



CONTACT

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 Tbilisi, Georgia
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 Lasha Chochua

SKILLS

Programming

Python

R

Mathematica

Bash

Latex

Operating Systems

Linux

MacOS

Windows

Software & Tools

Visualisation

Matplotlib, Seaborn

Data handling/analysis

PostgreSQL, Numpy, Scipy, Pandas

AWS, Docker

Office

Languages

English

Georgian

Russian

German

AWARDS

- The Best Doctoral Thesis Prize, Bielefeld University
- Graduate School Scholarship, German Academic Exchange Service
- Graduate Student Scholarship, University Carlos III of Madrid

CERTIFICATES

Data Science Bootcamp Certificate
SPICED ACADEMY

RESEARCH INTEREST

- International Trade, Trade Policy
- Applied Game Theory, Political Economy
- Applied Econometrics
- Applied Machine/Deep Learning

CURRENT POSITION

07/2024 - to present
 International School of Economics Georgia Associate Professor

WORK HISTORY

12/2023 - 05/2024
 Kiel Institute for the World Economy Germany Postdoctoral Researcher

04/2019 - 03/2023
 Bielefeld University Germany Postdoctoral Researcher

06/2015 - to present
 PMC Research Center Georgia Scientific Board Member

10/2011 - 12/2016
 Free University of Tbilisi Georgia University Lecturer

07/2007 - 08/2007
 European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, United Kingdom Intern in Chief Economist's Office

03/2005 - 08/2006
 Poti Sea Port LTD Georgia Investment Projects Specialist

EDUCATION

2013 - 2019
 Bielefeld University Bielefeld, Germany Doctor of Economics

2008 - 2010
 University Carlos III of Madrid Madrid, Spain M.A. in Economic Analysis

2006 - 2008
 International School of Economics Tbilisi, Georgia M.A. in Economics

1999 - 2005
 Iv. Javakishvili Tbilisi State University Tbilisi, Georgia B.A. in International Economics

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

- International Trade (Bachelor & Graduate Courses)
- Economics of European Integration (Graduate Course)
- Law and Economics (Bachelor Course)

Can plurilateral agreements facilitate global trade liberalization? with James Lake and Gerald Willmann

The last successful global trade negotiations were the 1994 Uruguay Round, and there's uncertainty about the timing of the next successful round. While Preferential Trade Agreements have been reducing bilateral trade barriers, evidence suggests that "plurilateral agreements" can significantly lower MFN tariffs for most countries in specific sectors. In this paper, we expand existing models of endogenous trade agreements to analyze the network of trade agreements among three countries. We demonstrate how plurilateral agreements can promote global trade liberalization by overcoming exclusion incentives that dominant countries might have or addressing free-riding incentives that could deter dominant countries from participating in trade liberalization negotiations.

Tariff Cuts, Uncertainty Reduction, and the Force of Many: The Impact of Plurilateral Agreements with Irene Iodice

This paper examines the effects of targeted trade liberalization under plurilateral agreements, focusing on tariff reductions and reduced trade policy uncertainty. Using the Phase II expansion of the Information Technology Agreement (ITA), covering around 12% of global trade, as a quasi-experiment, we analyze three key mechanisms: tariff reductions, phased elimination of bound tariffs, and the "plurilateral effect." The latter likely results from improved policy coordination, reduced policy reversibility, and increased collective bargaining power. Our findings show that liberalised products under ITA improved market access by 4 to 6% compared to similar products. Reducing policy uncertainty and enhancing coordination significantly boost market access, with the magnitude of the "plurilateral effect" depending on the number of liberalising countries, underscoring the importance of reaching a critical mass in such agreements.

The Farsighted Stability of Global Trade Policy Arrangements with Stefan Berens and Gerald Willmann

In this paper, we study the stability of trade policy arrangements under different regulatory scenarios. Unlike previous papers, we consider an extensive set of trade policy arrangements and unlimited farsightedness of negotiating parties. In the standard three-country setup, global free trade (GFT) is uniquely stable under symmetric endowments. When two countries are small (large), the availability of Preferential Trade Agreements decreases (increases) the stability of GFT. Furthermore, in equilibrium strategic complementarity between Customs Unions (CUs) and Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) can ensure GFT stability. As asymmetry increases, GFT becomes unattainable, and the MFN regime is the only stable outcome without PTAs.

Endogenous Trade Policy in the Presence of Lobbying and Heterogeneously Ignorant Voters with Giorgi Papava

Based on the Protection for Sale approach of Grossman and Helpman (1994) we develop a theoretical model in which exogenously organised groups provide political contributions to influence trade policy. The incumbent government cares about contributions yet simultaneously takes into account the potential reactions of voters. We formally consider citizens' voting decisions, assuming they have heterogeneous ignorance thresholds, and explicitly derive the objective function of the policy-maker. We find that the resulting equilibrium structure of protection differs from the standard case. Free trade obtains only if no group lobbies and ignorance levels are the same. On average, more ignorant groups will have lower (if any) protection from the policy-maker and, also, groups represented by lobbies will not always be supported by the incumbent government.

The Impartial Observer under Uncertainty with Stefan Berens

This paper extends Harsanyi's Impartial Observer Theorem by introducing Knightian Uncertainty in the form of individual belief systems. It features an axiomatic framework of societal decision-making in the presence of individual uncertainty. The model allows the analysis of scenarios where individuals agree on the ranking but not on the likelihood of social outcomes. The preferences of the impartial observer are expressed by a weighted sum of utilities - each representing individual preferences with different belief systems. To incorporate common criticism of the framework of Harsanyi (1953), our approach is based on the generalized version by Grant et al. (2010). The belief systems are introduced as second-order beliefs following Seo (2009).

WORK IN PROGRESS

Sectoral Labor Mobility and Trade Policy with Ana Burduli and Giorgi Papava




Global Supply Chains under plurilateral cooperation with Irene Iodice and Daria Taglioni

Free trade agreements versus customs unions: welfare decomposition with Gerald Willmann




Why do we observe 'tariff peaks' after the preferential liberalization? with Gerald Willmann

POLICY RELATED RESEARCH




Quantifying the Impact of Foreign Investment Restrictions in Specific Sectors in Jordan

 USAID/Jordan, Economic Reform Activity  Senior Economist  Present


Corporate Income Tax System Evaluation

 USAID, GGI, ISET Policy Institute  Consultant  2023




Tax Expenditure Analysis for Georgia

 USAID, GGI, Georgian Ministry of Finance  Leading Expert  2021




RIA on Establishment of Employment Mechanism in Georgia

 PMCG, GIZ  Team Leader  2017

RIA on Estonian Corporate Income Tax Model Implementation in Georgia (in force since 01.01.2017)

 USAID, GFG, Association of Young Economists of Georgia  Leading Expert  2016

Joint Feasibility Study on Georgia-China Possible Free Trade Agreement (in force since 01.01.2018)

 PMC Research Center, University of International Business and Economics (China),
Georgian Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development  Leading Expert from Georgia  2015