

Outreach

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Background on outreach

The WTO maintains regular dialogue with the business community, non-governmental organizations, parliamentarians, other international organizations, the media and the general public to enhance cooperation and raise awareness of trade issues.

8



Spotlight: Trade Dialogues

In June, the WTO facilitated a second “Trade Dialogue” at the WTO’s headquarters, bringing together over 60 senior business representatives to discuss trade-related issues and challenges. Their recommendations on strengthening global trade were presented in October during the WTO Public Forum.

Hosted at the request of the private sector, the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) and B20 Argentina, the business arm of the G20, the one-day meeting drew participants from small and large enterprises, from developed, developing and least-developed countries and a variety of sectors.

The discussions, which continued beyond the June meeting, resulted in a series of recommendations on how to reinforce global trade and investment in support of inclusive growth and development, together with a declaration of support for the WTO. The main topics – sustainable development, e-commerce, investment facilitation, and micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) – stemmed from priorities identified at the Business Forum held in December 2017 alongside the WTO’s 11th Ministerial Conference in Buenos Aires.

Business representatives sent a strong message of support for the WTO and the rules-based multilateral trading system, stressing its role in creating economic stability and supporting growth, development and job creation. Participants at the Trade Dialogues event

highlighted the negative impact of protectionism and called for businesses to speak up for an open, rules-based trading system.

DG Azevêdo addressed the opening session. “The level of engagement from the private sector in the WTO keeps rising, and I think that today’s event will provide real food for thought for WTO members as they take forward their work. I also heard a strong desire from business to keep this conversation going and to keep building this constructive partnership,” he said.

The first “Trade Dialogue” was held in 2016. The initiative aims to bring together a wide range of stakeholders, including labour organizations, consumer bodies, business and academics, to discuss trade concerns.

The opening session of the 7 June 2018 event was followed by four break-out sessions where participants engaged in small groups on the main topics identified by the business community as priorities. Business representatives also heard updates on the work conducted at the WTO in these areas since the Ministerial Conference.



Business representatives sent a strong message of support for the WTO and the multilateral trading system.



The sessions were chaired by four “discussion leaders”:

- Sunil Bharti Mittal, former ICC Chairman
- Paul Polman, ICC Chairman
- Daniel Funes de Rioja, B20 Chair
- Fernando Landa, B20 Policy Sherpa

At the final session, the discussion leaders and other participants presented the main messages from the working sessions to WTO members. DG Azevêdo and the Chair of the WTO General Council, Ambassador Junichi Ihara (Japan), also attended.

Mr Polman told the final session: “Governments are increasingly making plans to align global trading policies with national development approaches, to accelerate progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. It is critical that new forms of innovation and cooperation continue to be explored, amongst business, government and multilateral institutions. That is why dialogues – such as today’s – are necessary.”

The Trade Dialogue participants used the Public Forum in October (see page 150) to share their recommendations with a wider audience. On 2 October, a public session was held by the ICC and the B20 Argentina, where the chairs of the four groups outlined their recommendations.

Business representatives reaffirmed their “strong support for the WTO” and stressed that the “stability, predictability and transparency” provided by the multilateral trading system are crucial for

supporting growth, development and job creation. They underlined the need for ongoing multilateral negotiations and discussions at the WTO to ensure the system “remains responsive and well-equipped” to deal with trade-related and other modern, global economic issues.

DG Azevêdo told the session that it is vital that business “engage with governments directly, and with other stakeholders who also inform WTO members’ positions. This must be a constant process.”

The business recommendations included a call for a common and inclusive approach on a coherent regulatory framework for e-commerce and for the WTO to lead the way in aligning best regulatory practices to facilitate trade and investment. “The business community strongly supports the Joint Initiative on Investment Facilitation at the WTO, and stands ready to contribute to the development of a multilateral framework to facilitate investments.”

On sustainable development, business leaders said they support ongoing WTO work on fisheries subsidies and agriculture as well as initiatives on environmental goods and services. “Business stands ready to actively participate to help finding appropriate and workable outcomes on these issues,” the recommendations said. On MSMEs, the recommendations recognized the progress made through the Joint Initiative on MSMEs (see page 51) and encouraged increased dialogue on trade between governments and the private sector.

Relations with non-governmental organizations

- **Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were kept up to date on WTO activities through briefings, workshops and their attendance at various events.**
- **They were the second-largest group at the WTO's annual Public Forum.**

Background on relations with NGOs

The WTO maintains regular dialogue with civil society organizations to enhance cooperation and increase their awareness of WTO activities and the multilateral trading system. Maintaining and strengthening the relationship with civil society remains important for increasing transparency and increasing public awareness of the work of the WTO.

The WTO kept NGOs informed of its activities through workshops, briefings and a series of WTO events to which they were invited, notably the 2018 Public Forum.

The WTO Secretariat regularly briefed NGOs on the status of work in WTO bodies and in trade negotiations. To further encourage interaction with WTO members, NGOs are invited to submit position papers on trade-related topics. In 2018, six papers were received containing analysis and commentary on topics being addressed in the agricultural negotiations. These are available on the WTO's NGO webpage.

In October, the WTO and the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung held a three-day regional workshop in Nairobi, Kenya, for civil society, business and media from East Africa. Discussions among the 39 participants focused on the WTO's scope and functions, ongoing negotiations and issues relevant to the region, such as the role of trade in the Sustainable Development Goals, the digital economy, regional trade developments and trade

facilitation initiatives. Participants stressed that trade offers both challenges and opportunities in these areas and that regional cooperation and experience-sharing is key for making progress.

In 2018, NGOs had the opportunity to attend three dispute hearings which were opened to the public. These concerned two cases: US – Large Civil Aircraft (2nd complaint), a compliance complaint brought by the European Union; and US – Differential Pricing Methodology, a case brought by Canada.

Public Forum

In October, the Public Forum, the WTO's biggest outreach event, attracted over 2,500 participants from over 100 countries, including many NGOs. NGOs organized 17 sessions and accounted for 14 per cent of participants, the second largest group after business (see page 155). The sessions organized by NGOs covered topics ranging from inclusiveness and technology-enabled trade to sustainable trade.

Our World Is Not for Sale organized a Public Forum session on making the multilateral trading system more sustainable and inclusive.



Contact with parliamentarians

- **The 2018 Parliamentary Conference on the WTO attracted more than 300 members of parliament (MPs) representing more than 100 countries to the two-day meeting held at the WTO.**
- **The conference discussed WTO reform and the trade impact of rapid technological change. MPs urged WTO members to strengthen the multilateral trading system.**

Background on contact with parliamentarians

Parliamentarians play an important role in the multilateral trading system. Any deal resulting from intergovernmental negotiations at the WTO will, in most cases, need approval from legislators. The WTO seeks to maintain an open dialogue with parliamentarians and to help them gain a deeper understanding of the organization and its work.

The 2018 Parliamentary Conference on the WTO, meeting on 6-7 December at the WTO, discussed WTO reform and the effect on trade of rapid technological change, including digitalization, robots and artificial intelligence. The conference urged WTO members to strengthen the multilateral trading system, with the WTO as its cornerstone.

MPs were addressed by WTO Deputy Director-General Xiaozhun Yi, Chair of the WTO General Council Ambassador Junichi Ihara (Japan) and Vice President of the European Parliament Mr Fabio Massimo Castaldo, as well as by several Geneva-based ambassadors. All highlighted the importance of WTO reform and indicated the need to tackle issues such as the digital economy and the functioning of the WTO dispute settlement system.

DDG Yi stressed that at a time of heightened trade tensions it is more critical than ever for WTO members to find a way forward. He recalled the successes of the WTO and said there are now persistent voices for the need to reform the multilateral trading system while noting that not all members agree. He reiterated the WTO's firm commitment to working with parliamentarians as they are "the key transmission belt between international institutions, negotiations and the public in general".

The Steering Committee of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) on WTO matters met in April 2018 in Brussels and in Geneva during the WTO Public Forum (see page 150). The IPU is the international organization of parliaments. Deputy Director-General Yonov Frederick Agah, senior WTO staff and Geneva-based ambassadors briefed legislators on important issues facing the multilateral trading system.

A parliamentary session was held during the Public Forum on "Sustainable development in trade agreements". Speakers included members of the European Parliament and the National Assembly of Senegal as well as a representative of the International Labour Organization.

Regional workshops and meetings

In 2018, the WTO organized three regional workshops for parliamentarians: in Vienna (co-organized with the Joint Vienna Institute) for MPs from Central European, Central Asian and Caucasus countries; in Belgrade (organized jointly with the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean) for MPs from the Mediterranean area; and in Singapore (with the TEMASEK Foundation) for MPs from Asia. The three events drew over 180 MPs.



Spotlight: Public Forum 2018

The Public Forum debated how technological and other developments will affect trade in 2030. It attracted over 2,500 participants and staged a record number of sessions – 111 – on its themes of sustainable trade, technology-enabled trade and a more inclusive trading system. For the first time, the Forum held a session organized entirely by youth.



Policy-makers and representatives of government, business, workers, consumers and civil society (see Figure 1) came together at the 2018 Public Forum in October for three days of debate on how technological and other developments will affect trade in 2030 and beyond, and how to manage the major social and economic challenges technological change will bring.

Under its main theme of “Trade 2030”, the WTO’s biggest outreach event attracted over 2,500 participants from over 100 countries, with a record number of 111 sessions taking place.

High-level sessions

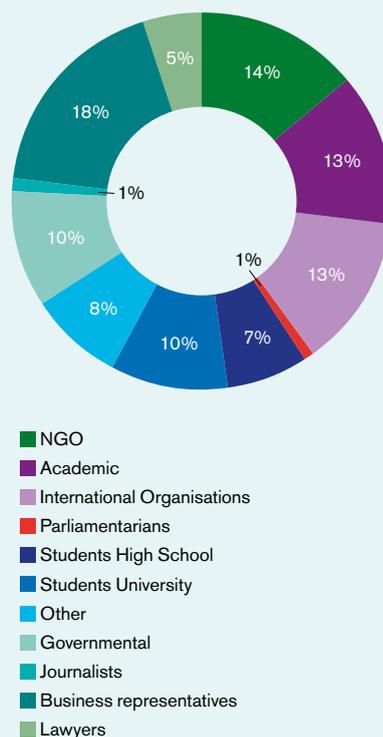
Keynote speakers at the opening plenary session stressed the importance of innovation and flexibility in adapting to the new global trading environment. DG Azevêdo underlined the need “to set a path towards better global trade by 2030 – trade that is even more sustainable and inclusive. We can’t put progress on hold until we’re ready. We have to start talking now. We have to get involved.”

Jack Ma, co-founder of the Alibaba Group, sounded an optimistic note. “All these things will fundamentally change the way we do trade, but for sure most businesses will benefit. We will create

a lot more jobs than we expected,” he said. Other speakers included: Erik Solheim, former Executive Director of the UN Environment Programme, Christine Bliss, President of the US-based Coalition of Services Industries (CSI) and two young entrepreneurs, Laura Behrens Wu, CEO and co-founder of Shippo, a multi-carrier shipping platform, and Tunde Kehinde, co-founder of Lidya, a finance company for small business.

The Forum saw the launch of the WTO’s flagship publication, the World Trade Report, which focuses on how digital technologies, such as artificial intelligence, 3D printing and Blockchain are transforming trade. A panel of experts, while optimistic about the future, agreed that digital technologies pose challenges to global trade regulation and that governments must work hard for coordinated solutions.

Figure 1: Public Forum participation in 2018





A high-level leadership dialogue on “Making Trade Work for the Environment, Prosperity and Resilience” (see page 96) was hosted by Mr Solheim and DG Azevêdo. “We must do everything we can ... to unlock trade in green sectors and move us towards more sustainable ways of consuming and producing. When we do this, we will find huge opportunities for prosperity and jobs,” Mr Solheim said.

Youth

For the first time, the Forum held a session organized entirely by youth. The session was based on a report prepared by the Global Shapers Community, a network of young people. Sixty city-based hubs from 42 countries, representing 800 young people, contributed to the report.

Participants highlighted that digital technology will redefine the workplace and business processes but many countries are ill-prepared to embrace the impact of new technologies. As “the generation of tomorrow”, they called for a “seat at the table” in order to shape the trade policies of the future.

Side events

A record number of 27 exhibitors, including international organizations and businesses, showcased their products and work relating to trade. Among them were companies offering innovative and sustainable technological solutions that are contributing towards greener, more inclusive economies. Exhibitors included Universal Robots, which displayed one of the robots that is changing the future of manufacturing.

The WTO Bookshop and Library organized three “Meet the Author Sessions” at which authors discussed their recent titles.

Small Business Champion

The Institute of Export and International Trade was declared a “Small Business Champion” (see page 156).



Cooperation with other intergovernmental organizations

- **G20 leaders recognized the contribution of the multilateral trading system to economic growth but called for reform to improve its functioning.**
- **The WTO continued to work closely with other international organizations to promote the Sustainable Development Goals and to assist developing countries in maximizing the benefits of trade.**
- **DG Azevêdo attended the G20 summit and took part in events organized by the UN, the World Bank, the IMF, the OECD and others.**
- **Addressing the OECD Council Meeting in May 2018, DG Azevêdo said the stability of the trading system is fundamental to global economic wellbeing.**

Background on cooperation with other international organizations

The WTO works closely with other intergovernmental organizations and regional bodies, especially those involved in trade-related issues. This cooperation helps to ensure coordinated action and a consistent approach to international trade policies.

G20

In November, DG Azevêdo attended the leaders' summit of the G20 group of countries in Buenos Aires, Argentina. In a communiqué issued at the end of the summit, leaders emphasized the important contribution of the multilateral trading system to growth, productivity, innovation, job creation and development. They also recognized that "the system is currently falling short of its objectives and there is room for improvement. We therefore support the necessary reform of the WTO to improve its functioning. We will review progress at our next Summit [in Osaka, Japan, in June 2019]."

"With this statement, the leaders underline the vital importance of trade and of the multilateral trading system," DG Azevêdo said. Noting the leaders' call for improvements and reforms, the Director-General said he will "work with WTO members to take this forward in the interests of all". In September, DG Azevêdo had also attended the G20 Trade and Investment Ministerial Meeting in Mar del Plata, Argentina, setting the stage for a productive discussion on trade by G20 leaders.

With the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the WTO continued to publish six-monthly reports on trade and investment measures in G20 countries. The November report showed a significant increase in the number and coverage of trade-restrictive measures, providing an insight into the measures imposed in the context of current trade tensions (see page 106).

The WTO contributed widely to trade discussions, notably in the G20 sherpa context and in the G20 working group on trade and investment. The International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, OECD and the WTO organized a conference during the IMF and World Bank annual meeting in Bali in October, bringing together policy makers and experts from G20 and other countries to discuss how global trade promotes growth and can benefit everyone. Together with the IMF and the World Bank, the WTO provided a background study on "Reinvigorating Trade and Inclusive Growth", which was launched by the heads of the three organizations (see page 109).

OECD

DG Azevêdo addressed the OECD Ministerial Council in May 2018, telling the meeting that the WTO is essential in resolving growing trade tensions but that this requires WTO members' active support for the system itself. "The stability of the trading system is fundamental to our economic wellbeing. Yet it is simply taken for granted. So we need to strengthen and safeguard the system," he said.

The OECD and the WTO cooperate in a wide range of areas, including in the trade in value-added (TiVA) database, launched in 2013. They also cooperate to improve the measurement of digital trade (see page 165). The OECD and WTO are also working together in the development of trade facilitation indicators (TFIs). This interactive web tool covers 152 countries. The TFIs identify areas for action and assess the potential impact of trade facilitation reforms so that governments can prioritize action and mobilize technical assistance.



DG Azevêdo participated in the G20 summit in Buenos Aires.



In cooperation with the OECD, the WTO launched the WTO iLibrary (www.wto-ilibrary.org), a new platform that brings together all the WTO's key research material on global trade (see page 159).

United Nations

DG Azevêdo attended meetings of the United Nations Chief Executives Board (CEB), a high-level body composed of the executive heads of UN agencies, funds and programmes as well as the executive heads of the IMF, the World Bank and the WTO. During the CEB spring meeting, held in London, DG Azevêdo presented to the UN Secretary-General António Guterres the WTO publication on "Mainstreaming Trade to Attain the Sustainable Development Goals" (see page 131).

The WTO is part of the UN Secretary General-led High-Level Task Force, which brings together 23 UN agencies and international organizations to provide policy coordination and political leadership to achieve the SDGs related to food security and to sustainable agriculture and food systems. The WTO also works closely with the UN Secretariat on trade-related targets in the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development.

During the Public Forum 2018, the WTO and UN Environment co-hosted a leadership dialogue and released a joint publication on "Making Trade Work for Environment, Prosperity and Resilience" (see page 96).

UNCTAD, the International Trade Centre (ITC) and the WTO jointly produce quarterly and annual statistics on international trade in services. They also combine in statistical capacity-building activities, including training courses and e-learning courses. Experts from the WTO Secretariat and UNCTAD met at the WTO in March 2018 to discuss how to better measure trade in services in the digital age. The event was the first in the "Simply Services" speaker series, an informal platform for sharing the latest information on trends in services trade.

The WTO's cooperation with the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

(UNESCAP) has grown, particularly in the areas of technical assistance and economic research. In 2018, the WTO and UNESCAP agreed to work together on a research project to better understand the impact on the economies of former LDCs when they graduate to developing country status. This research will be accompanied by technical assistance to graduating LDCs so that they can efficiently manage the transition.

ITC

The WTO and UNCTAD jointly sponsor the ITC, a trade-promotion body for developing countries. The WTO also collaborates with the ITC and UNCTAD in the annual publication of the World Tariff Profiles (see page 164).

The WTO works closely with the ITC to help developing countries implement and benefit from WTO agreements. The two organizations work together on the Business for Development initiative, which aims to help the private sector in developing countries define national priorities for WTO negotiations and make governments aware of business concerns.

The ITC's Joint Advisory Group (JAG) meets annually to make recommendations on the ITC's work programme. The 52nd session of the JAG was held in July at the WTO.

Other intergovernmental organizations

With the World Bank, the WTO launched a joint publication in December (see page 163) – "Trade and Poverty Reduction: New Evidence of Impacts in Developing Countries" – highlighting the need for policies to maximize trade gains for the extreme poor in developing countries.

The WTO is actively involved in the G20 Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS). The WTO undertook to continue helping AMIS in ensuring increased transparency in international commodity markets and improving policy coordination as part of the collective effort to address global food security.



Contact with the media

- The WTO's media team handled a growing number of queries as a result of mounting trade tensions and calls for reform of the WTO.
- The WTO increased its outreach to journalists, organizing a workshop for Latin American journalists in Mexico City and a seminar in Geneva for journalists from English-speaking countries in Africa, the Caribbean and Asia.

The WTO media team handled a growing number of queries from journalists about the organization's role in safeguarding the multilateral trading system in view of mounting global trade tensions and calls by WTO members for reform of the organization. International correspondents came to Geneva to undertake profiles of the WTO and to speak with senior officials from the WTO Secretariat and members' missions.

Thirty-one press briefings were held in 2018, almost half of them on dispute settlement. In April, DG Azevêdo briefed journalists on the WTO's annual trade outlook. In July, he was invited by the Geneva Association of UN Correspondents (ACANU) to brief its members.

The WTO's flagship outreach event, the Public Forum (see page 150), attracted strong media interest. Journalists were also invited to attend a number of special events at WTO headquarters, including three workshops and three book launches.

The WTO received 234 requests for registration to the online newsroom, where journalists can access press releases and publications under embargo. This was slightly up on the previous

year's 226. The total number of accredited journalists registered was 1,933, against 1,917 in 2017.

Outreach

The WTO organizes workshops for journalists to help them gain a better understanding of the WTO and the rules-based trading system. One was held for Latin American journalists in Mexico City. Under-Secretary of Foreign Trade Juan Carlos Baker opened the workshop and panellists included Mexican Ambassador to the WTO Roberto Zapata and former Appellate Body Chair Mr Ricardo Ramírez-Hernández.

Over 40 journalists took part in the workshop – 29 invited participants from 14 countries plus local media. The workshop covered a wide range of issues, from WTO reform to trade and climate change and the importance of the agriculture sector in Latin American economies.

The WTO invited 14 journalists from 12 English-speaking countries in Africa, the Caribbean and Asia to Geneva in December for a seminar. The programme touched on the new challenges of international trade and ways of using trade as an engine for growth and development.

Fourteen journalists from Africa, the Caribbean and Asia took part in a seminar at the WTO in December.



Contact with the business community

- The business community presented at the WTO's Public Forum its recommendations on how to reinforce global trade.
- DG Azevêdo welcomed the support of the business community for strengthening the multilateral trading system.

Background on contact with the business community

Business and the WTO have always been closely connected. The private sector is a major beneficiary of transparent and predictable trade rules and obligations. Business is an important interlocutor for both governments and the WTO. It is actively involved in the multilateral trading system and participates in public activities of the WTO.

Recommendations on reinforcing global trade

The International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) and B20 Argentina, the business arm of the G20, presented at the WTO Public Forum in October recommendations on how to reinforce global trade in support of inclusive growth and development. The recommendations build on the outcomes of the Business Forum held in Buenos Aires at the end of 2017 and the "Trade Dialogues" meeting (see page 146) held at the WTO in June 2018. They cover e-commerce, investment facilitation, small businesses and sustainable development.

The business community formed the largest grouping at the 2018 Public Forum (see page 150), with around 230 business representatives attending debates and meetings on the theme of "Trade 2030". The business community organized and co-organized 26 sessions during the three-day event, covering topics such as inclusive and sustainable trade and technology-enabled trade.

The Trade Dialogues session at the Public Forum was led by ICC Secretary General John Denton, B20 Chair Daniel Funes de Rioja and B20 Policy Sherpa Fernando Landa. DG Azevêdo delivered the opening remarks. "Reaching consensus

amongst businesses is just one element of the equation. You also have to bring your ideas and suggestions to the members themselves, and work with them to drive your issues forward ... I am delighted you are using the Public Forum for this continued exchange," he said.

Secretary General Denton said: "We know it is a particularly challenging time for the multilateral trading system and the point we made when we met in June was that the ICC stands willing and able to engage in constructive discussions to facilitate a continuing role for multilateralism in global commerce."

During a visit to Buenos Aires in October, where he attended the B20 Summit, DG Azevêdo welcomed the support of the business community for strengthening the multilateral trading system.

Small Business Champions

The Institute of Export and International Trade (UK) was announced as a new Small Business Champion and three more successful proposals were named under the ICC and WTO Small Business Champions initiative, which the two organizations launched in August 2017 (see page 156).

Other contact with businesses

Throughout the year, WTO officials met with members of the business community visiting Geneva and held meetings with business representatives during visits overseas. The issues most frequently discussed included the state of play in the WTO's trade negotiations, trade tensions and the Appellate Body impasse.



The ICC and B20 presented recommendations on how to reinforce global trade at the 2018 Public Forum.



Spotlight:

Small Business Champions initiative

The WTO and the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) declared the UK's Institute of Export and International Trade as the second ICC-WTO Small Business Champion. Google was named as the first in 2017. Encouraging micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) to trade internationally and raising awareness about the difficulties they face was the motive behind launching the Small Business Champions initiative.

MSMEs play vital roles in national economies, particularly in terms of providing innovation, growth and job creation. Yet their share in international trade is relatively small. The initiative, launched in August 2017, called on companies and private sector organizations around the world to come up with innovative and practical proposals for encouraging and assisting MSMEs to do business across borders.

The Institute of Export and International Trade's proposal was to run a competition – “Open to Export International Business Award” – aimed at encouraging small businesses around the world to begin trading internationally. It provided support, training and the online tools to help small businesses put together a “global growth action plan”.

During the Public Forum, 12 finalists pitched their “export action plans” to a panel of judges for the chance to win a package of financing and assistance from the Institute. The competition was launched in May and attracted plans from small businesses worldwide. “Running this competition and working with inspiring MSMEs from around



Alan Chanda, CEO of Dytech Limited, a Zambia-based honey producer, won the Export Business Award.

the world has been both humbling and truly inspirational. Thank you to the WTO and ICC for supporting it,” said Lesley Batchelor, Director General of the Institute of Export and International Trade, in announcing the result.

The winner was Dytech Limited, a Zambia-based honey producer. “I’m flabbergasted,” said Alan Chanda, co-founder and CEO of the social enterprise. “There were so many people with interesting ideas from around the world, and I’m extremely thankful that I’ve been chosen to go back home with a smile on my face.”

About 10 per cent of Dytech’s eco-friendly honey is bottled, branded and sold in 150 shops across Zambia while the rest is sold in bulk. The company has sold to customers in South Africa to the tune of 90 tons a year. It is now targeting new markets and will soon export to Germany and China for the first time.

Besides the Institute, the other three successful proposals in 2018 were from eBay, Brazil’s National Confederation of Industry and the Asian Association of Business Incubation.



The UK's Institute of Export and International Trade was announced as an ICC-WTO Small Business Champion.



Winners of a competition launched by Google, the first Small Business Champion, attended a masterclass at Google headquarters.



The “eBay Emerging Markets Initiative” aims to help motivated MSMEs in Latin America, the Middle East and North Africa leverage the eBay marketplace to reach developed market consumers. The project aims to provide training on key online commerce issues, a package of promotional eBay services and support and showcase successful project participants.

Under its project “Small Business Without Barriers”, Brazil’s National Confederation of Industry has conducted a range of activities, including surveying more than 400 small businesses to identify the difficulties they face in trading internationally, conducting capacity-building roadshows and providing training through brochures, online courses and videos.

The proposal by the Asian Association of Business Incubation aims at helping small businesses in Asia’s technology sector by matching them with

partners to assist them in areas such as cross-border technology transfer and identifying new trading opportunities.

The call for proposals for the business champions initiative closed in December 2018, with seven proposals having been accepted. They will be recognized as small business champions following the successful conclusion of their project.

A video competition launched by Google in partnership with the WTO and the ICC was the first successful proposal under the Small Business Champions initiative. The three small business winners of the competition were invited by Google to its headquarters in Mountain View, California, in May 2018 to participate in a “master class” in digital skills for export. Following the successful completion of its project, Google was confirmed as the first Small Business Champion.

Contact with the public

- The WTO website attracted over 2.3 million visits a month.
- The WTO's social media channels grew by almost 10 per cent in 2018.
- WTO videos were watched over 750,000 times on social media over the year.
- The WTO issued over 60 publications and launched the WTO iLibrary containing over 1,000 publications and reports.

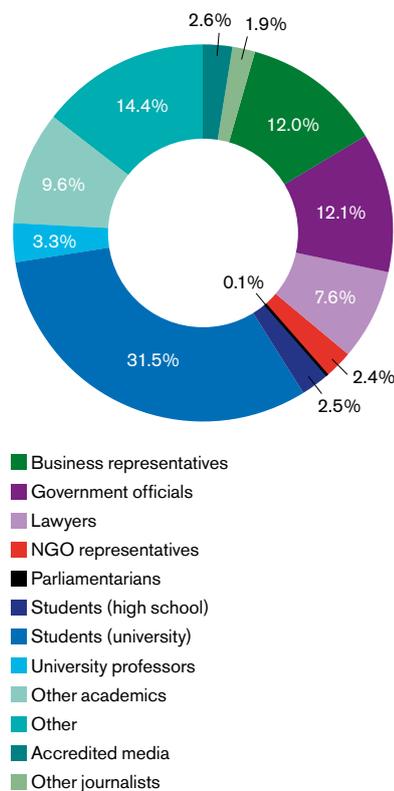
WTO website

The WTO website attracted over 2.3 million monthly visits in 2018, over 20 per cent more than the year before. Of these visits, 14.0 per cent were from the United States, 13.6 per cent from China, 10.2 per cent from Russia and 4.3 per cent from India. Total page views rose to 60.8 million from 50.1 million in 2017. Over 460 news items were published on the site in 2018.

The most downloaded files were the WTO's flagship publications, the World Trade Statistical Review 2017 (111,400 downloads), the World Trade Report 2017 (41,200) and the Annual Report 2018 (over 25,000). The most popular video posted on the WTO website, with 7,700 views, was about the 20th anniversary of the WTO while a video on global values chains had over 7,000 views. The "Trade Changes" video from the 2017 Public Forum, which illustrates how trade changes, challenges and connects people, continued to attract attention, with 6,000 views.

Some 87,500 people have registered to receive email alerts for WTO news items (see Figure 2). The largest numbers of registrations are from India (11 per cent), the United States (7 per cent), Mexico (5 per cent), Colombia (4 per cent), France (4 per cent) and China (3 per cent).

Figure 2: People registered to receive email alerts, as of end-2018



WTO website

2.3m

monthly visits to the WTO website in 2018



▲ 20%
increase over 2017

Visitors to the website



14%
from the United States



14%
from China



10%
from the Russian Federation



4%
from India



Social media followers 2018

4,248



Instagram

74,205



LinkedIn

293,736



Facebook

361,516



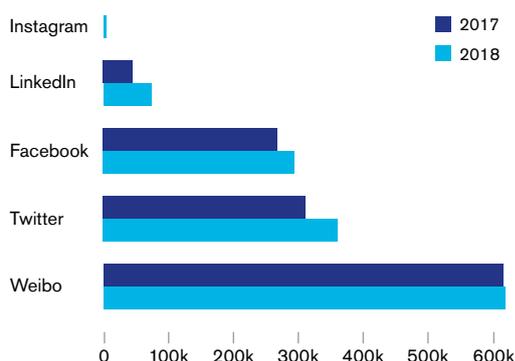
Twitter

618,466



Weibo

Figure 3: Growth in numbers of followers of the WTO on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter and Weibo



Social media

The WTO is active on social media, providing regular updates about WTO activities to journalists, business people, academics and the general public. Posts about the Young Professionals Programme (see page 143), the Public Forum (see page 150) and news about WTO activities attracted the highest level of interactions. Material showcasing the history of the WTO was also very popular.

In 2018, the WTO increased its offering of social media content in official languages other than English. The organization's Instagram presence has grown, using content developed especially for the platform's public. At the end of the year, the WTO's three institutional Twitter accounts had more than 360,000 followers, its Facebook page had nearly 300,000 "likes" and its page on Weibo, a Chinese social media platform, had 618,000 followers (see Figure 3).

WTO videos

In 2018, the WTO expanded the publication of videos in Spanish and French. Video production made use of diverse formats to cater to different audiences on the WTO website and on social media platforms. The most popular videos showcased the history of the WTO and highlighted trade statistics and forecasts. WTO videos were watched over 750,000 times on social media over the year.

Visiting groups

In 2018, the WTO welcomed 235 visiting groups (over 6,600 people). The presentations provided to these groups mostly covered the WTO's history, functions and current work. Some groups requested presentations on specific topics, primarily dispute settlement, agriculture, development and intellectual property rights.

Most of the presentations were given in English (153) while 32 were given in French, 12 in Chinese, nine in Russian, seven in Spanish and five in Korean. Three presentations each were

given in Arabic, German and Italian, two each in Portuguese, Thai and Ukrainian, and one each in Swedish and Vietnamese.

WTO publications

The WTO's publications programme was very active, issuing 63 publications and adding interactive apps of the Annual Report and the World Trade Report to its app library. The WTO held six high-level book launches in 2018, including co-publications with UN Environment (see page 96) and the World Bank (see page 109) and a new two-volume publication on the dispute settlement system under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) to mark the 70th anniversary of the GATT.

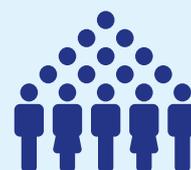
Most WTO publications can be downloaded free of charge in the WTO's three official languages, English, French and Spanish. Printed copies can be purchased from the WTO's online bookshop (<http://onlinebookshop.wto.org>). The WTO's apps are available free of charge from the App Store and Google Play. The WTO's Publications Facebook page has over 49,000 followers and its Twitter page has over 69,000 followers. A digital newsletter, "Book News", is regularly sent to 85,000 recipients.

In September, the WTO launched the WTO iLibrary (www.wto-ilibrary.org), a new dynamic research tool that brings together for the first time, into one self-contained area, all the WTO's key research material on global trade. Developed in cooperation with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the WTO iLibrary contains over 400 titles published by the WTO or co-published with other international organizations, over 30 titles co-published with Cambridge University Press, over 200 WTO working papers, comprehensive statistical data on world trade and over 400 dispute settlement reports.

Visiting groups

235

visiting groups

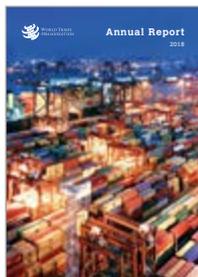


6,640

people in total



Flagship publications



Annual Report 2018

ISBN 978-92-870-4507-2 | CHF 50

The Annual Report contains a message from the Director-General, an overview of the past year and in-depth accounts of the WTO's various areas of activity.



World Trade Report 2018 app

Free

The World Trade Report 2018 app features an interactive quiz that tests users' knowledge of how digital technologies are transforming global commerce, and links to the full text of the Report.



Annual Report 2018 app

Free

The Annual Report app features an interactive quiz that tests users' knowledge of the WTO and links to the full text of the Report.



World Trade Statistical Review 2018

ISBN 978-92-870-4623-9 | CHF 50

The World Trade Statistical Review 2018 provides a comprehensive overview of the latest developments in world trade, covering both trade in goods and services and trade in value-added terms.



World Trade Report 2018

ISBN 978-92-870-4501-0 | CHF 50

The 2018 World Trade Report analyses how digital technologies are transforming global commerce and how trade is likely to evolve as a result of these technologies, such as 3D printing, artificial intelligence and Blockchain.

Other annual publications



Trade Profiles 2018

ISBN 978-92-870-4629-1 | CHF 50

Trade Profiles 2018 provides key indicators on trade in goods and services for 196 economies, highlighting each economy's major exports and imports and main trading partners.



Trade Policy Reviews

In 2018, 17 Trade Policy Reviews were published, analysing the trade policies and practices of Bolivia, Cambodia, China, the European Union, The Gambia, Guinea, Iceland, Jamaica, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Paraguay, the Philippines, Mauritania, Montenegro, Switzerland and Liechtenstein, and the West African Economic and Monetary Union.



World Tariff Profiles 2018

ISBN 978-92-870-4635-2 | CHF 50

World Tariff Profiles 2018 provides comprehensive information on the tariffs and non-tariff measures imposed by over 170 countries and customs territories. Co-published with ITC and UNCTAD.



Dispute Settlement Reports 2017

Eight volumes were produced in 2018, providing the full texts of panel reports, Appellate Body reports and arbitration awards issued by the WTO in 2017. Co-published with Cambridge University Press.



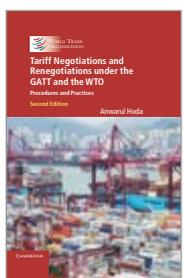
New publications



The WTO Agreements: The Marrakesh Agreement Establishing the World Trade Organization and its Annexes

ISBN 978-1-108-43843-8 | CHF 50

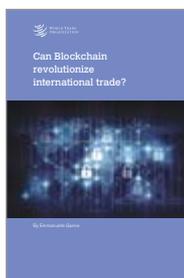
This publication contains the text of the WTO's founding agreement, the 1994 Marrakesh Agreement Establishing the World Trade Organization, and its Annexes, including all amendments and additions up to September 2017. Co-published with Cambridge University Press.



Tariff Negotiations and Renegotiations under the GATT and the WTO: Procedures and Practices (2nd edition)

By Anwarul Hoda
ISBN 978-1-107-19433-5 (hardback) | CHF 130

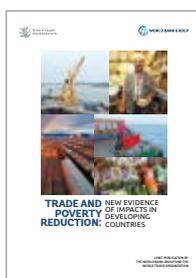
This publication reviews the evolution of the procedures and practices relating to tariff negotiations and renegotiations since the establishment of the GATT, encompassing the ITA expansion and successive enlargements of the European Union. Co-published with Cambridge University Press.



Can Blockchain Revolutionize International Trade?

By Emmanuelle Ganne
ISBN 978-92-870-4760-1 | CHF 40

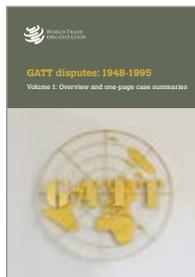
This publication seeks to demystify the Blockchain phenomenon by providing a basic explanation of the technology. It analyses the relevance of this technology for international trade by reviewing how it is currently used or could be used in the various areas covered by WTO rules.



Trade and Poverty Reduction: New Evidence of Impacts in Developing Countries

ISBN 978-92-870-4521-8 | CHF 40

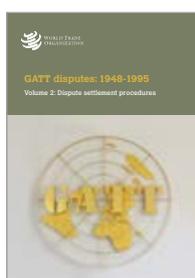
The publication is a follow-up to "The Role of Trade in Ending Poverty", which examined the challenges the poor face in benefiting from trade opportunities. The country-specific approach of this new co-publication complements the global perspective of the previous report. Co-published by the WTO and the World Bank.



GATT Disputes: 1948-1995 Volume 1: Overview and One-page Case Summaries

ISBN 978-92-870-4260-6

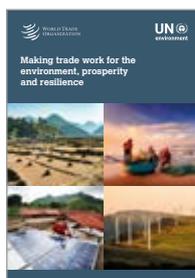
Volume 1 provides a comprehensive overview of dispute settlement activities under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) 1947 and one-page case summaries for each of the 316 GATT disputes brought by contracting parties during this period.



GATT Disputes: 1948-1995 Volume 2: Dispute Settlement Procedures

ISBN 978-92-870-4262-0

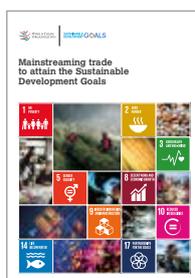
Volume 2 compiles documents containing GATT dispute settlement rules and procedures, and other selected documents.



Making Trade Work for the Environment, Prosperity and Resilience

ISBN 978-92-870-4296-5 | CHF 30

This co-publication by the WTO and UN Environment looks at the interplay between trade and the environment and identifies ways to ensure that trade and a healthy environment reinforce each other.



Mainstreaming Trade to Attain the Sustainable Development Goals

ISBN 978-92-870-4272-9 | CHF 30

This publication identifies steps towards ensuring that international trade contributes to achieving the SDGs. By continuing to foster stable, predictable and equitable trading relations across the world, the WTO is playing an important role in delivering the SDGs.



WTO in Brief

WTO in Brief provides a starting point for essential information about the WTO. Concise and practical, this short brochure is an ideal introduction to the WTO.

Economic research activities

- **The WTO's flagship World Trade Report says digital technologies will have a profound impact on international trade.**
- **Together with the IMF, World Bank and OECD, the WTO organizes a conference on how trade can promote growth for all.**
- **A new study analyses the impact of Blockchain on international trade.**
- **A WTO-World Bank joint publication shows how gains from trade and inclusiveness can be part of the same debate.**

Background on economic research activities

The WTO's Economic Research and Statistics Division organizes regular seminars and conferences as well as online forums involving academics and researchers in Geneva and around the world. These activities include the Geneva Trade and Development Workshop programme. It is responsible for the WTO's flagship publication, the World Trade Report, which aims to deepen understanding about trends in trade, trade policy issues and the multilateral trading system.

The WTO's flagship publication, the World Trade Report, was launched by DG Azevêdo at the WTO Public Forum (see page 150) in October. The report finds that digital technologies, such as artificial intelligence, 3D printing and Blockchain, will have a profound impact on global trade, adding up to 34 percentage points to trade growth by 2030 thanks to lower costs and higher productivity. They will also foster trade in goods such as time-sensitive products, change patterns of comparative advantage and affect the complexity and length of global value chains.

The reduction in trade costs could especially benefit micro, small and medium-sized enterprises and firms from developing countries, provided they can adopt digital technologies. "We are living through an era of unprecedented technological change ... These technologies are reshaping the economy before our eyes," said DG Azevêdo at the report's launch.

In October 2018, the Economic Research and Statistics Division (ERSD) organized with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) a conference

during the IMF and World Bank annual meetings in Bali to discuss how global trade promotes growth and can benefit everyone. The IMF, World Bank and the WTO launched a study on "Reinvigorating Trade and Inclusive Growth", which says that trade reform has not kept pace with changes in services trade, digital technologies and foreign direct investment. In many other domains, such as the rural economy, gender and small enterprises, trade-related reforms are important to foster more inclusive growth and increase productivity.

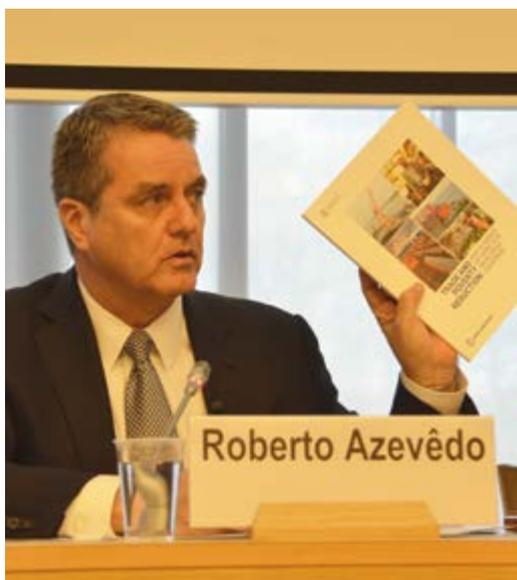
In November, ESRD launched "Can Blockchain Revolutionize International Trade?". The publication reviews how the tamper-proof, decentralized record of transactions is used or can be used in areas covered by WTO rules and how the technology could affect cross-border trade. It discusses the potential for reducing trade costs and enhancing supply chain transparency, and reviews challenges that must be addressed before the technology can be widely used.

In December, ESRD organized a conference on "Updating Trade Cooperation: An Economic View". Leading trade economists and the ambassadors of Japan, China, the United States

DG Azevêdo launched the World Trade Report 2018 at the Public Forum.



The WTO and the World Bank co-published “Trade and Poverty Reduction” in 2018.



and Brazil discussed the challenges facing the international rules-based system and the main principles and mechanisms that might make it more sustainable in the future. A WTO-World Bank co-publication on trade and poverty was launched in December 2018. The book – “Trade and Poverty Reduction: New evidence of impacts in developing countries” – presents eight case studies on how trade can help to reduce poverty in developing countries.

In 2018, the Geneva Trade and Development Workshop hosted 24 events. The programme provides a forum for the presentation of cutting-edge research and the exchange of ideas, supports high-quality research and facilitates outreach to policy-makers.

WTO Essay Award for Young Economists

Background on the WTO Essay Award for Young Economists

The WTO established the annual WTO Essay Award for Young Economists in 2009. The award, which carries a prize of CHF 5,000, aims to promote high-quality economic research on the WTO and WTO-related issues and to reinforce the relationship between the WTO and the academic community.

The 2018 WTO Essay Award for Young Economists went to Alonso de Gortari of Harvard University for his paper “Disentangling Global Value Chains”. He received a prize of CHF 5,000. The selection panel named Yuan Mei of the University of Chicago as runner-up for his work “Regulatory Protection and the Role of International Cooperation”.

The winning paper highlights a new feature of global value chains (GVCs) – that they employ specialized inputs tailored to the destination of final-product shipment. For example, the United States accounts for 74 per cent of the foreign inputs in Mexican vehicles sold to US consumers but for only 18 per cent of the inputs of those sold to German consumers. Similarly, the share of German inputs is much higher in cars exported to Germany than in those exported to the United States.

The paper suggests that members of GVCs are substantially more integrated with one another than traditional measures have shown, with the implication that traditional studies substantially underestimate the cost of GVCs being disrupted.

Yuan Mei’s paper studies the effects of product standards regulation on trade and welfare. The key finding is that standards can affect fixed as well as marginal costs of production. The paper shows that the gains from national treatment – the principle of giving others the same treatment as that given to nationals – are relatively small and that the potential for further gains from international standards cooperation can be very large.

Alonso de Gortari is a Mexican national. He received his Ph.D. in economics from Harvard University in 2018. He is currently an IES post-doctoral fellow at Princeton University. He will be joining Dartmouth College as Assistant Professor in 2019.

Yuan Mei is a Chinese national. He received his Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Chicago in 2018. He is currently Assistant Professor of Economics at Singapore Management University.

Selection Panel

The selection panel comprised Dr Avinash Dixit (Emeritus Professor of Economics, Princeton University), Dr Robert Koopman (Director, Economic Research and Statistics Division, WTO), Dr Robert Staiger (Professor of Economics, Dartmouth College) and Dr Alberto Trejos (Professor of Economics, INCAE Business School). Dr Roberta Piermartini (Economic Research and Statistics Division, WTO) coordinated the work of the panel.



Statistics activities

- A new WTO data portal was launched to provide a user-friendly comprehensive online database with a wide range of statistical indicators.
- The WTO continued its collaboration with OECD to produce a global dataset of bilateral trade in services statistics.
- The WTO advanced, with EU funding, an experimental data set on global trade in services by mode of supply.
- The Expert Group on Measuring Digital Trade met to discuss the first draft of a handbook for measuring digital trade.

Background on statistics activities

The Economic Research and Statistics Division supports WTO members and the WTO Secretariat with data on economic and trade policy issues and with technical advisory services on market access negotiations and on the maintenance of goods schedules. The division is the principal supplier of WTO trade statistics and information on tariffs and non-tariff measures. It provides technical assistance for trade policy courses and national workshops and contributes to inter-organizational statistical activities.

WTO data portal

The WTO launched in November its new online database. The WTO data portal brings together a wide range of statistical indicators on international trade, tariffs, non-tariff measures and other WTO-related information.

The new portal, which replaces the statistics database, is a central and user-friendly portal containing all available WTO time series on merchandise trade, trade in services statistics, market access indicators (bound, applied and preferential tariffs), non-tariff information and other indicators. The portal includes user-friendly retrieval functionalities, such as data selection, display and export of all WTO statistical data and official estimates.

Statistical time series and publications

The WTO's flagship statistical publication, "World Trade Statistical Review 2018", offers a detailed analysis of the most recent trends for world trade in goods and services. It also examines trade in value-added terms and the latest trade policy developments, highlighting recent trends in WTO members' use of trade-restrictive and trade-facilitating measures (see page 160).

Two other statistical publications were issued. "Trade Profiles 2018" provides a series of key indicators on trade in goods and services for

196 economies. "World Tariff Profiles 2018", a joint publication of the WTO, the International Trade Centre (ITC) and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), provides comprehensive information on the tariffs and non-tariff measures imposed by over 170 countries and customs territories. The special topic was "Utilization of preferential tariff treatment of products exported by least-developed countries", which examined the preferential market access granted to LDCs to improve their export performance and to what extent these preferential schemes have been utilized.

A new dataset, on trade in services by mode of supply, funded by the European Union, is being developed in cooperation with other international organizations, data compilers and researchers. The release of this experimental data set is planned for 2019. This work follows on from the WTO's cooperation with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) to develop a transparent methodology for creating a global dataset of bilateral trade in services statistics by main services categories from 1995 to 2012.

In 2018, the WTO boosted its efforts to improve dissemination of its statistical products. A bulk download online application was introduced to allow users to download all annual data on merchandise trade and trade in commercial services.



Statistical capacity building

The WTO organized a course in Geneva on trade in services statistics, with an emphasis on Africa, assisted by experts from the central banks of France and Italy, the UK Office for National Statistics, UNCTAD, the OECD, the UN Statistical Division, the ITC and the Partnership in Statistics Development in the 21st Century. It focused on best practices for collecting data in services sectors.

In September, the WTO hosted the second thematic course on trade in value added (TiVA) and global value chains (GVCs). The objective was to improve participants' understanding of the policy implications of TiVA and the repercussions of GVCs on trade. During 2018, the WTO provided technical assistance on trade in services and GVC-related statistics in several countries.

The WTO, in cooperation with the UN Development Programme, held a course on goods schedules negotiations for Uzbekistan's accession to the WTO to assist the government in preparing its goods offer.

A national workshop on tariffs and tariff rationalization was delivered at the request of Myanmar to strengthen capital-based officials understanding of WTO-related issues and to help the country fulfil its notification obligations. Another workshop familiarized capital-based officials from Nigeria with online tools for market access databases as well as requirements for notifications.

International cooperation

In October, the Expert Group on Measuring Digital Trade met under the aegis of the Inter-Agency Task Force on International Trade Statistics (TFITS) to discuss the first draft of the "Handbook on Measuring Digital Trade", which includes a conceptual framework for digital cross-border transactions and a compilation of existing country experiences. It will be released online in 2019.

The TFITS's annual meeting discussed ongoing methodological issues, such as questions related to classifications and the treatment of crypto-currencies as legal tender. The group also discussed creating an online technical assistance hub.

I-TIP

The WTO's Integrated Trade Intelligence Portal (I-TIP) was updated to increase the information available on non-tariff measures and on services trade policies. As of the end of 2018, more than 54,000 measures on trade in goods had been included.

DG Azevêdo delivered the WTO's forecast for global trade at a press conference in April 2018.



8

Cooperation with academic institutions

- **The WTO Chairs Programme (WCP) generated substantial research on trade-related issues, including 67 published articles in peer-reviewed journals, six books or book chapters and 80 working papers.**
- **Phase II of the WCP concluded in 2018; an external evaluation will be conducted in 2019 to assess its impact and to ensure the sustainability of the outcomes achieved.**
- **The WCP organized a session at the WTO Public Forum looking at the impact of digital technology on trade.**

Background on WTO Chairs Programme

The WTO Chairs Programme was launched in 2010 to enhance knowledge and understanding of the trading system among academics and policy makers in developing countries. Chair-holders are selected by a competitive process. Its main objectives are to foster further research on trade and WTO issues, to provide teaching support for the development and delivery of courses on trade policy and WTO-related matters and to organize public activities to disseminate research and promote discussion regarding international trade. The WCP is jointly managed by the WTO's Economic Research and Statistics Division and the Institute for Training and Technical Cooperation.

Activities of the Chairs Programme

In 2018, the WTO's Chairs Programme (WCP) helped 26 students develop PhD or Masters theses on WTO-related issues and trained about 2,600 students. Forty-four new or updated courses and diploma programmes were proposed and developed. The chairs arranged 62 outreach activities, attracting more than 1,400 participants, among them more than 370 officials or policy-makers.

The research output of the WCP was substantial in 2018. Chairs produced some 67 published articles in peer-reviewed journals, six books or book chapters and 80 working papers on trade, WTO topics and subjects of importance to the WTO.

At the WTO's Public Forum (see page 150), the WCP organized a session looking at the impact of digital technology on trade and the issues facing countries when adapting to the new trade era. The panel included WTO chairs and representatives from the Geneva trade policy community.

WCP chairs were active in many conferences, where they reached out to national government agencies, international organizations, the business community, media and other academics to underline the importance of trade. Activities included a trade workshop for the Middle East and North Africa region in Carthage, Tunisia, in March. It was organized by the Tunis Business School (University of Tunis), a WCP member, in partnership with other organizations and covered global value chains, trade agreements, the competitiveness of firms and the informal trade sector. In Buenos Aires, 30 participants attended a course on trade and climate change in December at the Latin American School of Social Sciences, a WCP member.



The WTO Secretariat participated in five technical assistance activities organized by chairs, such as academic conferences, seminars and specialized courses.

The WCP e-Platform, the dedicated WCP website launched in December 2017, continued to facilitate the sharing of information, encourage discussion and promote internet-based networking among institutions and individuals associated with the programme.

Concluding Phase II of the WCP

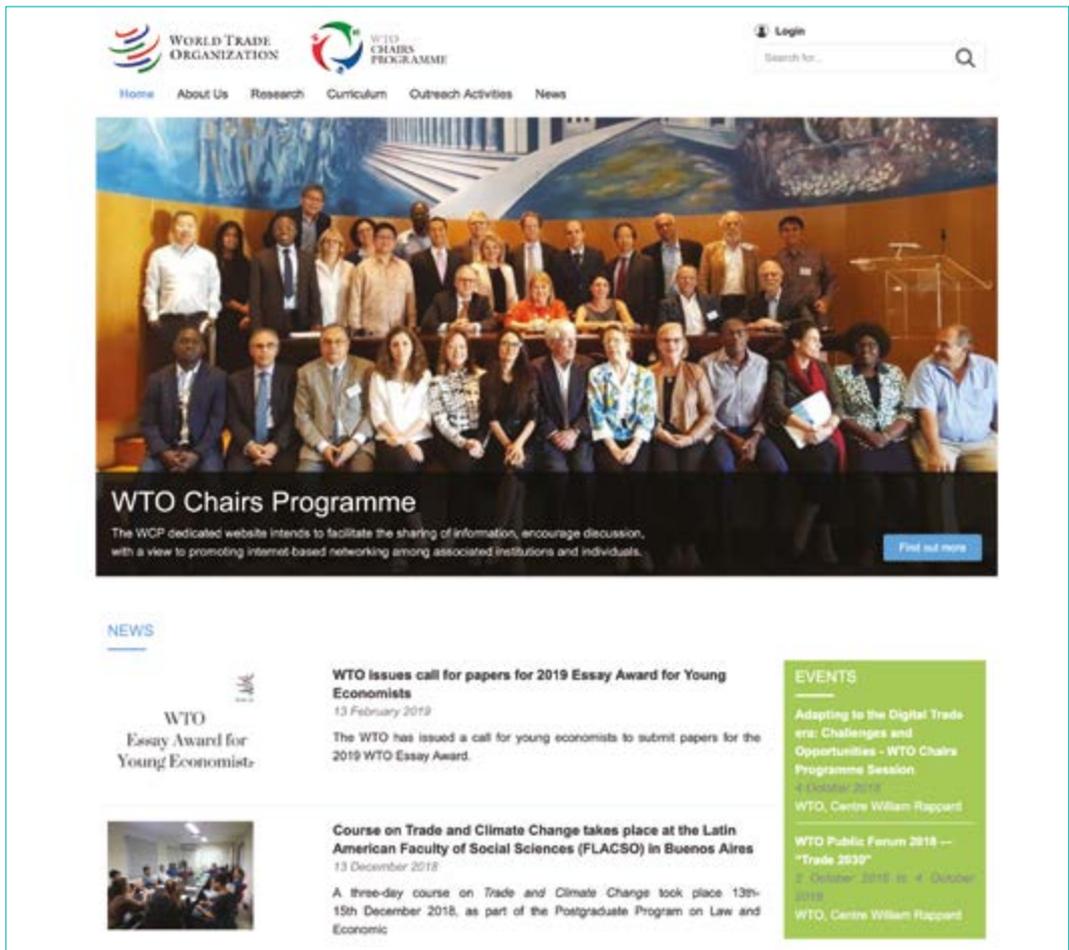
The WCP was launched in 2010, with two phases having run for four years each. Phase II ended in 2018. An external and independent evaluation of the WCP is scheduled to take place in 2019. The evaluation is to assess the performance of the WCP, identifying its impact, lessons learned, best practices and steps to ensure the sustainability of the outcomes achieved.

The result of the evaluation is expected to be presented at the Annual Conference of the WCP scheduled to be held in July 2019. It will provide an important guide to the future direction of the WCP.

The Advisory Board, an external body composed of experienced scholars, has recommended that the WTO Secretariat seek an extension of the programme to Phase III after the evaluation takes place.



The WTO Chairs Programme website facilitates the sharing of information and discussion among participants.



Academic Support Programme

In 2018, 12 activities were implemented under the Academic Support Programme (ASP), which engages with academic institutions from developing countries and least-developed countries that are not part of the WTO's Chairs Programme. Activities over the year included lectures delivered by WTO staff for master's and bachelor degree courses.

Half of the activities were related to supporting university competitions on WTO law and increasing knowledge of dispute settlement procedures among students and professors.

The WTO provided staff to act as panellists in regional inter-university competitions and for the final round of the competition at WTO headquarters (see page 122).

The ASP organized presentations to academic audiences. In addition, the WTO continued encouraging universities to register lecturers as participants in online courses offered by the WTO's E-campus.

Universities participating in the WTO Chairs Programme

- Phase I Chairs
- Phase II Chairs

