	April 8, 2025	Brown Bag Seminar, Organized by Beichen Ding, PhD candidate in Law and Noah Wheatly, PhD candidate in Political Science under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Manfred Elsig
Breaking Times: Slow violence, resistance, prefigurative politics	March 27, 2025	Organized by Prof. Elisa Fornalé

<p>US and EU Unilateral Trade Measures on Forced Labor in Global Supply Chains: Contexts, Mechanisms, and Challenges</p>	<p>March 25, 2025</p>	<p>Brown Bag Seminar, Organized by Beichen Ding, PhD candidate in Law and Noah Wheatly, PhD candidate in Political Science under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Manfred Elsig</p>
<p>Argentina at the WTO dispute settlement system: the experience and perspectives of a developing country with disputes and DSU negotiations</p>	<p>March 24, 2025</p>	<p>Global Economic Governance Seminar organized by Prof. Dr. Isabelle Van Damme and Dr. Rodrigo Polanco</p>
<p>Shaping Trade Stability: WTO Rulings on Export Restrictions and Business Confidence in Supply Chains</p>	<p>March 19, 2025</p>	<p>Brown Bag Seminar, Organized by Beichen Ding, PhD candidate in Law and Noah Wheatly, PhD candidate in Political Science under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Manfred Elsig</p>
<p>Gender-Based Violence in Academic Settings: Policy Evolution and Work Ahead</p>	<p>March 13, 2025</p>	<p>Organized by Prof. Elisa Fornalé</p>
<p>Global FDI Trends in a Challenging Environment: Implications for Sustainable Development</p>	<p>Feb. 10, 2025</p>	<p>Brown Bag Seminar, Organized by Beichen Ding, PhD candidate in Law and Noah Wheatly, PhD candidate in Political Science under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Manfred Elsig</p>
<p>The International Trade Regime of Critical Raw Materials and Global Value Chains: Challenges and Opportunities for Brazil</p>	<p>Jan. 27, 2025</p>	<p>Brown Bag Seminar, Organized by Beichen Ding, PhD candidate in Law and Noah Wheatly, PhD candidate in Political Science under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Manfred Elsig</p>
<p>Navigating the Future: Industrial Policy and Global Competitiveness</p>	<p>Jan. 17, 2025</p>	<p>Brown Bag Seminar, Organized by Beichen Ding, PhD candidate in Law and Noah Wheatly, PhD candidate in Political Science under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Manfred Elsig</p>



Coping with chaos: sustaining the rules-based trade order

World Trade Forum

The World Trade Forum, jointly organized by the EUI Robert Schuman Centre and the World Trade Institute (University of Bern), continued its role as a leading platform for dialogue between policymakers, practitioners, and scholars on the future of the global trading system. The 2025 edition of the Forum took place in Florence, Italy and focused on the growing disruption of the international trade order stemming from recent shifts in United States trade policy.

Discussions centered on the challenges posed by increasing unilateral trade measures and their implications for the multi-lateral, rules-based trading system. Participants examined the United States' significant increases in import tariffs and demands for preferential market access for its exports, developments widely viewed as inconsistent with commitments under the World Trade Organization (WTO) framework. These developments have contributed to heightened uncertainty in global trade and investment environments.

The Forum explored how governments and firms respond to this evolving landscape. With trade policy increasingly intertwined with concerns about economic security, industrial policy, and global challenges such as climate change, companies face difficult

investment decisions in an environment of shifting regulatory and geopolitical conditions.

Through a series of plenary sessions and expert discussions, the conference brought together policymakers and practitioners from Europe and the East Asia and Pacific region, alongside representatives from international organizations and leading academic researchers in international trade and development. Participants assessed potential policy responses to U.S. unilateralism and considered the broader implications for affected economies and the future of multi-lateral trade governance.

The 2025 World Trade Forum reinforced the importance of continued dialogue between policy and research communities to address the pressures facing the global trading system and to explore pathways for strengthening international economic cooperation.

We look forward to hosting the World Trade Forum in 2026 in Bern, Switzerland – under the banner of The Global Economic (Dis)order and the Quest for Stability.



Sponsorships

Every year, the WTI seeks to support young and developing professional talent from around the world. Because of this, the WTI sponsors three key events. Winning teams are awarded scholarships to participate in the Master MILE or TRAIL programs or the WTI Academy Winter and Summer Sessions.

John H. Jackson Moot Court Competition

The winning teams of the regional round and final oral round are awarded scholarships to the WTI's Summer or Winter Academy. The best orator at the final oral round was awarded a full tuition waiver for the TRAIL+ program at WTI.

Model WTO

The Model WTO is the biggest stimulation of the WTO's Ministerial negotiations in the world. The members of the winning team are offered the chance to receive a one-week tuition fee waiver for a Winter or Summer Academy course, where they can engage and learn from world-class experts on the latest trade issues.

Dissemination

Gujarat International Moot Court Competition

The winning team was awarded scholarships to the WTI Summer or Winter Academy. Several WTI alumni supported the Moot Court Competition as panelists.



The World Trade Institute has 25 years of creating impact – a long-standing track record of excellence in international economic governance.

The Global Impact Association (GIA) offers students the chance to attend the WTI to achieve that potential. The ambition of the GIA is to contribute to a better, more sustainable and inclusive system, by developing world-class trade professionals and scholars. Special attention is given to students from low and middle-income countries to promote diversity and inclusion in the field of international economic governance. The GIA is creating impact on the individual level, targeting trade professionals that have enormous potential to grow in their career.

Learn more from Li-Cheng Chen about how he was motivated to apply to the Penglai Scholarship, supported by the Republic of China.



Li-Cheng Chen

Global Impact Association



What motivated you to apply for the Penglai Scholarship, and why was the World Trade Institute at the University of Bern the right place for your studies?

Coming from Taiwan, where trade lies at the core of our economy, I have always wanted to advance my knowledge on the legal and economic framework of international trade and have been eager to pursue such opportunities abroad.

After extensive research, I concluded that the World Trade Institute was the best place to for me to pursue this goal. First, the WTI offers one of the most competitive and sophisticated academic programs lectured by the top scholars and practitioners in this field. Second, being conveniently located in Bern, Switzerland, WTI offers unmatched opportunities to participate in a range of events happening in Geneva such as the WTO Public Forum. Finally, the WTI's extensive alumni network provides an invaluable resource that could significantly boost my future career.

Considering these factors, there was no doubt to me that studying at the WTI is the key to making my career in trade, yet the cost of studying in Switzerland somewhat presented an obstacle. Luckily, at around the same time, I discovered the generous support offered by the Penglai Scholarship. As the scholarship covers both tuition fee and the living expenses during my one-year study in WTI, I

was able to pursue my plan without hesitation. Needless to say, I applied immediately. To sum up, as the WTI provided me with a perfect road-map to pursue a career in trade, the Penglai Scholarship was what made this journey possible.

Was there a particular experience or challenge that sparked your interest in global trade policy?

Yes, there were two. First was during my internship as a legal assistant at a Taiwanese semiconductor distributor. Shortly after the United States announced the export restrictions on advanced semiconductors, I was tasked with researching these complex trade measures. The purpose of my work was to help prepare internal trade compliance guidance for the company's export department. Through this experience, I gained a deeper understanding of how trade measures can form serious barriers to trade and impose additional costs on companies.

The second experience was when I coordinated a government research project on SPS/TBT issues. In this project, I organized several seminars on topics related to international trade and negotiations and co-authored a research paper on a WTO case concerning SPS/TBT issues. The insights I gained from this experience sparked my interest in exploring how trade policies are formed and how trade negotiations are conducted.

What does receiving the Penglai Scholarship personally mean to you?

The Penglai Scholarship is dear to me in the sense that it has completely shifted my course of life. Thanks to the opportunity offered by the Penglai Scholarship, I have spent by far the most exciting, fulfilling, and impactful time of my life studying in Bern. As previously mentioned, if it was not for the support from the Penglai scholarship, my plan to study in Bern would have never realized. My study in the WTI not only allowed me to explore my full potential but also opened so many opportunities for me in my future career. On a personal level, I feel like the Penglai Scholarship allowed me to explore what I ought to be and thus become a better version of myself.

How does the interdisciplinary approach at the WTI—combining law, economics, and political science—shape your understanding of global trade?

I would say this approach is perhaps one of the most comprehensive and successful educational programs for training future trade specialists. The knowledge in law allows me to navigate complicated regulatory regimes in international trade; the knowledge in political science provides me with theoretical frameworks to comprehend and interpret modern geo-politics in order to make better decisions; and

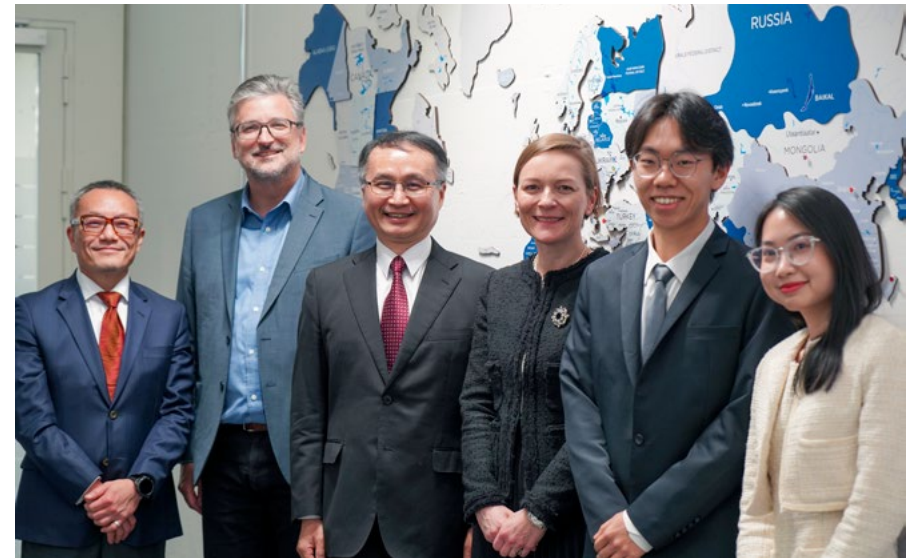
understanding economics helps me objectively assess the impacts of business decisions and governmental measures on trade. Moreover, having a multi-disciplinary portfolio potentially unlocks so many work opportunities for me as I can pursue jobs requiring either or any combination of these disciplines.

Are there specific courses, professors, or research projects that have significantly influenced your thinking?

In my opinion: Global Political Economy, Technical Barriers in Trade and Introduction to International Negotiations were the courses that truly opened my eyes to new perspectives.

Firstly, having done my undergraduate studies in Law, Global Political Economy inspired me with completely novel ways of thinking. The different theoretical frameworks under this discipline each provided their unique perspective and analytical framework. Learning the theories has allowed me to come up with my own unique interpretations on the geopolitical situations of the world.

Secondly, the course on Technical Barriers in Trade taught me how to think like a good lawyer by taking a holistic view of the WTO legal framework while also engaging in a deep interpretation of individual legal provisions. Moreover, Professor Appleton's teaching style really pushed



me to think, speak and question about the law, which has helped me develop a deeper and more fundamental understanding of the WTO legal system.

Finally, in a somewhat non-conventional - yet effective - manner, during the course Introduction to International Negotiations, Professor Felix Addor delivered invaluable lessons on how to navigate negotiations and reach desirable outcomes. To me, the most valuable takeaway from this course was learning to break away from stereotypes and presumptions based on the reaction of others. As these factors create unnecessary distractions that lead me away from achieving the best possible outcome. Instead, I learned to focus solely on my objectives and pursue my best interest through log-

ical strategies and well-grounded assumptions. This mental exercise became particularly useful as I realised it can be applied to many aspects of my life: focusing on personal growth and not overthinking the opinions of others.

How has studying in Bern and interacting with an international student body shaped your perspective on global economic governance?

The interactions with an international student body at the WTI has greatly influenced the way I perceive global economic governance. I have colleagues from a variety of countries, regions, cultures and professional backgrounds, all with their own unique perspective and approach to global trade governance.

It has been such a joy to be able to learn about what my colleagues have in mind about the world and to share my opinions. This exchange of opinions has in turns greatly shaped my perspective on global economic governance into a more comprehensive and encompassing manner.

How do you see emerging challenges—such as sustainability, digital trade, or geopolitical tensions—affecting global trade governance?

In my view, these issues present both challenges and opportunities for global trade governance. At the policy level, I think global trade policy is gradually moving beyond the endless pursuit of economic growth and industrial productivity based solely on comparative advantage. As we have seen over the years, this model of trade governance was inadequate to address countless challenges related to environmental protection, sustainability, data governance, national security, and the weaponization of trade interdependence, among others.

To prevent further harm and disruption in trade, there is the urgent need to adjust global trade policies to better account for these systematic issues, which would otherwise bring significant cost to trade in the long term. There has been more bilateral and multilateral talks and negotiations regarding these issues. And hopefully, most economies will be moving towards this direction.

As for dispute settlement for global

trade issues, people may argue that the WTO is not created to be the adequate forum to deal with these non-trade issues, yet in my view, the WTO would be the perfect place for countries to work towards a better solution. Firstly, if we look at the development in WTO case law, trade issues and non-trade issues such as labor law violation, environmental concerns, and geo-politics are increasingly interrelated and inseparable. Therefore, more has realized that it is not a choice but a necessity to resolve these 'trade issues' at the WTO. Secondly, despite having its flaws, the WTO dispute settlement system was proven to be one of the most effective and well-functioning among the international fora. If the dispute settlement system will be successfully reformed in the following years, the WTO, having 166 members and covering 98% of global trade, could serve as the perfect forum to resolve increasing complicated trade issues.

We need the new generation of trade professionals to understand the complexity of the world in the domains of trade and investment, but on how to seek solutions and strive for sustainability in the global trading system. There's a lot of work to be done – and we're open to new ideas.



Are you looking to support free and fair global trade?

Get in touch with the Global Impact Association.



As of 2025, the WTI alumni and student body comprised 687 current and former students from more than 110 countries, including the students enrolled in the MILE 26/TRAIL+9 program. Many WTI MILE and TRAIL+ alumni have launched highly successful careers following graduation. Around 20% of our MILE and TRAIL+ alumni work for international organizations (such as the WTO, UNCTAD, ITC, ACWL, UN-ECE, the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank). Approximately 25% are employed by their respective governments (frequently in trade, foreign or economic ministries). Roughly 40% work in the private sector (e.g. Deloitte, On, IKEA, Novartis, KPMG, EY and Price Waterhouse Coopers), for international law firms (including Van Bael & Bellis, White & Case, Hogan Lovells, Webber Wentzel and Sidley Austin LLP), or as independent consultants. Some 5% are employed by non-governmental organizations (e.g. CUTS International, Oxfam and the World Economic Forum) and industry associations (e.g. EPPA and SMMT), and a further 10% of graduates pursue an academic career (e.g. University of Leeds, Foreign Trade University in Hanoi and Max Planck Institute for Comparative Public Law and International Law).

The WTI takes pride in the careers of its alumni and makes efforts to maintain close relationships with the alumni through regular communication and events. In the past few years, several alumni networking meetings have taken place in different parts of the world. In 2025, two alumni get-togethers were organized in Geneva where current MILE & TRAIL+ students and alumni had opportunities to meet.

Alumni



The Embassy of Switzerland in India organized an event at their premises for WTI alumni and students in June 2025. During Prof. Isabelle Van Damme's visit to India to teach at the WTI-CWS Joint Academy, the India Regional Chapter of the WTI Alumni Association supported the organization of alumni get-togethers in Delhi and Mumbai.

The WTI hosted online and in-person panels on "Charting Global Trade Careers", bringing together an inspiring group of WTI alumni and experts to share their professional journeys and insights with students and the WTI community. Many of the WTI's alumni also represent the WTI as panelists in international trade law moot court competitions such as the John H. Jackson Moot Court Competition or the Gujarat International Moot Court.

Since 2015, the WTI, through its alumni network, has organized a mentoring program in which alumni support current students to establish themselves in their professional lives. The mentoring program is seen as a core element of the WTI's alumni strategy, as it links current students with alumni on a thematic or regional basis. In the past years, more than 100 mentoring groups have

been formed as part of the WTI's mentoring project. Both mentors and mentees have found their interactions very valuable.

The WTI Alumni Association (WTIAA) aims to connect former MILE/TRAIL+ and PhD alumni. It is a platform for cooperation, exchange, networking, and events, supporting alumni, students, and the WTI alike. The WTIAA Executive Committee is composed as follows: President: Mr Harsh Hiroo Gursahani, MILE 11; Vice-President: Ms Wakako Oshima, MILE 7; Secretary: Ms Esha Sandhu, TRAIL+3; Treasurer: Mr Murat Ayber, MILE 3; Outreach Officer: Ms Gabriela Garcia Merchan, MILE 22.

Every year, the WTI awards the Thomas Cottier Award for Best Thesis. This award was established to honor the WTI's founder and former Managing Director Prof. em. Thomas Cottier's leadership and vision. In 2025 two students received award: Triplicane Damodaran Satish (TRAIL+7) for his Master's thesis "Hidden Jewel in the Crown: Role of WTO committees in dispute resolution" and Chieh Ling Liao (MILE 24) for her thesis "Assessing the U.S. Criticisms on the Delay of WTO Appeal Proceedings".



For more information about our alumni, including recent interviews with our alumni, please visit our website: <https://www.wti.org/alumni-over/>

Financials

Financial account for 2025

(in CHF, rounded)

INCOME

External funds

Programme income	1,681,000
Other income (services)	358,000
Total external funds	2,039,000

University funds

Contributions to office rent ¹	0
Contributions to personnel expenditure	1,678,000
Contributions to operating expenses	256,000
Total university funds	1,934,000
Total income	3,973,000

EXPENDITURE

Personnel

Salaries	2,380,000
Social benefits	429,000
Total Personnel	2,809,000

Other Expenditure

Office rent ¹	0
Office operating expenses	556,000
Travel	11,000
Miscellaneous	+3,000
Total other expenditure	670,000

Accruals +494,000

Total Expenditure **3,973,000**

¹ Paid directly by the university administration.

The WTI is constituted as a centre of competence within the University of Bern, and the financial accounts are audited internally and externally. For accounting purposes, the University of Bern applies the accounting standard Swiss GAAP FER. A full overview, including the most recent financial positions, is available as part of the University's annual report.

(referring to variance)

usado para comparar variaciones de 2 muestras con escalas \neq o medidas de medida \neq

Desv este \div Promed $\times 100 = CV$ o $CV = \frac{Sx}{\bar{x}} \times 100$

*¿q% del promedio es la desv estándar?

→ convierte la dispersión en % a mayor CV ma

→ permite comparar cosas con rangos.

✓ a mayor CV mayor son # de variables los datos

Índice de Páscasche y Laspeyres

nos permiten comparar el valor de una variable a s
valor base en un periodo. Además sirve para med
Crecimiento, inflación. Crecimiento, inflación.
de su año de referencia.
→ permite comparar como ha cambiado un precio

Formula: $\frac{\text{Precio año actual}}{\text{Precio año base}} \times 100$

Índice de Páscasche y Laspeyres

cantid. año actual

Preg: cuanto costaba
canasta nueva ayer?

Tendenc: subestima infl

uso com: otros índices

$P = \sum (\text{precios hoy} \times \text{cant})$

$\sum (\text{precios año base} \times \text{cant})$

→ convertir valores nominales a reales
a los números?
cómo quitarle la inflación

$L = \sum (\text{precios de hoy} \times \text{cant año base})$

$\sum (\text{precio año base} \times \text{cant año base})$

Tendenc: sobre-estima inflac

uso com: IPC

Preg: cuanto cuesta la canasta
canasta hoy

cantid: años base

quantil



minimo y maximo de The
is sorted according

if the # of observations is odd, there is one
clear median → dato que queda en el medio.

if the # of observations is even, the Median
is the arithmetic of the 2 middle values

Requires at least ordinal level of measurement

1, 2, 4, 6, 8 → median → 4

1, 3, 4, 7 → 3, 4 → (3+4)/2 = 3.5

Quantiles

location measures that divide data into q
of about equal sizes → xq? Para ver como se
distribuyen. Partir datos en pedacitos iguales para ver como

Different kinds of quantiles

- Percentiles
- Deciles
- Quantiles

like for the Median, it requires at least
ordinal level of measurement

quantil es un valor que divide conjunto de

if, it could

subnormal



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