



“Book Track” at World Trade Forum 2018

International Trade, Foreign Investment, and the Sustainable Development Agenda

September 28-29, 2018, European University Institute, Florence, Italy

Call for Proposals

Dear colleagues,

We invite your submissions of proposals for contributions to a volume on trade, investment and sustainable development (World Trade Forum Series, Cambridge University Press) edited by Cosimo Beverelli (World Trade Organization), Jürgen Kurtz (European University Institute) and Damian Raess (World Trade Institute, University of Bern). Selected authors will be invited to present draft papers at the 2018 World Trade Forum at the European University Institute in Florence (September 28-29, 2018). Select funding is available to cover some of the costs of travel and accommodation for selected participants.

In 2015, world leaders agreed on the Sustainable Development Agenda, a global effort to tackle poverty and climate change while promoting more equal, inclusive and prosperous societies over the coming decades. International trade, foreign investment and related domestic policies can help to achieve key sustainable development targets. Some of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) explicitly call for the active use of trade- and/or investment-related measures. Trade and foreign investment also affect the implementation of the SDGs indirectly through shaping patterns of economic growth and real incomes.

The contemporary environment for international trade and investment policy presents unprecedented challenges for this grand vision. The political consensus on free trade and economic integration has broken down in states that are traditional supporters of global liberalism. Indeed, the backlash against globalization – epitomized by the election of President Trump and U.S. withdrawal from the Trans-Pacific Partnership, BREXIT, citizen protests in Europe against trade and investment initiatives, and calls to purge investor-state dispute settlement mechanisms from investment treaties – reflects a widely shared feeling that trade and investment gains have been unequally divided for too long. Yet, appropriate domestic policies that reshape the distribution of gains from trade and investment cooperation could contribute to the realization of the SDGs. The de-globalization phenomenon itself might resuscitate much needed domestic policy space to build enduring models.

We invite academics, practitioners and government officials to present research addressing the relationship between international trade and foreign investment and the achievement of the SDGs, including but not limited to the following:

- a) How does trade and foreign investment policy, domestically and/or internationally, affect the implementation of the SDGs?
- b) How can domestic institutions condition the impact of trade and investment flows in a manner that contribute to the SDGs, such as the goal of "reduc[ing] income inequality within and among countries" [Goal 10]?
- c) What is the impact of specific design features of trade and investment agreements, including sustainability standards, on economic outcomes (such as trade and investment flows) and/or social outcomes (such as labor rights and environmental protection)?
- d) What are the drivers of major reforms and/or innovations in sustainability provisions in trade and investment agreements? How can those reforms and/or innovations help attain SDGs?
- e) Does coherence across policy areas or instruments yield (stronger) improvement in the realization of the SDGs?
- f) Does trade- or investment-driven progress prioritize one set of SDGs over others? What policies might maximize positive synergies between different SDGs?

The deadline for the submission of proposals is April 30th, 2018. The proposal (max. 500 words) should briefly describe the research question, the planned methodological approach and, if appropriate, the dataset(s) to be used. Please submit your proposal at book.wtf2018@wti.org. Decisions will be sent out within a week of the submission deadline.

We look forward to your submissions.

Cosimo Beverelli (Economics), Jürgen Kurtz (Law) and Damian Raess (Political Science)