

# IPE @ WU NEWSLETTER

Institute for  
International Political Economy

Spring 2024

**WU**  
INTERNATIONAL  
POLITICAL  
ECONOMY



Institute for International Political Economy  
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# IPE-NEWS IN SPRING

*Editorial by*  
MATTHIAS KOUREK, MA  
*Administrative Assistant*

DEAR COLLEAGUES AND  
FRIENDS,

After winter, spring arrives and nature comes back to life. The first harbingers of spring have also appeared on the cover of our newsletter.

Are you already looking forward to the UEFA EURO this summer? Recently, the continental football championship also took place in Africa. Our colleague Zack Zimbalist explains the connections to IPE.

Zack Zimbalist also introduces himself briefly together with our new e-assistant Polina Lobanova. You can also meet our administrative assistant, Matthias Kourek, and one of our students, Nils Domenz.

The sixth edition of our event series "Pizza, Politics & (Motion) Picture" was one of the first highlights of the new year. Our colleague Sidan Raeskyesa takes a quick look back as the seventh edition is already approaching. We also want to use the springtime optimism to bring two outstanding theses onto the big stage of our newsletter. Julian Stapel's Bachelor's thesis deals with ownership dynamics in the modern football economy. Alexander Furtner reports on his Master's thesis, in which he analysed the incomes of indigenous small-scale farmers in coffee and cocoa production in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta in Colombia.

The summer semester, already underway, also brings many new things. In our teaching section, we therefore turn the spotlight on the revised courses in "Sustainable Economics: Deepening and Application". Our colleague Teresa Hübel also presents her first own course. A pedagogical insight comes this time from our colleague Ashley Simpson, who reveals the concept behind the podcast assignment that students work on in our courses. Prof Jonas Bunte, our Head of Institute, concludes with an insight into his current research.

We wish you a relaxing Easter break and hope you enjoy reading this issue.

Thank you for your interest in International Political Economy.

If you have any questions or suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact us at: [ipe@wu.ac.at](mailto:ipe@wu.ac.at).  
We will be happy to get in touch with you.

# IPE in the world

# AN “AFCON” TOURNAMENT FOR THE AGES

The Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON), held in Côte d’Ivoire in January this year, saw Africa’s top 24 men’s national football teams compete in a month-long tournament to be crowned Africa’s champion. Qualifying for the tournament is a noteworthy accomplishment—the qualifying round lasts more than 18 months and involves all 54 national teams that are members of the Confederation of African Football (CAF).

From its modest origins with only four teams in the inaugural tournament in 1957, AFCON has grown dramatically in scale and popularity, capturing diverse audiences across the continent and worldwide.\* Many African national teams feature top players from European leagues, attracting a broader fan base with star footballers such as Mo Salah from Liverpool F.C., Victor Osimhen from SSC Napoli, Mohammed Kudus from West Ham United F.C., and Achraf Hakimi from Paris Saint-Germain F.C.

In addition, several African teams are increasingly drawing on players born in Europe, who have developed their skills with leading clubs in European youth leagues. In this year’s AFCON, all but three of the 24 nations have dual nationals in their squad (the exceptions are South Africa, Egypt, and Namibia), including passport holders from France, Spain, Germany, the Netherlands, and elsewhere. For example, Sebastian Haller was the hero for this year’s AFCON champions, Côte d’Ivoire. Haller was born and raised in France and was a former French youth international before switching allegiance in 2020 to the Côte d’Ivoire national team. Having scored the match winner in the semi-finals, he followed that up with a worldly left touch to complete the comeback and defeat Nigeria in the final. It was a remarkable finish to a wild tournament marked by unpredictability and drama.

*\*With few independent African nations at the time, the participating teams were Egypt, Sudan, and Ethiopia, with South Africa disqualified due to apartheid.*

Leading article by  
ZACK ZIMBALIST, PHD  
Teaching and Research Associate



Zack Zimbalist, Ph.D.  
© IPE, Kourek / Zimbalist

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*Continuing:*

## AN “AFCON” TOURNAMENT FOR AGES

Witnessing the euphoric celebrations, tears, and exhaustion vividly illustrated the profound importance of this tournament for the African continent and African football. At AFCON every two years, we see that same level of commitment and passion for football in the players, coaches, and fans, irrespective of whether one’s team is ranked in the top 20 in the world (e.g., Morocco and Senegal) or outside of the top 100 (e.g., Mozambique and Angola). This year’s tournament also underscored one of the compelling features of AFCON: regardless of a country’s size, world ranking, or the talent level of their squad, teams will give everything on the pitch and frequently pull off stunning upsets. Angola is ranked 117th in the world and lacks the star power of other teams, with most of their squad playing club football in relatively obscure leagues in Angola, Egypt, and Qatar. However, AFCON frequently brings out the best in lesser-known players and teams, and the Angolans showcased their tenacity and skill in winning their group. Similarly, Equatorial Guinea, ranked 88th in the world with a population of 1.6 million, won a difficult group that included eventual finalists Nigeria and Côte d’Ivoire. Cabo Verde also surprised the bookies and pundits by topping its group over African giants Egypt and Ghana and then progressing to the quarterfinals. A small island nation of just over half a million people holding the 73rd world ranking, their squad has several foreign-born dual national players who elected to play for Cabo Verde and led the line in AFCON.

Notably, many star players of Cabo Verdean origin born in Cabo Verde or Europe have opted to play for their European nationalities (e.g., Nani for Portugal, Gelson Fernandes for Switzerland, and Patrick Viera for France). While selecting one’s national representation is a profoundly personal decision, this pattern has significant implications for many African teams, both in the present and throughout history. The colonial origins of this pattern are unmistakable. For instance, top-tier European colonial clubs had deployed scouting networks in African colonies in the hopes of identifying African talent and signing and/or selling these players. As early as 1938, nearly 150 Africans were plying their trade in the French first and second divisions.

Legendary Moroccan footballer Larbi Ben Barek even played for the French national team on 17 occasions between 1938 and 1954, scoring an extraordinary 35 goals. Morocco gained independence from France two years later, in 1956. Similarly, Eusebio is regarded as one of the greatest Portuguese footballers of all time and Portuguese club Benfica’s greatest player ever. He led Portugal to a third-place finish in the 1966 World Cup and scored an incredible nine goals. Many do not know or mention that Eusebio was born and raised in Mozambique (then still under the colonial control of the Portuguese empire) and only arrived in Lisbon when he was 18 years old. He was one of numerous Africans who migrated to the Portuguese metropole from the late 1940s to the end of the colonial era in 1975, lifting Portuguese clubs and the Portuguese national team to new heights. The Portuguese colonial regime often pointed to these players to underscore an alleged unity between the metropole and the colonies and opportunities for upward social mobility, even though these opportunities were unavailable to most Africans.

*Continue on the next page ...*



Continuing:

## AN “AFCON” TOURNAMENT FOR AGES

African women can ball, too. Despite having limited resources and even access to large competitions until relatively recently, African women’s teams such as Morocco, Nigeria, and South Africa impressed at the 2023 World Cup. They will battle it out for the Women’s Africa Cup of Nations (WAFCON) title later in 2024. The South African women, known as “Banyana Banyana”, are the reigning champions.

African Nations Cup Illustration  
© jemastock2, Giuseppe Ramos J



African Nations Cup Trophy  
© jemastock2, Giuseppe Ramos J

Why does AFCON matter, and how does this relate to international political economy? This piece has omitted a historical discussion of the negative economic, political, and social impacts of the horrific European-organised slave trades, as well as European imperialism and colonialism on the continent. Instead, it has used AFCON as a lens to highlight modern-day linkages between Africa and Europe (as well as the world) while African football continues to grow at both continental and global scales. It has also alluded to the persistent economic inequalities that limit opportunities for so many promising young footballers born in Africa without the financial resources, training support, or competitive leagues where they can further develop their skills to reach their maximum potential. This year’s AFCON showed the world that, despite these inequalities, African teams can play exceptional and enthralling football and will be a force to reckon with in future World Cups.



Nigeria Flag  
© Techin24, Getty Images



South Africa Football  
© askhamdesign, Getty Images Signature



Ivory Coast Flag Painted on a Man's Face  
© Semmick Photo

# LIFE AT THE INSTITUTE: INTRODUCING NEW COLLEAGUES

## Zack Zimbalist

Hello! I am thrilled to join the Institute for International Political Economy as a teaching and research associate (post-doc).

This year, I look forward to teaching courses on political economy for both bachelor's and master's students. In 2025, I will help design and co-teach a new course on qualitative methods alongside Professor Jonas Bunte. My research interests center on the political economy of development, governance, public finance, and political attitudes, with a regional focus on Africa. I am also interested in researching teaching pedagogy to enhance learning outcomes.

I grew up in San Diego, California, where I developed a love of surfing and the ocean. I am fortunate to have also had the opportunity to live in Brazil, India, South Africa, Mozambique, and Mexico. My professional experiences include academic positions and programme evaluation work with NGOs, the World Bank, and USAID.

Outside work, I enjoy running, cycling, dancing, and learning languages. Currently, I'm flailing about in German, so please don't hesitate to say "Hallo"!



*Zack Zimbalist, Ph.D.  
© IPE / Zimbalist*



*Polina Lobanova  
© IPE / Lobanova*

## Polina Lobanova

Hello everyone, I'm Polina Lobanova, your new eLearning Assistant at the Institute of International Political Economy. I'm now deep into Business Informatics at the Vienna University of Business and Economics. This academic ride has been a cool mix of tech, economics, and social sciences, setting me up nicely for my position as your eLearning Assistant.

So, what's my role here? I'm the person behind the scenes, working on crafting and launching digital teaching and learning initiatives. It's about blending cutting-edge technology with a stellar educational experience. And if you've noticed an uptick in engaging social media content lately, that's also part of the plan. I'm here to ensure we're all connected and thriving in this academic journey.

Continuing:

## INTRODUCING NEW COLLEAGUES

Before landing here, I was deep into the scene as a Social Media Marketing Specialist in education. It was a crash course utilizing digital platforms to spread the good word about education. I also participated in international student clubs, particularly in the B2B space. A notable highlight was organizing Austria's largest entrepreneurship event series.

Why did I take on the eLearning Assistant role? The job description spoke to my passion for injecting innovation into education – the Institute's mission to shake things up aligned perfectly with my goals.

What's got me excited about this work? Diving into the challenges of the sustainable economy is the real deal. It's a fusion of different perspectives, and I'm all in to bring my skills and knowledge to the table. Let's raise awareness about sustainable practices and gain a comprehensive understanding of International Political Economy!

As your eLearning Assistant, I'm focused on more than just the tech side of things. I'm on a mission to create an environment that goes beyond grades and exams, preparing us for the complexities of the real world. I'm eager to collaborate with the Institute's esteemed faculty, brilliant students, and all our stakeholders to make this educational journey impactful. Let's kick off this journey with innovation, exploration, and excellence!



WU Vienna Campus, Building D4

© WU Vienna

Zimbalist

Zack



Zack Zimbalist on IPE website  
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IPE Logo  
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Polina

Lobanova



Polina Lobanova on IPE website  
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## IPE Means Success

# CONFERENCE ACCEPTANCES AROUND THE WORLD

Participation in scientific conferences is an integral part of academic work. We are pleased to report on numerous upcoming trips to conferences in Europe and America.

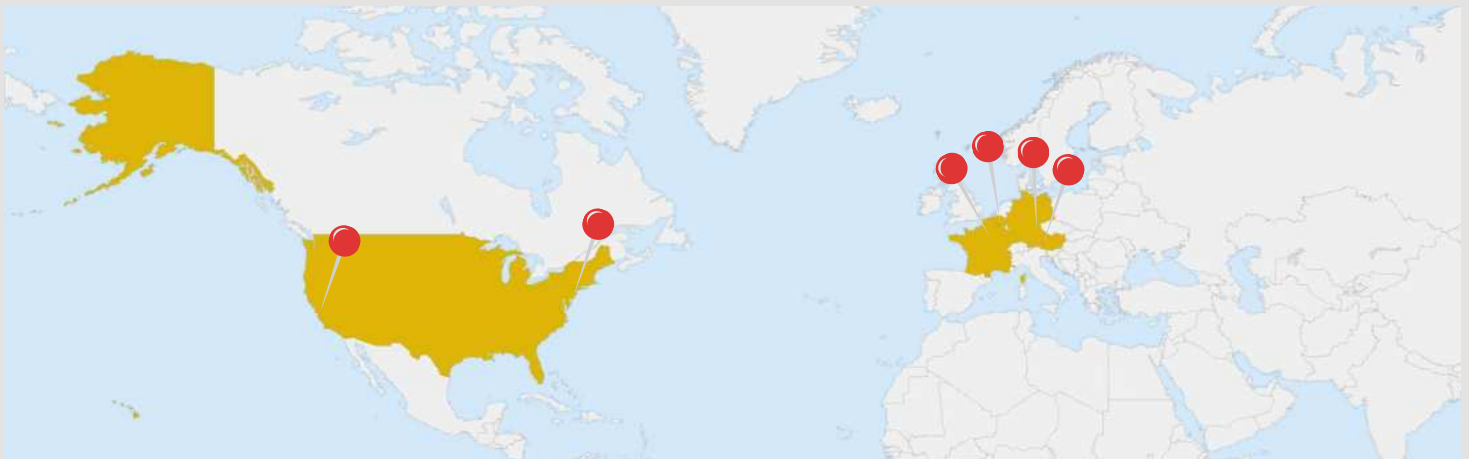
Success story by

ASHLEY B. SIMPSON, MSC

Teaching and Research Associate

Why, and under what conditions, does foreign direct investment (FDI) increase income inequality? How does FDI affect palm oil production and food security in Indonesia? Why do some countries' government institutions explicitly focus on women's empowerment and gender equality while others do not? Why do some governments subsidize environmentally "dirty" industries? How can we change academic and scholarship cultures to teach African Politics in a way that emphasizes African voices and perspectives? Why do some firms disclose their carbon emissions data while others do not, and what are the implications for government-industry dynamics and climate change? Why do some types of foreign aid boost formal employment while others do not?

Over the next few months, our team will travel to several conferences to seek feedback on our answers to these questions. Ashley and Sidan will present papers in San Francisco at the **International Studies Association conference** in April. Sidan will present his work linking FDI and income inequality. At the same time, Ashley will share her work with Jonas, analysing the causes of varying levels of support for women-owned businesses by governments' export credit agencies. Soon after, Sidan will go to Belgium to attend the **Global Food Security Conference**. He will support his co-authors Albert Hasudungan (Universitas Prasetiya Mulya) and Ingrid Fromm (Bern University of Applied Sciences) there as they present their paper linking FDI and food security. Teresa will be in **Salzburg, Austria**, in May to present her project linking carbon emissions, supply chains, and trade tariffs. Our post-doc Zack will be at the University of Bayreuth in Germany for the **VAD Africa Reconfigurations conference**. He will present his project on uplifting African voices and perspectives in African Politics courses. Finally, Jonas will attend the **Princeton Sovereign Finance Lab** to share his work with co-author Patrick Bayer (University of Glasgow), linking the U.S. Export-Import Bank and firms' environmental purposes. Soon after, Jonas will be in Paris for the **DebtCon7 conference** to present his work with Les Stanaland (University of North Texas), showing that the specific type of foreign aid, specifically loans or grants, matters in determining the size of the shadow economy.



# IPE Means Success

# AN OP-ED FOR A NEWSPAPER IN INDONESIA

*"I don't write to give joy to readers, but to give them a conscience."*

**Pramoedya Ananta Toer**

Success story by

D. G. SIDAN RAESKYESA, MSC

Teaching and Research Associate

Pramoedya Ananta Toer is my favorite writer. His quotes inspire me when it comes to writing an op-ed. Writing for newspapers' opinion sections allows us to share our ideas to construct our society for the better.

Fortunately, last year, one of my opinions was published by "Bisnis Indonesia," one of the leading national newspapers in Indonesia. It was in my mother language, Bahasa Indonesia, but don't worry, I will give you a glimpse of what it is about.



During my observations, I realized that foreign direct investment (FDI) in Bali (one of the beautiful islands in Indonesia, where my ancestors come from) shows a worrisome pattern. What I mean by worrisome is the concentration of the investment into service sectors, such as hotels and accommodation, real estate, and other services. As of 2022, up to 87 percent of total FDI in Bali was concentrated in the services sector.

But why should people in Bali worry? According to various studies, the concentration of FDI in the services sector may increase inequality. One plausible explanation is that the service sector often hires highly skilled labour rather than low-skilled labour in other sectors (e.g., agriculture). Thus, knowing that foreign companies usually pay higher wages than local companies, this situation will increase the income gap for Balinese people. Thus, the Bali Provincial Government should make more effort to allocate the FDI into more sectors that apply to labor conditions in Bali, such as the agriculture sector, to reduce the income gap.

Newspaper article in "Bisnis Indonesia"

© IPE / Raeskyesa

I hope this modest contribution can pique readers' and policymakers' interest in what is going on in Bali regarding FDI and its development.

## Meet Our Team

# MATTHIAS KOUREK THE ADMINISTRATOR AND THE WORLD AT LARGE

**How does a geographer end up in International Political Economy at the Vienna University of Economics and Business? Well, geographically relevant issues are sometimes not far from those studied in IPE. That's why the job was a "perfect match" for me.**

I was already very interested in geography as a subject in high school. This was primarily due to our very committed teacher, who presented geography to us not as a mere collection of factual knowledge but as the discipline of studying social and natural phenomena that impact space. This is how I first encountered the complexity of geography and decided to dedicate myself to this field during my studies. However, the course for this was probably set much earlier. As the child of an Austrian father and a Colombian mother, I grew up in the constant interplay of two continents, two cultures, two world views, and two languages. The combination of different cultural, economic, and even culinary approaches sparked an early interest in why the world and the people who populate it are the way they are. A professor in an introductory lecture in my bachelor's degree programme wanted to take away our "fear" of academic engagement with geographical issues by pointing out to us that everything that has to do with the space around us is geography or can be considered geography. We just had to look outside, so to speak, and discover the questions waiting for us there.

This became particularly evident in December 2014 when I had a key experience for my studies - although I only realised the full extent of it years later. We were at the country estate of a distant relative near the Colombian city of Cali. For the longest time, the conversations between those present were rather boring until politics came up. For whatever reason, I was also asked about geography, political views, and my attitude toward Colombia - I was only in the third semester of my degree then. As the conversation progressed, I became increasingly aware of the sometimes grossly denigrating way in which people spoke about their own country, their fellow citizens, and their society - and I realised that I would have to use the strength of geography's thematic diversity to engage more intensively with my "second homeland" in an academic context. The result of this "realisation" was ultimately a Bachelor's thesis and numerous seminar papers in various courses, all of which dealt more or less intensively with Colombia.

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Continuing:

## MEET OUR TEAM: MATTHIAS KOUREK

The culmination of this development was to be my Master's thesis, which – as with many students – turned out to be bigger, more extensive, and more time-consuming than initially planned. It also accompanied me when I began working as a secretary at the Institute for International Political Economy. It was finally completed in Autumn 2023, meaning that geography not only became the cornerstone of my academic education but also, in parallel, an arc spanning my professional development.

I started my first job while still studying for my bachelor's degree. I became a project manager in the incoming department of a travel agency. The job of this department was to bring youth music groups from all over the world to Austria and Europe for concerts and trips. In addition, we organised one of Vienna's largest youth music festivals, which consolidated my affinity for organisational and administrative work. I later moved to the Institute of Geography and Regional Research at the University of Vienna, where I was part of the scientific team in the population geography section as a student assistant. It was a glimpse behind the scenes of the university as an institution. Eventually, I was given the opportunity (after a coronavirus-related postponement) to do an internship at the Austrian Embassy in Buenos Aires, which suited both my geographical and my binational and, therefore, multicultural background.

The circle was completed at the Institute for International Political Economy, where colleagues from all over the world – from the USA to Austria, Germany, and Indonesia – work, contributing a wide range of experiences and perspectives and thus enriching the entire team. I am pleased to be able to make a small contribution to the development of the Institute with my perspectives, administrative experience, and a little pinch of humor.



Matthias Kourek, MA (Buenos Aires)  
© IPE, Kourek



Matthias Kourek, MA (Carinthia)  
© IPE, Kourek / Thurner



Matthias Kourek, MA (Vienna)  
© IPE, Kourek / NWS, Wimmer

# The People of IPE - Our Students

## NILS DOMENZ

**The world we live in today faces countless challenges, from global crises such as climate change to national, regional, or local issues involving homelessness, poverty, food shortages, and so much more. Since my last years of high school, I wanted to be able to contribute to solving such issues. Though I was always engaged in student representation at my school and in other projects beyond, I always felt as though we were either not taken seriously or I lacked the knowledge and skills to meaningfully shape society for the better.**

Then, I decided what to do after high school. I chose to move from my hometown in Germany to the Netherlands, more specifically Utrecht, where I am now doing my BSc in Philosophy, Politics, and Economics (& History), a programme that encapsulates all disciplines relevant for addressing societal issues as they are: Interdisciplinary, wicked, and complex. Throughout my Bachelor's, I narrowed down my focus more and more, and thorough electives and research papers, especially courses in economic history and development economics, sparked my interest, which is the area in which I now broadly want to work in after Uni. My main area of interest has become the relationship between (global) economic actors and societies, how best practices might be harmful or beneficial, and what governments can do to meaningfully engage with such actors to better their respective societies. For my exchange, WU offered a comparatively wide range of courses in that field, which was a compelling reason for me to come to Vienna (of course, paired with the fact that Vienna is gorgeous, and I was missing the mountains in the flat Netherlands).



Nils Domenz  
© IPE / Domenz

When selecting courses, I knew that I would not want to do neo-classical economics solely but wanted to take socioeconomics and political economy courses. As I had studied other disciplines before, taking a singularly economic perspective seemed like a step in the wrong direction for me personally. I took a course offered by the Institute for International Political Economy at WU (IPE), "FDI and Development" with Sidan Raeskyesa. The course was interesting, beneficial, and fun at the same time. I found the cutting-edge types of assignments as well as the focus on in-class discussions highly beneficial as they provide a space to engage with each other, discuss, and learn from the different perspectives brought to the table by peers and professors on an equal level. The course on FDI and Development was especially interesting: It provided me with a deep understanding of how FDI can benefit or hurt peripheral countries, strategies to mitigate or strengthen effects, and valuable tools to analyse them, which I will consider in my bachelor's thesis design and beyond.

In my exchange, I was also able to join one edition of the Pizza, Politics & (Motion) Picture (PPP), and I can only recommend it! Watching a movie, relaxing with peers and professors, and having fascinating discussions over free pizza was an excellent experience for me! In the future, I want to do a master's in development economics and work in the field. WU and especially IPE both motivated me to go in this direction and equipped me with valuable skills and knowledge to pursue this path. At the same time, continue striving for the betterment of societies in my local surroundings and beyond.



**CLICK FOR  
MORE INFO  
ABOUT  
"PPP"**

# Pizza, Politics & (Motion) Picture - 6th edition

## ON TO NEW WORLDS: *ELYSIUM*

Report by

D. G. SIDAN RAESKYESA, MSC

Teaching and Research Associate

What could be better than starting the year with pizza, a movie, and a political discussion? On 17th January, the Institute organised the 5th “Pizza, Politics, and (Motion) Picture” edition. Almost 20 students from the social sciences gathered to watch “*Elysium*” and discuss the main messages from the movie through the lens of International Political Economy.

Interestingly, we saw students who took classes from our Institute as well as new people studying at the TU Vienna, CEU, and the Medical University of Vienna. This means that PPP has increased its popularity beyond the borders of WU Vienna!

The various backgrounds of the attendees contributed to the fruitful discussion about the movie. For example, many students thought “*Elysium*” was about the inequality between developed and developing countries, while others believed that the film touched upon migration and technological change. The group also discussed whether inequality leads to unbalanced power over controlling resources and becomes the driver of migration from the Earth to Elysium. This led to connections between migration scenes in the movie and real-world examples of diaspora.

We finished the event with the question: Does inequality cause migration or vice versa? Why do people want to migrate to a better place like Elysium? Do they want better public services, such as a better healthcare system that can improve someone's health?



PPP Participants on 18th January 2024  
© IPE, Kourek



Advertisement for “*Elysium*”  
© IPE, Kourek

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Continuing:

# PIZZA, POLITICS & (MOTION) PICTURE



PPP will continue -  
see you again on the  
**18th April 2024**

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The  
**INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ECONOMY**  
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# PPP

PIZZA, POLITICS & (MOTION) PICTURE

Eat **FREE** pizza, watch a movie, discuss politics

# DAS WUNDER VON WÖRGL

Thursday  
📅 **18** Apr. 2024 | 📍 **D5** Lounge (6. OG) D5.6.029

🕒 18:00 | [www.wu.ac.at/ipe](http://www.wu.ac.at/ipe)

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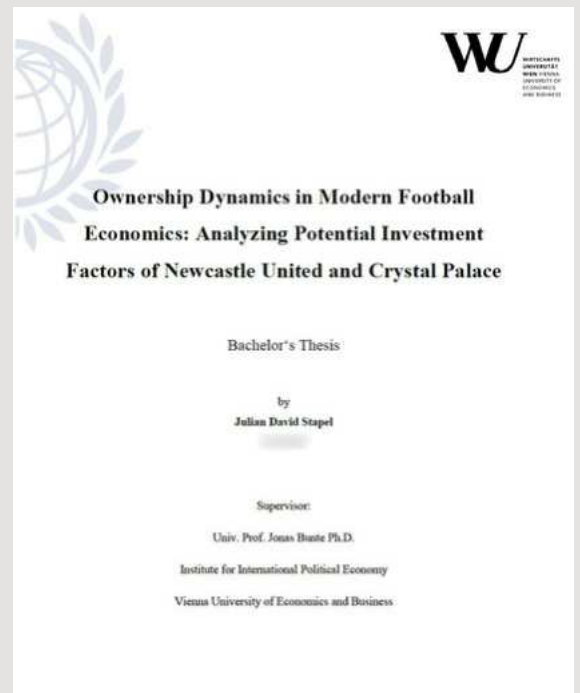
# Our Graduates - Bachelor

# JULIAN STAPEL: OWNERSHIP DYNAMICS IN MODERN FOOTBALL ECONOMICS

Like any other industry, football is constantly changing – new regulations here, new tactics there. While the fan communities welcome some changes, others may be less popular. The latter was certainly the case when the English Premier League (EPL) club, Newcastle United, underwent a takeover by the Public Investment Fund (PIF), a Saudi Arabian consortium, along with other investors in October 2021.

Because of the consortium's direct ties to the Saudi government, heavy criticism ensued even before the ownership change was made official. For example, critics often referred to accusations of human rights abuses by the state. Additionally, there were concerns over the club's massively increased spending power and how it would affect the league overall.

So, how did it come to this? Saudi Arabia's intentions of diversifying its portfolio by investing in sports, specifically football, were no secret. However, some questions remained unanswered. For instance, why choose Newcastle United and not another Premier League club like Crystal Palace? This ultimately led me to my research question (shortened): **Why did Saudi Arabia, through PIF, decide to invest in Newcastle United instead of other EPL clubs, like Crystal Palace, which had a similar market value and on-pitch success, before the investment?**



Cover Bachelor's thesis Julian Stapel  
© IPE / Stapel

Newcastle United  
© heyrabbiticons



Football and Money  
© Route66

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Continuing:

## OUR GRADUATES: JULIAN STAPEL

Through extensive literature research, I narrowed the possible explanations for my research question down to three hypotheses. The first two were mainly based on papers about value creation for stakeholders of football clubs and which factors can positively influence a club's value. This led me to choose a) the club's financial condition and b) their brand recognition as possible explanations. However, it soon became apparent that these two hypotheses alone did not consider the whole picture. The missing factor was the supporters. While their influence is partially included in the first two explanations, analysing the fan perspective independently was best. Therefore, the last hypothesis c) was regarding fan acceptance of PIF as a potential owner.

During the analysis, it quickly became apparent that all three hypotheses carry significant weight. However, during an interview with Chris Waugh, a journalist working for the sports newspaper "The Athletic" and an expert on all things about Newcastle United, he mentioned that fan acceptance, as proposed in the thesis, "was a bonus on top, rather than the main role it possibly played." Further research also pointed toward brand recognition having a significant impact on the investment, and that without it, the Newcastle takeover may have never come to fruition. Consequently, the hypothesis most likely to answer the thesis' research question was b) the club's brand recognition.

Last but not least, I'd like to mention that working on my bachelor's thesis helped me gain valuable knowledge that I will certainly use soon. Interviewing Chris Waugh was an especially beneficial learning experience, and I'd like to thank him again for helping me with my research.



Swing Bridge

© GordonBellPhotography, Getty Images Pro

# Our Graduates - Master

## ALEXANDER FURTNER: HOW TO RAISE SMALL-SCALE INDIGENOUS FARMERS' INCOME

*In my master's thesis, I analysed strategies to maximise the incomes of small-scale indigenous farmers in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, Colombia.*

Coffee and cocoa are two of the heaviest-traded primary goods worldwide. The largest share is consumed in the Global North, while the crops are almost exclusively grown in the Global South. Yet, most of the value-added is in the hands of roasters and retailers in the consuming countries while farmers struggle to make a decent living. The Arhuacos, one of the four indigenous peoples of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, Colombia, are at the forefront of this struggle. They want to gain fair access to the market and export their cosmovision, which seeks the balance between humans and nature.

Asoarhuaco, an Arhuaco farmer association, and the partner companies Amas la Sierra/Jaguar Siembra have chosen different strategies to bridge the indigenous ways of life and the logic of the market. Interestingly, the prices paid to the farmers differ between the two, leading to the research question: **"What enables the partner companies Amas la Sierra/Jaguar Siembra to offer a higher price per kilogramme for coffee and cocoa to Arhuaco producers than the cooperative Asoarhuaco?"**

Based on preliminary interviews with representatives of Amas la Sierra/Jaguar Siembra, who also offered me field access, I assumed that company size, the type of product traded (raw resources vs. final goods), and the choice of economic partners may be crucial to offering a higher income to the coffee and cocoa producers. While Amas la Sierra/Jaguar Siembra has a small administrative body, only exports final goods and sells their goods through Direct Trade and Community Supported Agriculture, ASOARHUACO is a larger organisation representing hundreds of farmers, sells raw goods and does so predominantly with the help of big retailers.



*Farmers hold fresh coffee beans on a coffee plant in the fields*  
© Wasan Tita, Getty Images

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Continuing:

## OUR GRADUATES: ALEXANDER FURTNER

Qualitative interviews, analysis of company data, and field trips have led to the conclusion that while all factors seem to influence the prices paid, the type of trade used and the choice of trading partners are of particular importance. Direct Trade and Community-Supported Agriculture might offer more possibilities to create networks with consumers who are willing to pay more for the products than regular resellers. Strategies like these could be a viable solution for other small-scale farmers in the Global South to secure fair and self-determined access to the market.

In addition to these results, this thesis enabled me to further my personal and academic development: From gaining access to and conducting research in a field with a different cultural background than my own to conducting interviews, data analysis, and field trips in Spanish to first-hand insights into the rich and complex history and culture of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta. Last but not least, the thesis has created personal bonds between the farmers and myself and left me with aspirations to play my part in supporting their cause.



Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta  
© prill, Getty Images



Arhuacos village in Colombia  
© alexa125, Getty Images



Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta  
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# Peeking into the lecture halls

## TEACHING IPE

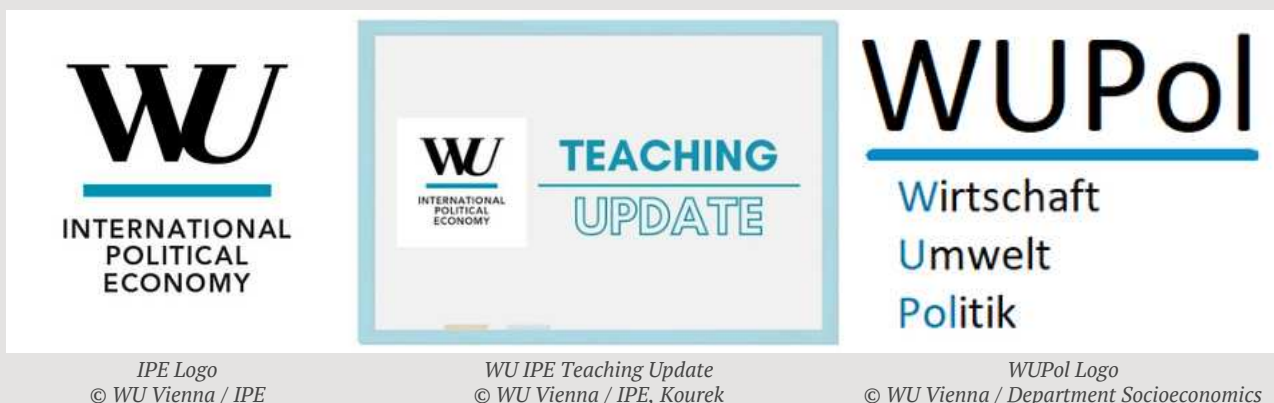
Teaching description by  
NICO SCHUH  
Teaching Assistant

### Sustainable Economics: Deepening and Application

With the start of the summer semester 2024, the Institute for International Political Economy is delighted to introduce you to the flagship course of the new WUPol degree programme offered by our team: **Sustainable Economics: Deepening and Application** (GER: "Zukunftsfähiges Wirtschaften: Vertiefung und Anwendung"; short: ZuWi VA). ZuWi VA builds upon students' experiences from the STEOP-course **VWL & ZuWi** and serves as a gateway to the field of political economy and the WUPol degree programme. In our new course, we aim to grant students a better understanding of how political actors, market actors, and citizens interact with each other and how these interactions shape our economy, society, and environment.

ZuWi VA is a lecture with interactive elements (GER: Vorlesungsübung; short: VUE). This allows us to meet our students in the lecture hall, where we can take advantage of the benefits of collective learning, as well as in smaller sections with up to 30 students, in which we can dive deeper into specific topics and create a learning experience more tailored to the strengths and weaknesses of our students. In total, the course is made up of 3 lecture sessions and 7 section sessions. Additionally, there is a final exam on the lecture's contents at the end of the course.

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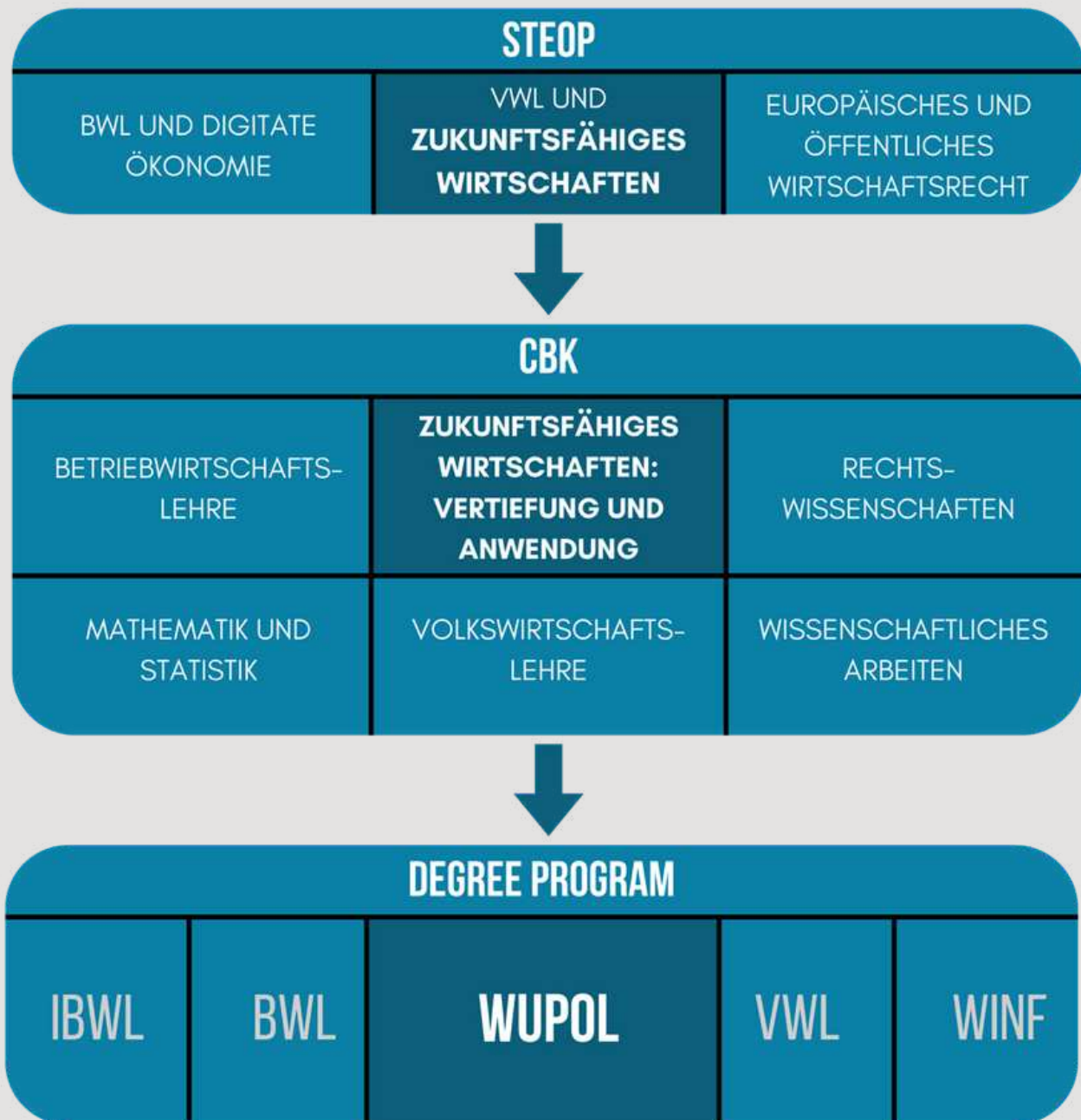


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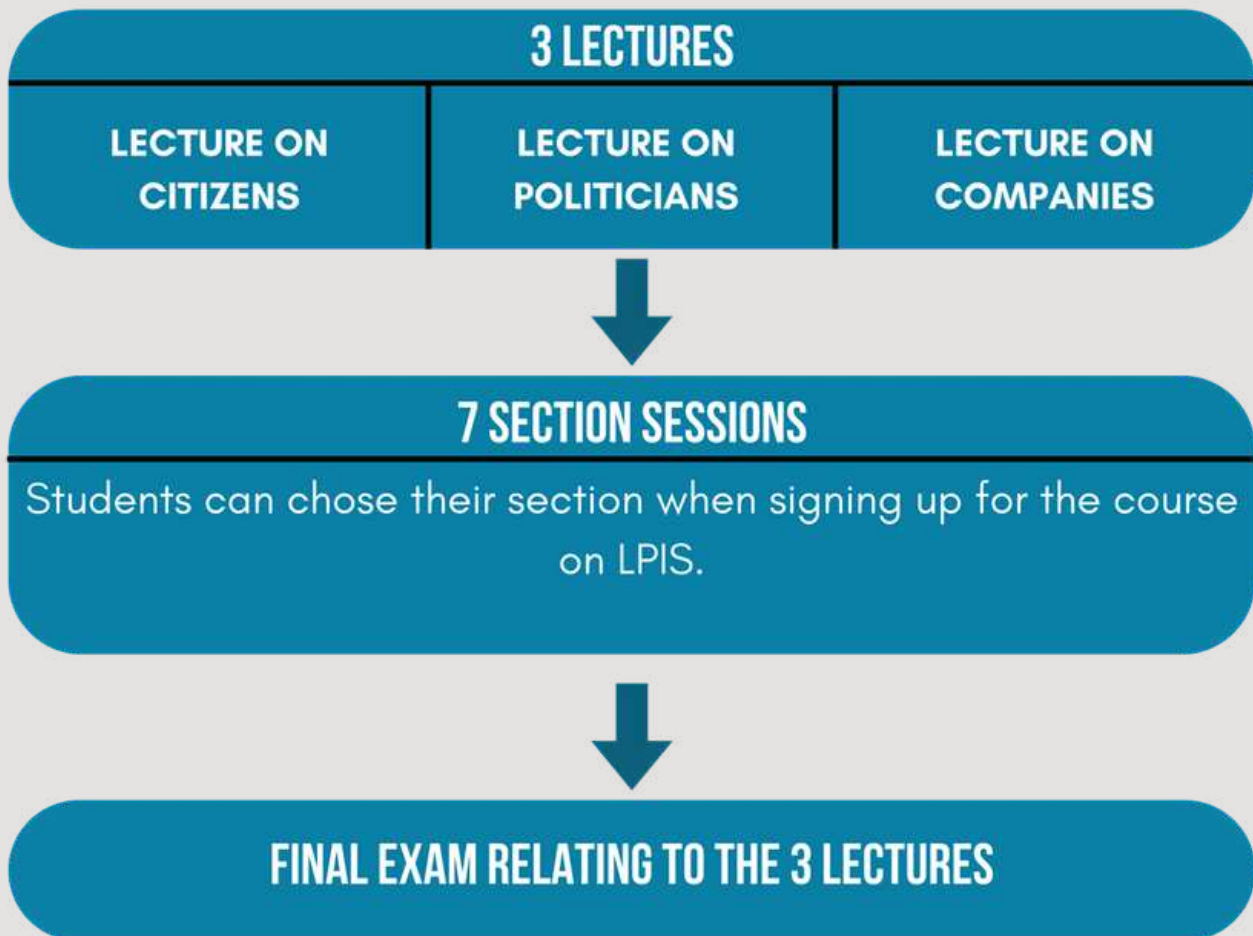
**TEACHING IPE: ZUWI-VA**

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[www.wu.ac.at/en/ipe/teaching](http://www.wu.ac.at/en/ipe/teaching)

**CLICK FOR  
MORE INFO**

*Continuing:***TEACHING IPE: ZUWI-VA**

The three lectures, led by the head of our Institute, Prof. Jonas Bunte, will focus on three actors (Politicians, Companies, and Citizens) and their roles on the path towards a sustainable future. Each lecture session will be dedicated to one actor, giving students a better understanding of how they exert their power and agency and what motivates their actions. This learning will be illustrated using scientific puzzles in which students must identify possible explanations for research questions based on real-life phenomena.

In the seven section sessions, students will have the opportunity to specialise in a field of their choosing. In the 2024 summer term, we are offering sections about six different research areas, as illustrated in the ZuWi VA course matrix below. Each section presents a different intersection of the three actors (Politicians, Companies, and Citizens) and the three subject areas (Globalisation, Society, and Environment) of ZuWi VA. The course will be expanded in the coming semesters, and a broad range of sections focusing on different intersections in our course matrix will be established. The section offering represents the exceptional diversity of the Department of Socioeconomics. It features courses like "The Political Economy of International Trade and Supply Chains" (taught by Dennis Kolcava) as well as "The Housing Crisis From a Social, Economic, and Political Perspective" (taught by Katharina Litschauer).

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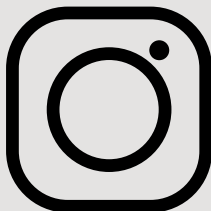
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# TEACHING IPE: ZUWI-VA

	GLOBALIZATION	SOCIETY	ENVIRONMENT
CITIZENS	The Political Economy of International Trade and Supply Chains 6001 Kolcava		Sustainable City 6047 Ware
POLITICIANS		Arbeit und Arbeitszeiten 5995 Haas / Digitalisierung und Sozialpolitik 6002 Goldboyz	Nachhaltige Mobilität 6000 Peer
COMPANIES		The Housing Crisis 6004 Litschauer	Pol. Ökonomie der Nachhaltigkeit 6003 Scholz-Wäckerle

The Institute for International Political Economy always aims to improve its relationship and communication with students and strives to offer a conducive, interesting, and engaging learning experience. To this aim and to help our students choose the section that best reflects their interests, we produced a series of informational videos for each ZuWi VA section. These videos are on the course website, our Instagram account (@zuwi\_va), and our YouTube channel (@zuwi\_va) and resonated exceptionally well with our students.

Instagram app icon  
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[www.instagram.com/zuwi\\_va](https://www.instagram.com/zuwi_va)

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[www.youtube.com/@zuwi\\_va](https://www.youtube.com/@zuwi_va)

# Teaching News

## INSIGHTS INTO “TRADE, POLITICS, AND SUSTAINABILITY”

Report by  
TERESA HÜBEL, MSC  
Teaching and Research Associate

If Donald Trump is re-elected as President of the United States, this will gravely impact not only US citizens, but economies around the globe. One area where Trump is known to shape policy in particularly drastic ways is trade: The last time he was in office, he dissolved NAFTA and started a trade war with China.

However, these are not isolated events. In recent history, protectionist policies have been on the rise. In 2020, the United Kingdom was the first to withdraw from the European Union. COVID prompted many countries to emphasise self-reliance more strongly and sparked debates about shortening supply chains and bringing critical industries home. What effect will these trends have on our society, our environment, and our economy?

The course **“Trade, Politics and Sustainability (PI 6137)”** addresses these and more issues. Why do some countries favour protectionist trade policies while others embrace free trade? Why does trade impact domestic job markets and economic inequality within countries? This course seeks to answer such questions by analysing how politics affects trade and how trade shapes politics.

The course is being offered as part of “Sustainable Economics and Business II (ZUWI II)” in the 2024 summer term. If you missed the registration deadline for this semester, Teresa will teach a similar course in the winter semester.



Audimax  
© WU Vienna



# Teaching IPE - Pedagogic Insight

## PODCASTS: TALKING ABOUT PUZZLES AND COMPETING EXPLANATIONS

The second learning goal behind our teaching philosophy is developing multiple explanations for variation in the world by identifying causal mechanisms. In addition to practicing this during class, how do we emphasize this skill in our assignments? We ask our students to apply this skill by constructing competing explanations for a puzzle and communicating their thought processes and findings in a podcast format.

In our ever-changing world, generating fresh ideas and critically evaluating them is essential. That's why our upcoming podcast assignment isn't just another task – it's a chance to hone these vital skills.

At its core, the podcast assignment encourages students to think outside the box and devise new explanations for complex issues. For example, why does Microsoft allow employees to unionise while Amazon does not? Why did Putin approve special payments for civil servants before the 2021 parliamentary elections, but not before the 2016 elections? In the 1994-1995 financial crises in Latin America, why did Mexico bail out its banks while Argentina did not?

But it's not just about brainstorming – it's also about carefully evaluating different explanations. Through this assignment, students will sharpen their ability to weigh competing hypotheses and determine which ones hold the most weight. Plus, the podcast assignment offers more than just academic growth. Students will also learn practical skills like using different technologies, communicating clearly, and working constructively on a team. This assignment also helps students become comfortable with uncertainty. We intend for students to learn to navigate gray areas with humility and respect for differing opinions.

By diving into case studies and crafting podcasts that explore different perspectives, students will be better prepared to face real-world challenges. This assignment isn't just about grades – it's about preparing students to thrive in an ever-changing world. Listen to our students great work here:

[www.wu.ac.at/en/ipe/third-mission/analysis](http://www.wu.ac.at/en/ipe/third-mission/analysis)

Teaching insight by  
ASHLEY B. SIMPSON, MSC.  
Teaching and Research Associate



# What our team is working on

# SHADOW ECONOMY

Research introduction by  
PROF. JONAS BUNTE, PHD  
Head of the Institute

In our latest working paper, Les Stanaland and I delve into a topic of immense importance for socio-economic development: The shadow economy. This term refers to unrecorded legal economic activities, thus not contributing to the national GDP. While it might offer short-term benefits to individuals, the broader societal effects are detrimental. Lower wages, longer working hours, and higher income inequality characterise societies with larger shadow economies.

Our research focuses on how politicians, driven by the desire to remain in office, can leverage foreign aid to mitigate these effects by promoting formal employment. Specifically, we examine the distinction between bilateral loans and grants. With their repayment obligations and predictable disbursements, we find that loans incentivise politicians to create formal employment opportunities. In contrast, grants, which come with fewer strings attached, do not have the same effect.

The implications of our findings are far-reaching. For policymakers and international donors, understanding how aid structure influences employment can guide more effective aid policies. Loans, particularly those earmarked for large-scale infrastructure projects, support economic development and encourage a shift from the shadow to the formal economy.



Jonas B. Bunte, Ph.D.  
© IPE / Bunte

# LOOKING AHEAD - IMPORTANT DATES



**18th April 2024**

**Pizza, Politics & (Motion) Picture**  
Seventh Edition

**2nd - 12th May 2024**

Registration period for ZuWi-VA  
courses, second half-semester

## *Scientist's joke*

*How many economists does it take to screw  
in a light bulb?*

*None. If the light bulb needed changing, the  
market would have done it already.*

# Get in Touch

## CLICK & FOLLOW

Are you still looking for inspiration for your bachelor's thesis?

We have compiled a list of potential topics and research questions for bachelor's theses that can help you find your way.



Follow us on LinkedIn

[linkedin.com/wu-ipe](https://www.linkedin.com/wu-ipe)



E-Mail for general questions	<a href="mailto:ipe@wu.ac.at">ipe@wu.ac.at</a>
Telephone	+43 (1) 31336 - 6722
Opening hours (Availability by phone)	<p><b>Mon:</b> 10:00 - 14:00</p> <p><b>Tue, Fri:</b> 10:00 - 13:00</p>