

34.17/26/1/EC1 EURO PhD School on Retail Operations, September 2025, Barcelona, Spain

EURO Working Group on Retail Operations PhD Summer School

Calella de Palafrugell – Spain

Organized by IESE Business School

Sep 29 - Oct 1, 2025

Final Report

Following a first edition organized in Stockholm in 2023, Laura Wagner and Victor Martínez de Albéniz of IESE Business School organized the second summer school of the EURO Working Group on Retail Operations in 2025.

The summer school offered a PhD level course on Retail Operations and Analytics. We provided best-in-class training for PhD students interested in Retail. This year, we focused on three one-day lessons on important retail contemporary challenges.

Aims and scope:

After the course, students were expected to:

- Possess an advanced knowledge base on operations research and other analytics methodologies in the context of retail operations
- Be able to critically evaluate and assess different methodological approaches in relation to their own PhD research
- Be able to communicate and discuss complex operational problems in retail operations with their peers and experts in the field
- Be able to design solution approaches for industrial case studies and present these to relevant stakeholders

Teaching and learning activities:

The course consisted of 3 full days of course work, together with 4 weeks of previous preparation and 1 week of posterior work on a short paper about the hackathon findings.

On day 1, Prof. Dorothée Honhon (University of Texas at Dallas) offered a masterclass on sustainability. Indeed, sustainability is a pressing concern for the retail industry, which is wasteful in many aspects.

On day 2, Prof. Mihalis Markakis (IESE Business School) offered a masterclass on pricing. Classic models and optimization techniques were discussed, with an exploration of new mechanisms.

On day 3, Profs. Laura Wagner and Victor Martínez de Albéniz (IESE Business School) run a hackathon with the support of the UK retailer Sainsbury's. We explored how their layout decisions impact their sales and devised improved store designs. This is a relatively unexplored aspect of retail planning that should grow in future years. Students, working in groups, had to write a short research paper with hypothesis, evidence and next steps, that may lead to a real research paper in the future.

Course faculty and scientific committee:

Dorothée Honhon, University of Texas, Dallas (teacher day 1)

Mihalis Markakis, IESE Business School (teacher day 2)

Victor Martínez de Albeniz, IESE Business School (teacher day 3 and organizer)

Laura Wagner, IESE Business School (teacher day 3 and organizer)

Laszlo Torjai, Sainsbury's (teacher day 3)

Alexander Hübner, Technical University Munich

Pedro Amorim, University of Porto

Supporting entities and financing:

The summer school was generally financed through the support of EURO (15,000€), registration fees (3,800€) and IESE Business School (support, logistics, material resources – 1,000€). We are very grateful for the generous support of EURO so that the attendance fees could be kept very low.

We had 20 participants and 5 teachers in a three-day event, which included transportation to the venue, classroom booking, meals, and accommodation.

List of participants

	Name	Surname	INSTITUTION
1	Shahnawaz	Akhtar	IESE Business School
2	Anju	Anju	Kuhne Logistics University
3	Emre	Çakir	IESE Business School
4	Daniela	Ferreira Fernandes	University of Porto
5	Joshua	Gladstone	University of Massachusetts
6	Zeynep	Gürkan	IESE Business School
7	Armin	HAJIBEYGI	HEC
8	Alicia	Hamann	WHU
9	Melika	Khandanbarkoosaraee	Stockholm Business School
10	Till	Krieger	TU Munich
11	Soo Youn	Kwon	TU Munich
12	Miguel	Lunet	University of Porto
13	Margarita	Rakhimova	Koç University
14	Luis	Rojas-Romero	University of Stockholm
15	Claudio	Sanchez	IESE Business School
16	Susana	Santos Fernández	Universidad Carlos III
17	Efe	Senyuva	TU Eindhoven
18	Mariana	Silva Sousa	University of Porto
19	Kailin	Yang	TU Munich
20	Boyang	Zhang	IESE Business School

Photos from the classroom and social activities





