



# 17<sup>th</sup> FIW-Research Conference

## ‘International Economics’

### Policy Panel Announcement

## Geopolitical Shifts and Global Trade: The Role of the WTO and U.S. Leadership

 Room: Foyer, EA (Executive Academy)

 Time: 16:15 - 18:00

#### Panelists:

- **Ignacio García Bercero** (Bruegel)
- **Meredith Crowley** (University of Cambridge)
- **Gabriel Felbermayr** (WIFO)
- **Manfred Schekulin** (BMAW)

#### Moderation:

- **Harald Oberhofer** (FIW, WU Vienna, WIFO)

Join us for an insightful panel discussion on the evolving landscape of global trade, the role of the World Trade Organization (WTO), and the influence of U.S. leadership in shaping international economic policies. As the WTO marks its 30th anniversary, we will reflect on its achievements, shortcomings, and the reforms needed to keep it relevant in an era of geopolitical and economic uncertainty.

With rising protectionism, the growing role of industrial policy, and the increasing use of trade as a geopolitical tool, our panel will explore the future of the multilateral trading system. How should the WTO respond to major global challenges such as the U.S.-China trade rivalry, disruptions in supply chains, and the green transition? What role should the EU play in shaping trade rules, both in response to potential U.S. policy shifts and within the broader multilateral framework?

As we look ahead, the discussion will also tackle the "elephant in the room"—the potential return of Donald Trump and its implications for global trade policy. What would a second Trump presidency mean for the WTO, transatlantic trade, and the future of international economic cooperation?

Our distinguished panelists will share their perspectives on these pressing questions, providing expert insights into how governments, businesses, and international institutions can navigate the complexities of modern trade.

## REGISTRATION

We kindly ask for Registration until February 17:

<https://www.fiw.ac.at/en/signupforms/6689/>

## TIME & LOCATION

The 17<sup>th</sup> FIW Research Conference on 'International Economics' will take place on Thursday, **20<sup>th</sup> February 2025** and Friday, **21<sup>st</sup> February 2025** at the **Vienna University of Economics and Business (WU Vienna)**, Welthandelsplatz 1, 1020 Vienna, Austria.

## Panelist Bios

### Ignacio García Bercero



Ignacio García Bercero joined Bruegel as a Non-resident fellow in September 2024.

Active at the European Commission since 1987, he participated in the Uruguay Round negotiations and was subsequently posted in the EU Delegation to the United Nations in New York. Upon his return to Brussels he worked in the preparation of what eventually became the Doha Development agenda and was head of unit for legal affairs and WTO dispute settlement. From 2005 until 2011 he was Director responsible for the areas of Sustainable Development, Bilateral Trade Relations (South Asia, South-East Asia, Korea, Russia and ex-CIS countries, EuroMed and the Middle East). He was also the Chief Negotiator for the EU-Korea and EU-India Free Trade Agreements. From 2012 he was responsible for overseeing EU activities in the field of Neighboring countries, US and Canada and was Chief negotiator for the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership.

Mr. García Bercero has written several papers and publications on WTO matters, including WTO reform, Dispute Settlement, Competition Policy and Regulatory Cooperation. In 2020 he has completed a Fellowship at Saint Anthony's College Oxford where his research focused on WTO reform. Since 2021 he is Visiting Professor in the Department of Political Science of the University College London and Visiting Senior Fellow at LSE Ideas, London School of Economics and Political Science. Mr. García Bercero holds a Law Degree from the Law Faculty of Universidad Complutense, Madrid and a Master of Laws Degree (with Distinction) from University College, London.

### Meredith Crowley



Meredith A. Crowley is a Professor and Deputy Chair of the Faculty of Economics at the University of Cambridge, Fellow of St. John's College, and a Research Co-ordinator at the Janeway Institute at Cambridge. She is President of the International Economics and Finance Society, a co-investigator of the publicly funded Centre for Inclusive Trade Policy, a Research Fellow at the Centre for Economic Policy Research (CEPR - London), and a member of the Scientific Advisory Councils of CEPII and the Kiel Institute. Her research on international trade, multinational trade agreements, and trade policy has appeared in numerous peer-reviewed journals including the American Economic Review, the Canadian Journal

of Economics, the European Journal of Political Economy, the Journal of Development Economics, the Journal of International Economics and World Trade Review. She has over 100 media citations or appearances, including the BBC, The New York Times, The Washington Post, The Financial Times, The Economist, The Guardian, The Telegraph, and The Times.

Prior to arriving at Cambridge in 2013, Crowley worked in the Research Department of the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago. She has held visiting positions at Georgetown University, the Shanghai University of Finance and Economics, and Nanjing University. Her research has been presented at central banks and international institutions around the world, including the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the World Trade Organization.

### **Gabriel Felbermayr**



Gabriel Felbermayr has been Director of the Austrian Institute of Economic Research (WIFO) in Vienna and university professor at the Vienna University of Economics and Business (WU) since 1 October 2021. Professor Gabriel Felbermayr, PhD, was born in June 1976 in Steyr, Austria. After studying Economics and Trade at the University of Linz, he went to Florence, Italy, to pursue his doctoral studies. From 2004 to 2005, he was an Associate Consultant with McKinsey & Co. in Vienna. From 2005 to 2008, he was Assistant Professor at the University of Tübingen. From 2009 to 2010, he held a chair in International Economics at the University of Hohenheim (Stuttgart). From 2010 to 2019, he led the ifo Center for International Economics at the University of Munich, where he also served as a full professor in International Economics. From 2019 till September 2021, he was President of the Kiel Institute for the World Economy and held a chair in Economics and Economic Policy at Kiel University (CAU). Gabriel Felbermayr holds various roles and positions. The most important are: Member of the Scientific Advisory Board of the German Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Action, Chairman of the Statistics Council of the Statistics Austria Federal Institute, Founding President of "Supply Chain Intelligence Institute Austria" (ASCII). His research and consulting work focuses on issues of international trade theory and policy, labour market research, European economic integration, and current economic policy issues. He has published a large number of articles in international academic journals, policy briefs, and newspapers. His research has been recognized with several awards.

### **Manfred Schekulin (BMAW)**



Manfred Schekulin is Director for Trade and Competition Policy Analysis and Strategy at the Austrian Federal Ministry for Labour and Economy. He studied law and economics at Vienna University and holds postgraduate degrees in political science from the Vienna Institute for Advanced Studies and in executive management from the Vienna University of Economics and Business. He has been involved in international work on trade, cross border investments and responsible business conduct for more than 25 years including, since its creation in 2004, as chairperson of the OECD Investment Committee.

### **Moderation: Harald Oberhofer**



Harald Oberhofer is a Senior Economist at WIFO, the Austrian Institute of Economic Research. He is Professor of Economics at the Vienna University of Economics and Business. His research interests include International Economics, empirical Industrial Organisation and Applied Econometrics. Harald Oberhofer studied at the University of Innsbruck and holds a doctorate in Economics and Social Sciences from the University of Innsbruck. Harald Oberhofer regularly serves as a consultant to international organisations such as the OECD and the World Bank, where he analyses the impact of institutional regulations on firm performance, also over the business cycle.

### **ABOUT FIW**

**The FIW - Research Centre International Economics (<https://www.fiw.ac.at>) is a cooperation between the Vienna University of Economics and Business (WU), the University Vienna, the Johannes Kepler University Linz and the University of Innsbruck, WIFO and wiiw. FIW is grateful for financial support by the Austrian Federal Ministries for Education, Research and Science (BMBWF) and Labour and Economy (BMAW).**

Questions may be addressed to [fiw-pb@fiw.ac.at](mailto:fiw-pb@fiw.ac.at) or [alexander.hudetz@wifo.ac.at](mailto:alexander.hudetz@wifo.ac.at).

The conference programme will be published on <https://www.fiw.ac.at>

Attendance of the FIW Research Conference is free of charge.

The conference language is English. Travel expenses will not be refunded.

### **CONFERENCE VENUE**

Vienna University of Economics and Business (WU Vienna)  
Welthandelsplatz 1, 1020 Vienna, Austria