

WTI Brown Bag Seminar



Title

SME Competitiveness Outlook 2018: Business Ecosystems for the Digital Age

Speaker

Marion Jansen, Chief Economist, ITC
Olga Solleder, Economist, ITC

When

Thursday
1 November 2018
12.30-13.30

Where

Silva Casa Auditorium
World Trade Institute
Hallerstrasse 6, 3012 Bern

Abstract

Digitalization and the rise of the platform economy are rapidly changing the way in which firms do business. The publication describes major drivers of change, opportunities and challenges they create for SMEs, and suggests ideas on how different players in the ecosystem can make use of these developments to better serve SMEs. These players will have to embrace data and technologies, forge innovative partnerships, and take calculated risks to build trust and help SMEs manage the transition to new technologies.

The underlying working papers evaluate the effectiveness of trade promotion organizations (TPOs). The first paper “The impact of quality-related business trainings in Latin America” assesses the impact of quality-related business training on firm certification and export status, applying a difference-in-difference regression specification and propensity score matching. Findings indicate that quality-related trainings help firms gain and retain internationally recognized quality certificates. Furthermore, these trainings help firms transition to gain or retain exporter status.

The second paper “What bang for the buck? Export promotion and the extensive margin of trade” analyses how TPOs can allocate their budget to increase the number of exporters, using fixed effects model and an instrumental variable approach. The results indicate that allocating TPO’s budget to new exporters effectively raises the number of exporters. This result is led by budget allocated to small firms, while the number of exporters declines when more budget is allocated to large firms.

Biography of the speakers

Marion Jansen

Marion Jansen is the Chief Economist of ITC and in this position responsible for the ITC's flagship publication "SME Competitiveness Outlook" and ITC's portfolios for export strategies and trade in services. She also has the lead on ITC's contributions to G20 processes.

Before joining the ITC, Marion Jansen held appointments as counsellor in the World Trade Organization (WTO) and as head of the Trade and Employment Programme in the International Labour Organization (ILO). She worked in the private sector (economics consulting) before joining the WTO.

Marion Jansen holds a PhD in economics from the Universitat Pompeu Fabra (Barcelona, Spain). She has lectured at the University of Geneva, the World Trade Institute, the Universitat Pompeu Fabra and the European University on international trade, socioeconomic effects of globalization and managerial economics.

Her publications in the field of international trade and global governance cover the areas of standards and regulations in international trade, regional integration, services trade and migration. She has edited and authored a number of influential publications on trade and labour, including the joint ILO-WTO volume "Making Globalization Socially Sustainable" (2011).

Olga Solleder

Olga Solleder is economist at the International Trade Centre (ITC), an agency of the United Nations and the World Trade Organization. She coordinates the production of SME Competitiveness Outlook, the annual flagship publication of ITC dedicated to the performance of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in international markets. She designs and produces empirical research, datasets and indicators contributing to evidence-based policymaking in the area of trade, competitiveness and private sector development. She has published articles in peer-reviewed journals on empirical trade and development. Olga has extensive experience in design, implementation and analysis of firm-level surveys.

Olga has earned her PhD in International Economics (*Magna cum laude*) at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva, for her research on the effects and determinants of export taxes. Her research interests include firm-level trade and competitiveness, non-tariff measures and voluntary (private) standards.