



PRESS RELEASE

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'BEHIND-THE-BORDER POLICIES AND GLOBAL TRADE' WORLD TRADE FORUM TO ADDRESS GLOBAL ISSUES IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND ECONOMIC GOVERNANCE

On 23-24 September the World Trade Forum will attract leading scholars, trade policy practitioners, senior government officials, members of international organisations and the business community to the European University Institute in Florence, Italy. Under the theme 'Behind-the-Border Policies and Global Trade', delegates will discuss the world's most pressing issues facing international trade and economic governance, with the aim of developing policy solutions that benefit society.

"In light of increasing anti-globalisation sentiment in the EU and the US, it is important to address people's concerns and ensure that trade agreements promote social welfare. This requires objective analysis of the actual impacts of trade policies and informed public deliberation on the substance and design of trade agreements such as TTIP and the WTO. Unfortunately, there is too little of both, reducing prospects for trade to be an instrument of sustainable development," said Bernard Hoekman, Professor at the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute.

Is the world sliding into greater protectionism? What are the prospects for sustaining cooperation on trade and investment among developed and developing countries? Are the criticisms that have been expressed by many groups in the EU regarding the detrimental effects of TTIP on citizens accurate? What could be done at this point in the negotiating process to address such concerns?

These are all subjects that will be discussed at the Forum. Specific sessions will present research on the magnitude of so-called 'behind-the-border' policies and their effects on economic performance, including trade, productivity, growth and employment creation. Other sessions will focus on responses to globalisation that seek to assure product quality, worker safety, labour and social rights and the environment.

Roundtable discussions will centre around topics such as the global trade slowdown, progress and prospects in negotiating mega-regional trade agreements such as the TTIP and examining the trade implications of Brexit and possible post-Brexit scenarios, in particular what lessons should be drawn from the UK referendum result and if this is specific to the EU or part of a broader backlash against globalisation.

“We founded the World Trade Forum seven years ago to create a platform for dialogue on key issues affecting international trade and investment regulation and economic governance and sustainability. Our objective is to bring together thought leaders from a variety of organisations around the world to present their research and potential solutions to decision-makers from governments and international organisations that will serve the general public”, said Joseph Francois, Managing Director and Professor of Economics at the World Trade Institute, University of Bern.

The full programme is available [here](#). The World Trade Forum will be on Twitter too: follow the hashtag [#globaltradeforum16](#)

The **Robert Schuman Centre** is a multi-disciplinary research centre that engages in research, high-level policy dialogues and executive training on the challenges of the European Union. It was established in 1992 to complement the four disciplinary departments that make up the European University Institute (EUI) with the vocation of being involved in both basic and policy research, collaborating with other centres of excellence in Europe, providing opportunities for young scholars and promoting dialogue with the world of practice.

Established in 1999, the **World Trade Institute (WTI)** is one of the world's leading academic institutions for studies, teaching and research in international trade and investment regulation and economic globalisation and sustainability. As a centre of excellence at the University of Bern, the WTI explores the interconnections between the fields of law, economics and political science. The institute's aim is to shape public policy so that international economic governance yields tangible benefits for society.



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