KIEL Institut

The Kiel Institute at a Glance

Our mission

The Kiel Institute aims to be Europe's preeminent research institute for global economic affairs, combining cutting-edge research on par with leading economics departments with visible and lasting policy impact on the national and international level.

To achieve this, we are committed to fostering a strong culture of **research excellence** and intellectual openness, supported by modern career paths, an extensive international network, and a rigorous doctoral program. In a rapidly shifting economic and technological environment, our approach prioritizes innovation, change and curiosity to grasp new opportunities for impactful research and policy contributions as they arise.

We are deeply committed to having **observable impact** by producing policy-relevant research and providing research-based policy advice. Through our research, we put new topics and ideas on the agenda and shape the policy debate in Germany, Europe, and internationally. We are dedicated to transferring the insights from data-driven research into the political process and the wider public debate. Our research hub in Berlin with CEPR plays a central role for the dissemination of our research, as does our commitment to remain a leader in forecasting.

Our **global ambition** is to be a central node in research and policy networks on international economic affairs. To achieve this, we continuously seek to attract outstanding scholars, build new international partnerships, and deepen our cooperation with leading research institutions and universities in Germany and internationally. As the only economic research institute dedicated to international economics in Germany, we initiate and facilitate public conversations on global economic affairs and maintain an active conference and event calendar.

Our Research Centers

The operating system of the world economy is changing before our eyes. Growing protectionism and systemic competition between the U.S. and China are fragmenting global trade and finance along political lines. Germany's and Europe's prosperity are deeply tied to globalization and an open world economy, raising difficult trade-offs between openness and security. Meanwhile, the climate transition, migration pressures, and rapid technological change demand international cooperation and societal adaptation. These challenges guide the Institute's research agenda.

Organized in **five thematic research centers**, each composed of individual research groups, we operate in flat department-like structures that facilitate exchange, interdisciplinary cooperation, and idea generation. The Institute promotes an open, constructive, and inclusive work environment that enhances gender equality, diversity, and academic freedom.

- The **RC Macroeconomics** combines Germany's top forecasting group (Prof. Stefan Kooths) with two of Europe's leading research groups in macrofinance (Prof. Moritz Schularick) and monetary economics (Prof. Lena Dräger). At the beginning of September 2025, Prof. Kaspar Zimmermann joined the RC. His research focuses on the role of firms in the macroeconomy.
- The **RC Trade** studies international trade and investment, as well as the economic and political repercussions of globalization. The RC consists of Germany's leading research groups covering international trade and investment (Prof. Holger Görg), innovation and competition (Prof. Dirk Dohse), as well as trade policy (Prof. Julian Hinz).
- The **RC Global Transformation** studies transformational processes that challenge the global commons, social cohesion, and global health. It uniquely combines top-down quantitative modeling of environmental change (Prof. Wilfried Rickels) with bottom-up behavioral approaches understanding societies' capacity to cope with these challenges (Prof. Ulrich Schmidt).
- The **RC International Development** is one of Europe's leading centers for research and policy advice on the international dimension of development. Led by Prof. Tobias Heidland, it has a strategic focus on Africa, with a particular focus on international migration and migration policies.
- The **RC International Finance** studies big, policy-relevant challenges in international finance and geoeconomics. Research in the groups led by Prof. Christoph Trebesch and Prof. Sebastian Horn studies questions at the intersection of finance and geopolitics. In September 2025, Prof. Cathrin Mohr has joined to establish a new group on geoeconomics and political economy.

Our Research Initiatives

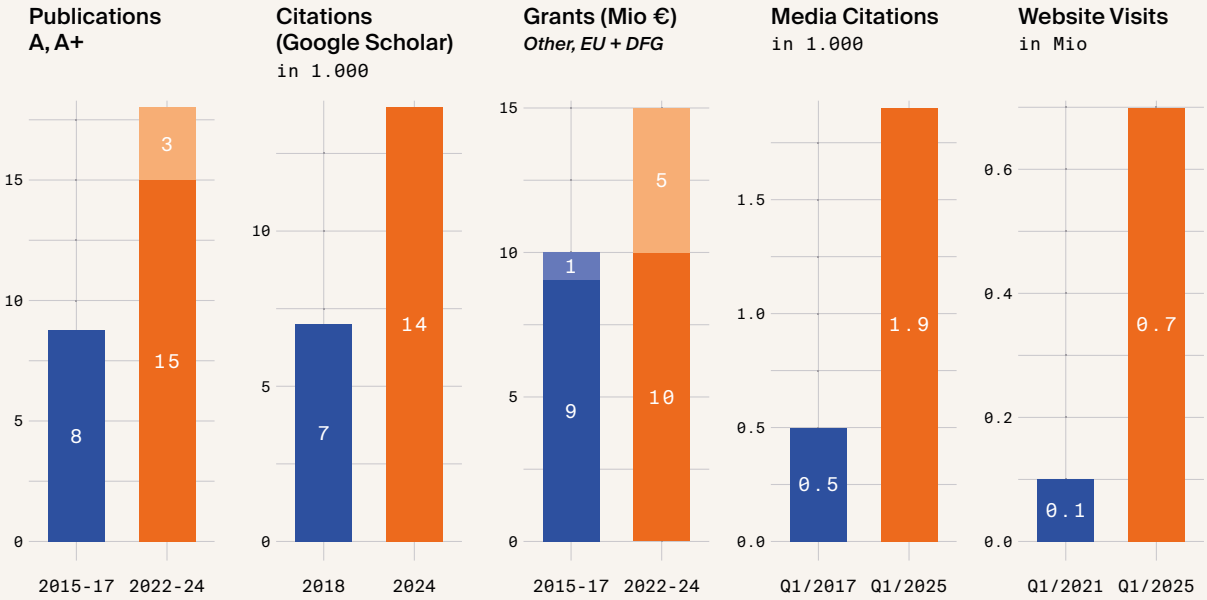
Four **cross-cutting initiatives** tie together our research in core areas across the five research centers, our four institute initiatives coordinate research, policy advice, and organize our flagship annual academic conferences on Geoeconomics, China, and Africa.

- The **Geoeconomics Initiative** is led by Prof. Christoph Trebesch and focuses on the economic, geopolitical, and security dynamics that increasingly shape the world economy. The initiative has played the central role in establishing the institute as the global leader in the emerging field of geoeconomics and organizes the Institute's annual Geoeconomics conference with CEPR.
- The **China Initiative** brings together the institute's expertise on China to better understand the economic model, China's global strategy, as well as its implications for Europe and the world economy. The initiative is coordinated by Prof. Andreas Fuchs and organizes high-profile formats like the Global China Conversations and the annual Kiel-Göttingen-CEPR China Conference.
- The **Africa Initiative** is coordinated by Prof. Rainer Thiele and links the institute's work on African development, trade, and finance. It has coordinated the Megatrends Africa project and organizes the annual Kiel-CEPR Africa Conference.
- The **Kiel Centre for Globalization** is coordinated by Prof. Holger Görg and connects researchers from the Institute and Kiel University to jointly study the evolution of global supply chains, and the performance of special economic zones. It organizes events like the Aarhus-Kiel Workshop and the Kiel Trade Talks.

Our main achievements

In the past years, we have substantially raised the quality and impact of our research. We have more than doubled publications in top general interest and top field journals. New citations to works by researchers of the institute on Google Scholar have risen from 7,000 to more than 14,000 per year in the period 2018-2024. Traffic on our website has risen six-fold in the past four years alone, now annualizing 2.5 million visits. Media appearances, interviews, and citations have more than tripled relative to levels reached seven years ago. The following chart summarizes our key performance indicators.

Kiel Institute KPIs



Notes: Publications: A+ includes the top-5 econ journals plus Nature & Science. A includes 27 top-field & general interest econ journals and the top-2 health journals. Citations: New google scholar citations to works by researchers that were employed by the Institute in the specific year. Grants: Acquired funds in a specific year. Media Citations: Number of clippings in a fixed set of major German and international media outlets. Website Visits: general visits to all pages of our main website, tracked via "Matomo" (tracking method is continuously adjusted according to technical circumstances).

In 2023, we have opened our Berlin hub that sharply increased our public visibility. The Berlin hub serves as the key platform for our transfer activities and the development of our academic network in cooperation with CEPR. We have established three new flagship conferences in Berlin – on Geoeconomics, Africa and China.

We gained global recognition and impact with the Ukraine Support Tracker that quantifies the military, financial and humanitarian aid provided to Ukraine by governments around the world. The project has become the global reference on Ukraine aid, cited at G7 meetings and is regularly cited in major international media like *The Economist*, *New York Times*, *Financial Times* and *CNN*.

The Kiel Institute has become a global leader in geoeconomics research. Launched in 2021, our Geoeconomics Initiative has established an interdisciplinary global research network, created the world's top academic conference on geoeconomics, and

helped shape the field through high-impact studies on sanctions and China's lending, among others. Building on this success, we have submitted plans for a strategic expansion to establish a new research center.

The Institute has shaped the German and European debates on defence investments with research reports, media contributions, and public engagement. Our comparative research on European security investment helped build the intellectual ground for the 2025 constitutional change exempting defense spending from the debt brake. With a strong presence at for a like the Munich Security Conference, we established ourselves as a leading voice in defence economics.

We have developed the Kiel Institute Trade Evaluation Model KITE to provide assessments of trade policy in real time. With KITE, we introduced a state-of-the-art quantitative trade model as a basis for research-based policy advice on trade policy. Its results feature prominently in national and international media and its quantitative output is available via our Kiel Trade & Tariffs Monitor. Our AI-based Kiel Trade Indicator tracks global trade flows in real time, offering faster, broader, and more accurate insights than previous indicators.

We have created a state-of-the-art data hub that serves as a backbone for research in international economics. With over 100,000 monthly visits, the Institute's data hub has become a central platform for accessing key research datasets and indicators.

We have built a cluster for economic research on Africa in Germany. With support from the German Economics Ministry, the EU, and the Leibniz Association, we have become a key hub for research on African development. We produced over 40 papers, built major datasets, adapted the KITE model for African trade policy, and have been selected by the Gates Foundation as the global partner for a major project on the redesign of development policy.

We have developed our long-standing Advanced Studies Program into a structured PhD program in international economics. It offers a strong core curriculum and electives by top scholars like Hélène Rey, Marc Melitz, and Laura Alfaro. The program attracted strong demand from excellent applicants, of whom 80 % are female.

Institutional developments

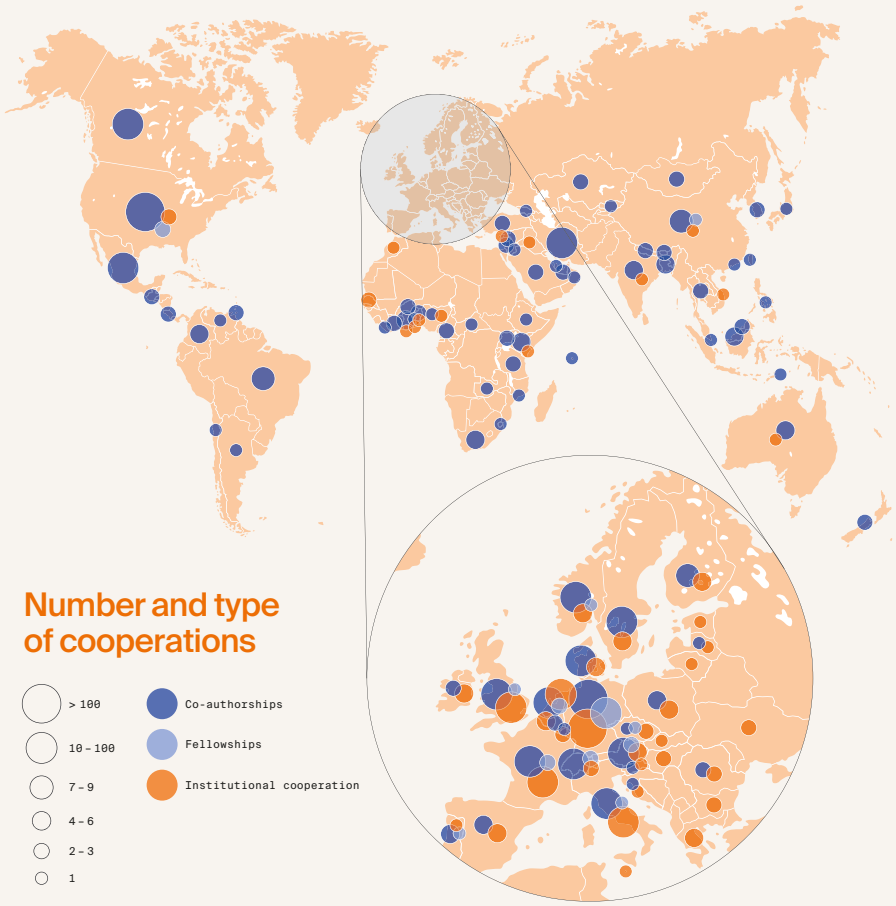
New personnel concept and new appointments. Our new personnel concept builds on more tenure-track professorships and builds closer ties with leading research universities. Since 2023, five new professorial appointments have been completed or are in the final stages of the appointment process, with three more currently in preparation.

Progress on gender equality. When the new president arrived in June 2023, there were no female professors at the Institute. We have now increased the number to two, and two more are likely to join in the foreseeable future. This being said, we are at the beginning of the way.

New guest professors and fellowships. We have implemented guest professor and international fellow programs to bring outstanding researchers to the Institute, enriching our academic environment and fostering idea generation and exchange.

New academic cooperations. We have extended or reanimated cooperations to build our academic network. For our new appointments, we have strategically expanded our cooperation with universities in Northern Germany and Berlin and have broken new ground in terms of the types of cooperation that integrate professors into our activities. At the same time, we have deepened collaborations and organized joint events with institutions such as Sciences Po, Bocconi University, the African School of Economics, but also with think tanks such as the Global Asia Institute, CF40 and the Peterson Institute for International Economics, among others.

Kiel Institute Cooperation Network



What others say about us

"The Kiel Institute for the World Economy is Europe's most important institution for the study of the global economy. I have known its work well since the days of Herbert Giersch. It was the leading European institution then. It is the leading European institution now."

Martin Wolf, Chief Economics Commentator, Financial Times

"The Kiel Institute for the World Economy continues to be one of the most respected and intellectually rigorous organizations in the world conducting research into global challenges and providing timely economic policy advice."

Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Director General, World Trade Organization

"The Kiel Institute is an essential voice on the state of the world economy. Its high-quality research and policy focus on the key global economic issues of our time is unparalleled and very much needed in a time of heightened global uncertainty."

Pierre-Olivier Gourinchas, Chief Economist, International Monetary Fund

"The Kiel Institute sets the highest possible standards for data and analysis. The Institute has led the world with its work on Ukraine, Russia, trade and much more."

Simon Johnson, Professor, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Nobel Laureate

"The work of the Kiel Institute for the World Economy deserves the highest recognition – both for its research that is relevant to current affairs and of the highest quality, and for its contribution to public debate."

Fritzi Köhler-Geib, Executive Board, Deutsche Bundesbank

"In today's environment, it is good to have the IfW – a reliable, fact-based voice in an increasingly hectic and noisy world. I find its analyses and reports both well-founded and helpful for entrepreneurial decision-making."

Marc Fielmann, CEO Fielmann AG

"The IfW is indispensable for political and economic discourse in Germany."

Mathias Döpfner, CEO Axel Springer SE

"With a long tradition, short paths, and a constructive approach, the Kiel Institute for the World Economy builds a bridge between science and politics. I personally value its high level of expertise and am glad to rely on it."

Daniel Günther, Prime Minister of Schleswig-Holstein

"The Kiel Institute for the World Economy provides excellent economic analyses that make an important contribution to advising the Federal Government."

Wolfgang Schmidt, former Federal Minister and Head of the Federal Chancellory