

## WTI Global Economic Governance Seminar Series

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### Small is Beautiful: Is there room for small states and SMEs in trade discussions?

Wednesday, 3 April 2019

15.00-18.00

Silva Casa Auditorium, World Trade Institute, University of Bern  
Hallerstrasse 6, 3012 Bern, Switzerland

More Info 

#### Brief description

Of the 164 Members of the WTO, 13 of them have populations less than 100,000 people and 22 of the smallest WTO members have less than 8 million people in total. The group of Small, Vulnerable Economies (SVEs) in the negotiations have been de facto defined as members which in the period 1999 to 2004 had an average share of world merchandise trade of no more than 0.16% , of world trade in non-agricultural products of no more than 0.1% and world trade in agriculture products of no more than 0.4%.

With these figures, can small states really have an influence in the global trade negotiations? Can they ever be rule makers rather than rule takers? Related to this is the role of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) - is harnessing shared priorities of SMEs across countries the way forward in allowing SMEs to play a role in influencing the trade agenda at the global level?

At a time when the multilateral trading system is in crisis and geo-politics is stalling meaningful movement in the negotiations, it is useful to examine whether there is a role that small states can play in refocusing the development agenda and supporting a strengthened multilateralism.

Matthew Wilson, a former WTO Trade negotiator for Barbados and the Group of SVEs, will draw on his experiences in the Doha Round negotiations and on the work of the International Trade Centre (ITC) in better capturing the nature of the constraints and the priorities of SMEs in developing countries.

Participation is free of charge. Registration is not necessary.