

# Bibliographical newsletter

11/11/2018

Year 4, Number 2

In the following pages you'll find bibliographical news on recently published papers and on open source works in the field of policy evaluation.

Information has been organized by Author, following a first-in, first-served criterion. Nevertheless, here are some previews of the methods applied in the research works presented:

- ➔ Dif-in-dif
- ➔ Propensity score matching and Mahalanobis matching
- ➔ Control-function approach
- ➔ Random trial
- ➔ Non parametric decomposition
- ➔ (Spatial) Regression discontinuity design

... and much more

In this number, you'll find works analysing:

- The Smart Industrial Specialisation
- Many topics on regional policies: EU vs national policies? What the effect of territorial capital? What impact is found during the crisis? Is there a link between regional policies and migrations?
- The effect of audit publicity on tax compliance
- Active labour market policies
- The link between job insecurity and wage distribution
- Information barriers as an explanation for gender segregation and social stratification in higher education
- Young migrant's integration in education

*By Elena Ragazzi and Lisa Sella*



**This newsletter circulates bibliographical information about recently issued research work concerning impact evaluation. It is fed by the contribution of the authors, who remain responsible for the correctness and completeness of information and for the quality of the work. The editors manage the newsletter on a volunteering basis. We hope that it will foster a reflection on the evaluation experiences so as to improve methodological tools and to ease their correct application, and that it will encourage a discussion on the latest advancements, by easing their diffusion.**

The next bibliographical newsletter will occur in SPRING.

Please send to [mlist@ircres.cnr.it](mailto:mlist@ircres.cnr.it)

- ➔ new open source works (reports, working papers, papers and presentations discussed at conferences). In this case send
  - the full bibliographical reference
  - the link to download it,
  - a short abstract (no more than 250 words)
- ➔ bibliographical references of published works (articles or books). In this case send
  - the full bibliographical reference
  - a short abstract (no more than 250 words)

**WITHIN March 15<sup>th</sup>**

Please follow the format of the following pages that can be downloaded [here](#)

<b>Full bibliographical reference:</b> Crescenzi, R., de Blasio, G. and Giua, M. (2018): Cohesion Policy incentives for collaborative industrial research: evaluation of a Smart Specialisation forerunner programme, <i>Regional Studies</i> , <a href="https://doi.org/10.1080/00343404.2018.1502422">https://doi.org/10.1080/00343404.2018.1502422</a>	
<b>Abstract:</b> This paper evaluates a programme of subsidies for collaborative industrial research (co-)funded by the European Union's Cohesion Policy in Italy mobilizing over €1 billion. In the 2007–13 funding cycle, the programme was a precursor to some of the key features of Smart Specialisation Strategy (S3) programmes, offering evidence-based insights into potential challenges of the practical application of the S3 approach. The programme was unsuccessful in boosting investments, value added or employment of beneficiary firms. The collaborative dimension of the projects added limited value and a more generous funding level would not have improved effectiveness. However, positive impacts emerged in low-tech sectors.	
<b>Link:</b> <a href="https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00343404.2018.1502422">https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00343404.2018.1502422</a>	
<b>Type:</b> journal article	<b>Contact:</b> <a href="mailto:r.crescenzi@lse.ac.uk">r.crescenzi@lse.ac.uk</a> ; <a href="mailto:guido.deblasio@bancaditalia.it">guido.deblasio@bancaditalia.it</a> ; <a href="mailto:mara.giua@uniroma3.it">mara.giua@uniroma3.it</a>
<b>Language:</b> ENGLISH	<b>Open source:</b> YES
<b>Keywords:</b> Cohesion Policy, Smart Specialisation, policy evaluation, innovation, European Union	
<b>Notes:</b>	

<p><b>Full bibliographical reference:</b> Pastore F., Pompili M., 2018, Valutazione di impatto del programma PIPOL in Friuli Venezia Giulia, Regione Friuli Venezia Giulia</p>	
<p><b>Abstract:</b> The evaluation studies the effect of PIPOL, an integrated program of active labor policies, launched by the Italian Region Friuli Venezia Giulia in 2014, aimed at supporting people in finding a job. Different population targets, divided by need band, are the object of intervention.</p> <p>The evaluation aims to understand the impact of PIPOL on the employment integration of benefit recipients. To address the issue, we have resorted to a counterfactual approach: a control group is extracted by means of propensity score matching (PSM) or Mahalanobis matching among those who registered in the program over the years 2014-'16, but have never benefited of the program. We used data from two main sources: first, the ESF monitoring data on the administration of the program; furthermore, information on outcome variables is obtained from compulsory communications that employers have to make to employment services whenever any labor contract is signed or completed.</p> <p>We found that the net impact of PIPOL is equal to 5% on average, but no impact for in room training. The greatest impact is found for on-the-job training. The latter affects also the probability to find permanent work (+3%). This is consistent with the view of a youth labor market where young people have excellent theoretical competences, but very little work experience and work-related competences (Pastore, 2015; 2017). The off-the-job training programs show not statistically significant impact on employment, but do affect the probability to experience at least one labor contract after 2016. These results are partly due to a lock-in effect, namely the tendency of those who attend training programs to put off their effort in job search. Interestingly, we found that the program has a different impact for different typologies of recipients and different types of intervention. To sum up our findings, active labor policy work when they generate work-related competences.</p>	
<p><b>Link:</b>  <a href="http://www.regione.fvg.it/rafv/export/sites/default/RAFVG/GEN/programmazione/FOGLIA23/allegati/13072018_1RT_PIPOL_V1_1_FINALE.pdf">http://www.regione.fvg.it/rafv/export/sites/default/RAFVG/GEN/programmazione/FOGLIA23/allegati/13072018_1RT_PIPOL_V1_1_FINALE.pdf</a></p>	
<p><b>Type:</b> Technical Evaluation Report</p>	<p><b>Contact:</b> <a href="mailto:pompili@ismerieuropa.com">pompili@ismerieuropa.com</a>;  <a href="mailto:Francesco.PASTORE@unicampania.it">Francesco.PASTORE@unicampania.it</a></p>
<p><b>Language:</b> Italiano (an executive summary is available in English)</p>	<p><b>Open source:</b> yes</p>
<p><b>Keywords:</b> Impact evaluation, active labour policies, counterfactual</p>	
<p><b>Notes:</b> Una sintesi del lavoro è stata pubblicata nel sito lavoce.info:  <a href="http://www.lavoce.info/archives/54541/politiche-attive-si-ma-solo-se-creano-competenze/">http://www.lavoce.info/archives/54541/politiche-attive-si-ma-solo-se-creano-competenze/</a></p>	

<b>Full bibliographical reference:</b> Pellegrini, G., Tarola, O., Cerqua, A., Ceccantoni, G., 2018. Can the European Structural Funds shape migration flows? MPRA Paper No. 87874.	
<b>Abstract:</b> We consider how two groups of regions, which differ in productivity and public good endowments, compete in tax and public goods to attract or reject migrants. In our framework the less productive regions receive public transfers which increase their panoply of public goods. We find that, whenever public transfers are sufficiently high, migration to the less productive regions is observed only in the case when the productivity gap between regions is not extremely wide. We then employ a regression discontinuity design to empirically assess the causal relationship between the reception of large amounts of public funds and migration flows in the EU-15 regions. The theoretical predictions are broadly confirmed as we find a wide expansion in the share of foreign citizens in the highly subsidized regions, when compared to low-subsidized regions with similar pre-treatment characteristics.	
<b>Link:</b> <a href="https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/87874/1/MPRA_paper_87874.pdf">https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/87874/1/MPRA_paper_87874.pdf</a>	
<b>Type:</b> Working paper	<b>Contact:</b> <a href="mailto:augusto.cerqua@uniroma1.it">augusto.cerqua@uniroma1.it</a>
<b>Language:</b> English	<b>Open source:</b> yes
<b>Keywords:</b> migration, fiscal competition, EU Cohesion Policy, regression discontinuity design	
<b>Notes:</b>	

<b>Full bibliographical reference:</b> Cerqua, A., Pellegrini, G., 2018. Local policy effects at a time of economic crisis. MPRA Paper No. 85621.	
<b>Abstract:</b> Regional inequalities are large and have widened during the Great Recession. As they prompt people and economic activities to migrate from lagging regions, central governments around the world transfer large amounts of resources in order to prevent these phenomena from occurring. In this paper, we evaluate the effectiveness of the most extensive and long-lived experiment of income redistribution across regions and countries, i.e., the EU regional policy, at a time of economic crisis. Exploiting geographic discontinuities in funds eligibility and using a spatial regression discontinuity design, we analyze comprehensive data on all publicly funded Italian projects at the municipality level. We find a positive and significant impact on employment and number of plants in the least developed regions. However, the impact turns largely negligible when the gap between more and less intensively treated areas is relatively small. Moreover, the EU regional policy appears not to have had any effect on local average income.	
<b>Link:</b> <a href="https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/85621/1/MPRA_paper_85621.pdf">https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/85621/1/MPRA_paper_85621.pdf</a>	
<b>Type:</b> Working paper	<b>Contact:</b> <a href="mailto:augusto.cerqua@uniroma1.it">augusto.cerqua@uniroma1.it</a>
<b>Language:</b> English	<b>Open source:</b> yes
<b>Keywords:</b> EU regional policy, spatial regression discontinuity design, recession, municipalities	
<b>Notes:</b>	

<b>Full bibliographical reference:</b> Cerqua, A., Pellegrini, G., 2018. Local multipliers at work. MPRA Paper No. 85326.	
<b>Abstract:</b> We measure the effects of a substantial place-based policy shock on the local labor market systems exploiting as an instrumental variable the peculiar information necessary to apply for capital subsidies in Italy during the period 1996-2006. The results show the presence of positive multipliers in the South of Italy, slightly lower than what was previously found for the US but much higher than those identified for European and Asian countries. The reasons for this finding lie in the greater accuracy of the data, in the relevance of the instrument used, and in the widespread underutilization of production factors.	
<b>Link:</b> <a href="https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/85326/1/MPRA_paper_85326.pdf">https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/85326/1/MPRA_paper_85326.pdf</a>	
<b>Type:</b> Working paper	<b>Contact:</b> <a href="mailto:augusto.cerqua@uniroma1.it">augusto.cerqua@uniroma1.it</a>
<b>Language:</b> English	<b>Open source:</b> yes
<b>Keywords:</b> Local multiplier, place-based policy, local labor market	
<b>Notes:</b>	

<b>Full bibliographical reference:</b> Battiston, P., Duncan, D., Gamba, S., Santoro, A. (forthcoming) "Audit publicity and tax compliance: a natural experiment", <i>The Scandinavian Journal of Economics</i>	
<b>Abstract:</b> We use confidential data on value added tax payments at the sector level, in two large Italian cities, to estimate the effect of audit publicity on tax compliance of local sellers. By employing a difference-in-differences identification strategy, we find that such publicity has a positive effect on fiscal declarations made shortly after. The results suggest that increasing awareness on future audits via the media can be an important instrument in the hands of tax authorities.	
<b>Link:</b> <a href="https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/sjoe.12330">https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/sjoe.12330</a>	
<b>Type:</b> journal article	<b>Contact:</b> <a href="mailto:gamba.simona@gmail.com">gamba.simona@gmail.com</a>
<b>Language:</b> English	<b>Open source:</b> no
<b>Keywords:</b> Tax evasion, Audits, Media coverage, Social norms	
<b>Notes:</b>	

**Full bibliographical reference:** Gianluigi Coppola, Sergio Destefanis, Giorgia Marinuzzi & Walter Tortorella (2018) European Union and nationally based cohesion policies in the Italian regions, *Regional Studies*, DOI: 10.1080/00343404.2018.1447099

**Abstract:** This paper analyzes the effects of cohesion policies on the gross domestic product (GDP) per capita of the 20 Italian administrative regions for the period 1994–2013. The analysis includes both European Union and national funds. It estimates average partial effects through a control-function approach based on the funds' allocation rules, and allows for the role of the regional environment on the impact of regional policies. A positive impact of European Union funds is found, as well as a less significant impact of (nationally financed) subsidies to firms. Quality of government has no relevance for European Union funds, but it enhances the impact of subsidies to firms.

**Link:** <https://rsa.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00343404.2018.1447099>

**Type:** journal article

**Contact** [destefanis@unisa.it](mailto:destefanis@unisa.it)

**Language:** english

**Open source:** --

**Keywords:** European Structural Funds, nationally based regional policies, quality of government, Mezzogiorno, dynamic panel data

**Notes:** JEL codes: [O11](#), [O43](#), [O47](#), [R58](#)



<b>Full bibliographical reference:</b> Barone, C., Assirelli G., Schizzerotto, A., Abbiati G. (2018), <i>Nudging Gender Desegregation: a Field Experiment on the Causal Effect of Information Barriers on Gender Inequalities in Higher Education</i> , European Societies, <i>accepted, in press</i> . DOI: 10.1080/14616696.2018.1442929	
<b>Abstract:</b> In this article, we propose and test a novel explanation for gender segregation in Higher Education that focuses on the misperceptions of economic returns to fields of study. We frame this explanation within the literature emphasizing the role of gender-stereotypical preferences and occupational plans, and we argue that counselling activities in school can play a crucial role in either reinforcing or countering the weight of these expressive mechanisms relative to more instrumental considerations involving occupational prospects of different fields. In particular, we suggest that the availability of reliable, ready-to-use information on these prospects enhances the probability that students, particularly females, opt for more rewarding fields. To test this argument, we present the results of a field experiment conducted in Italy that confronted high school seniors with detailed information concerning returns to tertiary education and field of study differentials, and we assess how girls and boys reacted to this counselling intervention.	
<b>Link:</b> <a href="https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/14616696.2018.1442929?journalCode=reus20">https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/14616696.2018.1442929?journalCode=reus20</a>	
<b>Type:</b> Journal article	<b>Contact:</b> Giovanni.abbiati@frdb.org
<b>Language:</b> English	<b>Open source:</b> No
<b>Keywords:</b> Field experiment, gender segregation, higher education, information, returns to education	
<b>Notes:</b> An earlier version of this paper, in the format of a working paper, can be found at <a href="https://spire.sciencespo.fr/hdl:/2441/6nemhd9te891akhtlfqe8589f/resources/wp63-barone-gender-info-barriers-amp-study-choice.pdf">https://spire.sciencespo.fr/hdl:/2441/6nemhd9te891akhtlfqe8589f/resources/wp63-barone-gender-info-barriers-amp-study-choice.pdf</a>	



**Full bibliographical reference:** Abbiati, G., Argentin, G., Barone, C., Schizzerotto, A. (2017). *Information barriers and social stratification in Higher Education: Evidence from a field experiment*, British Journal of Sociology, first printed online. DOI: 10.1111/1468-4446.12332.

**Abstract:** Our contribution assesses the role of information barriers for patterns of participation in Higher Education (HE) and the related social inequalities. For this purpose, we developed a large-scale clustered randomised experiment involving over 9,000 high school seniors from 62 Italian schools. We designed a counseling intervention to correct student misperceptions of the profitability of HE, that is, the costs, economic returns and chances of success of investments in different tertiary programs. We employed a longitudinal survey to test whether treated students' educational trajectories evolved differently relative to a control group. We find that, overall, treated students enrolled less often in less remunerative fields of study in favour of postsecondary vocational programmes. Most importantly, this effect varied substantially by parental social class and level of education. The shift towards vocational programmes was mainly due to the offspring of low-educated parents; in contrast, children of tertiary graduates increased their participation in more rewarding university fields. Similarly, the redistribution from weak fields to vocational programmes mainly involved the children of the petty bourgeoisie and the working class, while upper class students invested in more rewarding university fields. We argue that the status-maintenance model proposed by Breen and Goldthorpe can explain these socially differentiated treatment effects. Overall, our results challenge the claim that student misperceptions contribute to horizontal inequalities in access to HE.

**Link:** <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/1468-4446.12332>

**Type:** Journal article

**Contact:** Giovanni.abbiati@frdb.org

**Language:** English

**Open source:** Yes

**Keywords:** Randomized experiment higher education field of study horizontal inequalities rational action theory

**Notes:** An earlier version of this paper, in the format of a working paper, can be found at <https://irvapp.fbk.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/FBK-IRVAPP-Working-Paper-No.-2016-11.pdf>

**Full bibliographical reference:** Barone, C., Assirelli, G., Abbiati, G., Argentin, G., De Luca, D., (2018), *Social origins, relative risk aversion and track choice: a field experiment on the role of information biases*, Acta Sociologica, vol 61(4), pp.441-459. DOI: 10.1177/0001699317729872

**Abstract:** This study develops and tests the hypothesis that information biases concerning the perceived extent of risk of educational options fuel social inequalities in track choice. In particular, it is argued that low-educated families are more concerned than college-educated families with the risks of dropout in the academic track, even when their children perform well at school. Moreover, they overestimate the risks of low occupational outcomes associated with academic diplomas. These information biases enhance their propensity to select vocational tracks, which are perceived as safer options, even when their children have the potential to succeed in the academic path. Survey data from Italy were used to assess these misperceptions and experimental evidence is presented concerning their causal effect on track choices. To correct these misperceptions, we designed a light information intervention, which was nested in a longitudinal survey to assess the impact of this intervention on students' track choices. Both survey and experimental results corroborated our hypothesis that information biases contribute to social inequalities in track choice.

**Link:** <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0001699317729872>

**Type:** Journal article

**Contact:** Giovanni.abbiati@frdb.org

**Language:** English

**Open source:** No

**Keywords:** Educational inequality, field experiment, information biases, relative risk aversion, track choice

**Notes:** An earlier version of this paper, in the format of a working paper, can be found at <https://irvapp.fbk.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/FBK-IRVAPP-Working-Paper-No.-2016-11.pdf>

<b>Full bibliographical reference:</b> Fratesi U, Perucca G (forthcoming) “EU Regional Development Policy and Territorial Capital: A Systemic Approach”, Papers in Regional Science, accepted and forthcoming. DOI: 10.1111/pirs.12360	
<b>Abstract:</b> The territorial capital of regions is an important determinant of growth, but also of the impact of EU Cohesion Policy. First, because it can act as a filter, enhancing the impact of regional policies. Second, the latter can help building territorial capital which, in turn, will foster regional development. This work analyses the medium and long-run relationship between the territorial capital of EU NUTS 3 regions and Cohesion Policy using data from the programming period 2000–2006. Results point out complementarities between different territorial assets of regions and the impact of EU regional policy: Cohesion Policy effectiveness is higher when investments are focused on the assets complementary to those already abundant in the region.	
<b>Link:</b> <a href="https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/pirs.12360">https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/pirs.12360</a>	
<b>Type:</b> journal article (Papers in Regional Science)	<b>Contact:</b> <a href="mailto:ugo.fratesi@polimi.it">ugo.fratesi@polimi.it</a> , <a href="mailto:giovanni.perucca@polimi.it">giovanni.perucca@polimi.it</a>
<b>Language:</b> English	<b>Open source:</b> no
<b>Keywords:</b> Cohesion Policy, policy impact, regional policy, territorial capital	
<b>Notes:</b>	

<p><b>Full bibliographical reference:</b> Lamonica, V., Ragazzi, E., &amp; Sella, L. (2018). Evaluating social innovation: results and emerging issues from a random-trial evaluation of a program for the inclusion of migrant adolescents. <i>Working Paper IRCrES</i>, 4(10). <a href="http://dx.doi.org/10.23760/2421-7158.2018.010">http://dx.doi.org/10.23760/2421-7158.2018.010</a></p>	
<p><b>Abstract:</b> This paper presents the experimental evaluation of a pilot program for the educational inclusion of foreign adolescents with low language skills and high dropout risk in junior high school. The intervention aims at filling migrant students' gaps in both general subject knowledge and character skills. The pilot is jointly developed by a private VET (Vocational Education and Training) centre for adolescents in Turin, Italy, and some local junior high schools.</p> <p>During the pilot, treated students attend 290-hour classes at the VET centre. VET classes aim at restoring students' interest in education by professionally-oriented teaching, inductive innovative pedagogic methods, and individual mentorship.</p> <p>The pilot is evaluated through experimental counterfactual design. In the recent past, a similar preliminary project had positive results, but its evaluation was based on qualitative evidence and on teachers' subjective assessment. Now, a grid of outcome variables is proposed to monitor students in the treated and control groups regarding their educational inclusion and scholastic achievement. The aim is to assess social and behavioural skills, alongside school performance.</p> <p>Previous experimental evaluations of similar programs (see Kautz et al., 2014 for a survey) provide ambiguous results: depending on program features such as length of the treatment, role and pervasiveness of training, tutors, mentors, families' and peers' influence, long-term analyses showed either positive (Durlak et al., 2011; Tierney et al., 1995; Orr et al., 1994) or negative (Rodrigues-Planas, 2012) effects on some outcome variables such as behavioural attitudes, character skills, educational attainment, future wages and other labour market outcomes. For this reason project adopts a randomised experimental design, so as to get sound evidence on the effectiveness of the implemented activities.</p>	
<p><b>Link:</b> <a href="http://www.ircres.cnr.it/index.php/it/produzione-scientifica/pubblicazioni?id=200">http://www.ircres.cnr.it/index.php/it/produzione-scientifica/pubblicazioni?id=200</a></p>	
<p><b>Type:</b> Working Paper</p>	<p><b>Contact:</b> <a href="mailto:lisa.sella@ircres.cnr.it">lisa.sella@ircres.cnr.it</a></p>
<p><b>Language:</b> English</p>	<p><b>Open source:</b> Yes</p>
<p><b>Keywords:</b> evaluation; random trial, field experiment; social integration; migration; education</p>	
<p><b>Notes:</b> This working paper describes some preliminary results of an experimental evaluation assessing the impact of a pilot program named "Oltre i Muri". The pilot was conceived and implemented in Turin, Italy, by Piazza dei Mestieri, a private training centre for adolescents, and some public junior high schools in the city. It was funded by the Italian Home Office through FAMI funds, which we kindly acknowledge.</p> <p>The description and the final results of the project are published in a book edited by Fondazione Piazza dei Mestieri and IRCrES-CNR. It can be downloaded at</p> <p>"Building a transnational community of educators to welcome young foreigners into the school system" (English version) <a href="http://www.ircres.cnr.it/images/pubblicazioni/oltreimuri_ENG.pdf">http://www.ircres.cnr.it/images/pubblicazioni/oltreimuri_ENG.pdf</a></p> <p>"Costruire una comunità transnazionale di educatori per l'accoglienza dei giovani stranieri nella scuola" (Italian version) <a href="http://www.ircres.cnr.it/images/pubblicazioni/oltreimuri_ITA.pdf">http://www.ircres.cnr.it/images/pubblicazioni/oltreimuri_ITA.pdf</a></p>	