

Last update: Sep 2021

Supervisor: Prof. Mirco Tonin

Research area(s): Empirical applied microeconomics using experimental, administrative or survey data.

Current research: see <https://sites.google.com/site/mircotonin/research>

Available thesis projects: Contact the supervisor to discuss topics of interest. Proficiency with econometric methods (e.g., regression analysis) and data management skills are required to write a good thesis.

Supervisor: Prof. Davide Ferrari

Research area: Statistics, applied econometric methods for policy analysis

Current research: My methodological research focuses on the development of model selection and inference methods for complex data. Recently, I have started to apply my methods to spatio-temporal econometric data in order to improve the quality of inferences and predictions in the context of policy evaluation and analysis. This allows me to combine my interest in statistical methodology with my interest in econometric applications.

Available thesis projects:

Project 1) Robust aggregation of non-representative polls with applications to political opinion data. A poll aggregator tracks and combines individual polls or surveys conducted by different organizations in order to measure public sentiment on key issues such as the rating of a political figure or the perceived effectiveness of a policy measure. Common aggregators simply take averages of polls leading to severely biased estimates and misleading forecasts in the presence of non-representative polls. This project develops an aggregator by applying a statistical technique called exponential tilting; the resulting aggregator is robust in the sense that it mitigates the effect of biased individual polls, thus leading to more accurate inference and forecasting. The methodology will be illustrated through the analysis of the 2020 US presidential election polling data.

Atkeson, Lonna Rae, and R. Michael Alvarez, eds. The Oxford handbook of polling and survey methods. Oxford University Press, 2018.

Project 2) Assessing the effect of government restrictions on the Covid-19 outbreak. This project develops a new statistical model to monitor the time evolution of the COVID-19 outbreak across multiple geographical areas, and associated reproduction rate R_0 . Differently from previous approaches, the new model takes into account spatial interactions between geographical areas, thus leading to more accurate inference for the R_0 index at the local level (e.g., province, region, etc). The new model will be used to investigate the effectiveness of a number of policy restrictions on the reproduction rate, including travel restrictions, school attendance, and carry out a comparative evaluation of health policy measures in Italy.

G. Chowell. Fitting dynamic models to epidemic outbreaks with quantified uncertainty: Aprimer for parameter uncertainty, identifiability, and forecasts. Infectious Disease Modelling, 2(3):379–398, 2017.

Supervisor: Prof. Alexander Moradi

Research area: Public Economics, Regional Economics, Identity Economics, Political Economy; South Tyrol

Current research: My research focuses on the evaluation of public policies. I am also interested in fundamental causes of economic development. My work is applied, quantitative domain.

Language: German, English

Available thesis projects:

Project 1) Time preference of policy makers, proposed and implemented policies. Does the expected time in power have an effect on planned and implemented policies? This is a hypothesis that can be quantified. First, the project involves classifying the proposed policies as taken from party election manifestos. These are "promised policies". Second, the promised policies should be checked with what policies were actually implemented. An ideal (and do-able) testing ground are the provinces of South Tyrol and Trentino.

The dissertation can also be written in Italian with Prof. Ravazzolo as supervisor.

On classification:

Verberne, Suzan; Eva D'hondt; Antal van den Bosch and Maarten Marx. 2014. "Automatic Thematic Classification of Election Manifestos." *Information Processing & Management*, 50(4), 554-67.

Lehmann, Pola; Matthieß, Theres; Merz, Nicolas; Regel, Sven and Annika Werner. 2015. *Manifesto Corpus*. Berlin: WZB Berlin Social Science Center. <https://manifesto-project.wzb.eu/>

Project 2) Public Policy Evaluation. I take on projects that aim to apply public policy evaluation methods, such as randomized control trials, instrumental variable regressions, regression discontinuity designs, from surveying to data analysis. Ideally, this should involve a partner from the public administration whereby the dissertation is following and evaluating an actual policy change (at the local level).

Fritz Sager und Markus Hinterleitner. 2014. „Evaluation.“ In Schubert Klaus und Nils C. Bandelow, *Lehrbuch der Politikfeldanalyse*, 3. Auflage, De Gruyter Oldenbourg, (438-462).

Project 3) Identity Economics and Politics. By shaping preferences, beliefs and norms, identity influences people's choices. First, the project should aim to measure identity. Identity is multidimensional, but the project should focus on one identity (e.g. ethnicity, gender, religion, occupational class). Second, it should test responses when identity becomes more salient, e.g. using indicators such as voting behaviour and willingness to contribute to public goods. The project may lean towards behavioural economics and implement field experiments combine it with an online surveys, or use historical shocks using existing observational data. What are the implication for identity politics?

Akerlof, George A. and Rachel E. Kranton. 2000. "Economics and Identity." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 115(3), 715-53.

Atkin, David; Eve Colson-Sihra and Moses Shayo. 2021. "How Do We Choose Our Identity? A Revealed Preference Approach Using Food Consumption." *Journal of Political Economy*, 129(4), 1193-251.

Supervisor: Prof. Ivo De Gennaro

Research area(s): Ethics, Philosophy of science

Current research: My research is in fundamental and applied ethics, including the ethics of science. Currently, I'm interested in understanding trends in the evolution of scientific knowledge, science governance, and the relation between the scientific and the – broadly construed – political sphere.

Available thesis projects: Contact me to discuss possible thesis topics.

Supervisor: Prof. Ralf Lüfter

Research area(s): Basic Questions of *Ethics; Responsibility Ethics; Ethics of Economics; Philosophy of Economics*

Current research: The character of my research is largely interdisciplinary. I am mainly working at the intersection between Ethics and Economics. My focus is on basic research in the field of philosophical ethics. The methodological approach is that of hermeneutic phenomenology. Over the last few years "responsibility" has become a thematic focus, in as much as "responsibility" itself has become a key concept in present day

ethics. I am particularly interested in the ethical dimension of decision-making processes and in an ethical analysis of all those elements that are constitutive of decisions.

Available thesis projects: *Contact the supervisor to discuss available topics (e.g. The Scope of Ethics in Public Policy; Building Integrity in Public Sector Operations; Ethical Leadership etc.)*

Supervisor: Prof. Kaniovskiy Yuriy

Research area(s): Econometrics of business cycles, Markov models in survey analysis.

Current research: *The dynamics of productive capacity utilization over business cycles.*

Available thesis projects: *Contact the supervisor to discuss available topics. The most recent reference: Exploring the Dynamics of Business Survey Data Using Markov Models,*

***Computational Management Science**, 2019, 16(4), p. 621-649 (with W.Hölzl and S.Kaniovski)*

***Comment.** In general, a solid background in mathematics and statistics is **desirable**. There are topics related to risk analysis (credit and systemic). However, I am not sure that they are relevant dealing with LM-63 students.*

Supervisor: Prof. Laura Valle

Research area(s): Private Law, Contract Law, Fundamental Rights, Internet Law, Consumer Law

Current research: My current research interests deal with legal instruments for the sustainability and corporate social responsibility, digital aspects of contract law and fundamental rights, legal issues about the succession of family enterprises.

Available thesis projects:

Project 1: Public Procurement Contracts and EU Green Deal

Project 2: Public Procurement Contracts in the National Recovery and Resilience Plan

Project 3: The digitalization of Public Procurement Contracts

Project 4: The digital Citizenship

Supervisor: Prof. Steve Stillman

Research area(s): labor economics, health economics, political economy and development economics

Current research: My research focuses on empirical labour economics, specializing in the behavior of individuals and households, and the interplay between government policy and human behavior. I have done extensive work examining the impact of migration on immigrants and their families exploiting a lottery used to allocate migrant quota slots. In recent work, I have also examined voting behavior along a number of dimensions and how individuals have responded to changes in a number of policies, including minimum wages, the drinking age and doctor's fees.

Available thesis projects: "Contact the supervisor to discuss available topics"