



The DTU MINLAB PhDs



□ FACULTY OF LAW,
ECONOMICS
AND FINANCE

Project presentation

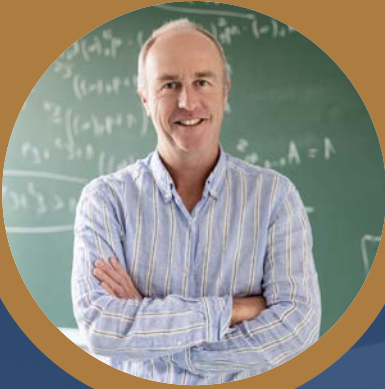
The Doctoral Training Unit on Migration, Inequalities and Labour Markets (MINLAB) is a joint research programme of the Department in Economics and Management (DEM) of the Faculty of Law, Economics and Finance (FDEF), the Department of Social Sciences (DSOC) and the Department of Behavioural and Cognitive Sciences (DBCS) of the Faculty of the Faculty of Humanities, Education and Social Sciences (FHSE), and the Luxembourg Institute of Socio-Economic Research (LISER). MINLAB specifically supports the development of applied socio-economic research (Economics and Quantitative Sociology) on issues around migration, labour markets and inequalities. The DTU benefits from DEM's excellence in economics and methodology, DBCS's expertise in quantitative socio-economic analysis of inequality and social problems, and LISER's comparative advantage in public policy analysis.

**Supported by the Luxembourg National Research Fund (FNR)
(PRIDE15/10949242/MINLAB/BEINE)**



Fonds National de la
Recherche Luxembourg

The coordinator of
the DTU MINLAB



Michel BEINE

The current migration crisis and the rise in the level of economic inequality, both within and across countries, show the extreme importance of bringing new light on the economic phenomena around human mobility, labour market and income inequality. The DTU MInlab aims at providing new knowledge around these issues by providing doctoral training to students from three research centers in social science, namely DEM and INSIDE from the University of Luxembourg and the LISER.





RANA CÖMERTPAY

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Thesis title

Essays on the Economics of Forced Displacement and Conflict

Supervisor

Prof. Dr. Luisito Bertinelli

Research webpage

<https://ranacomert.wixsite.com/website>

Current position

Research Associate, Labour Market at Luxembourg Institute of Socio-Economic Research (LISER)

Research interests

Migration (in particular forced displacement), development, media and conflict economics

Research papers

Gravity Analysis of Refugee Mobility Using Mobile Phone

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0304387820301930>

Refugee Mobility: Evidence from Phone Data in Turkey.

https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-12554-7_22

Diversity and Conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa. Policy

<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/37463>

Immigration in Aging Populations. CESifo (Working Paper)

<http://bit.ly/3QLN7sf>



THESIS SUMMARY



In my thesis I focus on forced displacement and conflict situations in developing countries, employing advanced methods in econometrics, also borrowing from other disciplines, in particular geography, to answer economically relevant questions. My contribution relies on up-to-date, highly disaggregated, complex, and novel datasets, satellite, climate, and media event data. First, I explore determinants of refugee mobility (e.g., Syrian) after resettlement in receiving societies (e.g., Turkey), relying on geolocalized mobile phone calls. Bringing these measures to a micro-founded gravity, I find that refugees are sensitive to income differentials and contribute therefore to a more efficient allocation of labor across space, similarly to economic migrants. Second, I investigate the implications of refugee-induced ethnic diversity for social cohesion in sub-Saharan Africa. Refugee-induced polarization is found to exacerbate the risk of violence at the local level. The opposite is found for refugee-induced fractionalization. The results should not be interpreted as evidence that refugees per se impact the likelihood of violence. We find a negative correlation between the number of refugees and violence. Instead, it is the change in ethnic polarization, which is the main driver of conflict. Finally, I look at the role of media for political accountability during the Arab Spring across the Middle East and North Africa region, focusing on two major media in the Arab World: Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya. Independent media usage is found to increase participation to protests, whereas state-owned media seem to play a silent role. These findings are in line with previous literature on media's capacity to facilitate action, by either spreading relevant information or easing coordination.

TESTIMONIAL

The funding from MINLAB DTU was truly a great opportunity that enabled the gathering of motivated Ph.D. candidates, young and senior researchers, professors, guest scholars and other experts in the field to investigate and answer relevant and urgent questions for the economics of migration, through seminars, courses, research visits and social events.



KATHERINE FORD

Thesis title

Educational and occupational differentials in cognition: Examining the role of gender using population-based studies

Supervisor

Prof. Dr. Anja Leist

Current position

Postdoctoral Fellow at Carleton University (Canada)

Research interests

Social epidemiology, health inequality, life course exposures and chronic disease development

Research papers

Returns to Educational and Occupational Attainment in Cognitive Performance for MiddleAged South Korean Men and Women

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/23337214211004366>

Examining gender differentials in the association of low control work with cognitive performance in older workers

<https://academic.oup.com/eurpub/article/31/1/174/5905674>

Childhood Socioeconomic Disadvantage and Pathways to Memory Performance in Mid to Late Adulthood: What Matters Most?

<https://academic.oup.com/psychsocgerontology/article/77/8/1478/6588036>



THESIS SUMMARY



Gender differences in cognitive outcomes have been noted across the life course, including incidence rates of Alzheimer's disease. Educational and occupational characteristics also follow a patterning based on gender, particularly for those born in the first half of the twentieth century. My thesis explored cognitive differences related to educational and occupational characteristics with consideration for gender patterns related to these indicators. Generally, my thesis stressed the importance of education – and to some extent occupation – for cognitive health into later life for both genders. Two of the three empirical studies suggested that educational and occupational indicators operate similarly on cognitive outcomes for men and women, implying that gender differences in outcomes are related to different opportunities. While the third empirical study suggested that, for women, educational attainment and occupational class may have been relatively less important for mediating later-life cognitive differences between those that were socioeconomically disadvantaged versus non-disadvantaged as children.

TESTIMONIAL

MINLAB DTU brought together students from a variety of academic backgrounds for an interesting learning experience.



NIKITA GAPONIUK

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Thesis title

Essays in international migration (not yet approved)

Supervisor

Prof. Dr. Pierre M. Picard

Research webpage

<https://sites.google.com/view/nikitagaponiuk/>

Current position

PhD ongoing

Research interests

International migration, trade, political economy, optimal policy

Research papers

International Migration Unions: theory

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1TJz7sCgBZDpbKyGf03cDMaA-VaZIPswu/view>



THESIS SUMMARY



We study potential outcomes of migration coordination, its determinants, and stability.

We first explore the migration policy implications of the noncooperative behavior between countries. We find that countries fail to coordinate and forbid any migrations. We show that migration unions (a free labor mobility agreement) resolve the coordination failure, and benefit in size both union members and independent countries, but are credible only in the short run.

We then look at the policy implications of cooperative bargaining and show that the European Union enlargement in 2004 would not be collectively supported without an implicit transfer system. Additionally, we show that losses from a single-country withdrawal from the EU are larger than the benefit of a single-country accession to the EU.

Finally, we look at the effect of populism on the welfare implication of labor liberalization and find that it negatively affects bilateral migration.

TESTIMONIAL

*Being included in a networking between University and LISER is beneficial.
Having the budget for academic exchanges is helpful.*



GIUSEPPE GRASSO

Thesis title

Essays on Skills, Labor Market Institutions, and Wage Inequality

Supervisor

Prof. Dr. Konstantinos Tatsiramos

Research webpage

<https://giuseppe-grasso.github.io>

Current position

PHD ongoing

Research interests

Labor Economics, Applied Micro-Econometrics, Economics of Migration



THESIS SUMMARY



My doctoral thesis focuses on understanding the variation of skill demand across labor markets, its reaction to labor market policies, and the way it influences wage inequality.

In my job market paper, I use online job vacancy (OJV) data to examine the effect on firms' labor demand and skill requirements of an Italian labor reform that restricted the use of temporary contracts. I find that the reform shifted hiring intentions from temporary to permanent contracts but also raised the skill requirements for entry into jobs. The paper highlights unintended consequences of this type of reform, such as fewer employment opportunities for less qualified workers and potentially lower efficiency of job search and matching.

In another paper, I use matched employer-employee administrative data and labor market-level skill demand information from OJVs to study how skill demand differences across labor markets relate to wage differentials, also exploring the role of worker and firm heterogeneity. In a third paper, I use machine learning methods to classify job types and work domains based on skill demand similarity across jobs, exploiting hundreds of granular skill requirements extracted from OJVs.

TESTIMONIAL

The MINLAB DTU is committed to supporting its PhD students as they pursue advanced studies in the interdisciplinary field of migration, inequalities, and labor markets. It is known for its talented faculty and students, who are dedicated to producing innovative and impactful research. Being part of its community has given me the opportunity to learn and grow within a highly stimulating research environment.



ADDA CARLA JUSTINIANO MEDINA

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Thesis title

Intermarriage and the integration of immigrants

Supervisor

Prof. Dr. Marie Valentova

Research webpage

<https://sites.google.com/view/adda-carla-justiniano-medina/research>

Current position

PHD ongoing

Research interests

Applied microeconometrics on immigrants integration, discrimination, family and labor economics



THESIS SUMMARY



I analyzed the effect of intermarriage to a native on labor market outcomes for foreign born women in Italy and on the life satisfaction of foreign born men and women in Luxembourg in comparison to endogamous counterparts. I found that intermarriage affects negatively the employment status of women, the hours of work and the underemployment. While there is no effect of intermarriage on their wages. In the analysis of LS in Luxembourg, intermarriage to natives is generally related to a higher LS, while the size and statistical significance varies depending on the sex and origin of the studied subjects and/or their spouses. Intermarriage to a foreign of different origin than their own is generally related to a penalty in LS, however, the results vary significantly depending on the country of origin of the analyzed subject and their spouses.

TESTIMONIAL

The DTU was a great opportunity to develop relevant socio-economic research.



ANDREÏ VICTOROVITCH KOSTYRKA

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Thesis title

Efficient estimation with non-standard sampling or missing endogenous variables, and conditional density modelling with unobserved copula-connected shocks

Supervisor

Prof. Dr. Antonio Cosma

Current position

Economist / econometrician at Hendyplan SARL

Research interests

Microeconometrics and financial econometrics, computational methods



THESIS SUMMARY



In Chapter 1, smoothed empirical likelihood is used to conduct efficient semi-parametric inference in models with conditional moment equalities when data are collected by variable-probability sampling. In Chapter 2, a novel conditional density model is proposed to decompose asset returns into copula-connected unobserved 'good' and 'bad' shocks. The novelty comes from the explicit correlation between unobserved shocks. The proposed model yields better forecasts of risk measures. In Chapter 3, the semi-parametric efficiency bound is derived for estimating parameters identified via conditional moment equalities when some endogenous variables contain missing values. An estimator is proposed, and it is shown that it achieves the semi-parametric efficiency bound. Accompanying simulation studies show that the proposed methods can work well and that the resulting efficiency gains can justify the extra complexity in some common empirical settings.

TESTIMONIAL

Thanks to the support of MINLAB DTU, I was able to present my research and get feedback at international conferences and benefit from academic services that improved the quality of my work.



VICTORIA MALEEVA

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Thesis title

Essays on the Economics of Migration, Inequalities, and Culture

Supervisor

Prof. Dr. Skerdilajda Zana

Current position

Microdata expert at Statec & LIS Luxembourg

Research interests

inequalities, marital dissolution, exposure to communism, migration

Research papers

Poverty in Russia: the Role of the Marital Status and Gender

<https://ideas.repec.org/p/luc/wpaper/20-16.html>



THESIS SUMMARY



The second chapter is focused on how a massive exogenous increase in the stock of migrant residents and migrant co-workers affects the perception of migrants. I explore several data sources for the mass migration of Ukrainians in Poland between 2014-2016. The results indicate that an increase in the size of the migrant group affects attitudes toward migrants positively.

The third chapter explores how poverty can be explained by marital status and gender, using the RLMS-HSE household survey. This research shows that divorced women exhibit lower poverty levels than divorced men by employing longitudinal data from the RLMS-HSE from 2004 to 2019.

In the fourth chapter of the thesis, we study the effect of past exposure to communist indoctrination during early age (9-14 years) on a set of crucial attitudes in the communist ideology. We find robust evidence that has been a pioneer has long-lasting effects on interpersonal trust, life satisfaction, fertility, income, and perception of own economic rank.

TESTIMONIAL

I am grateful to be a part of the MINLAB joint research program. It gave me a fantastic opportunity to work on socially important research topics and be a part of a group of distinguished researchers.



GIORGIA MENTA

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Thesis title

Essays on Human Capital, Inequality, and Income

Supervisor

Prof. Dr. Conchita D'Ambrosio

Research webpage

<https://sites.google.com/view/giorgiamenta/home-page>

Current position

Postdoctoral researcher at the Luxembourg Institute of Socio-Economic Research

Research interests

Applied Microeconomics, Health Economics, Education, Gender Economics, Inequality, Genoeconomics

Research papers

Pace of aging, family environment and cognitive skills in children and adolescents
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssmph.2022.101280>

Sleep Quality and the Evolution of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Five European Countries

<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0278971>

Families at a Loss: The Relationship Between Income Changes and Child Human Capital

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/86xt8oluqk4pkc/mcs.pdf?dl=0>

Poverty in the COVID-19 Era: Real Time Data Analysis on Five European Countries
<https://doi.org/10.1108/S1049-258520210000029010>



THESIS SUMMARY



The aim of this dissertation is documenting inequalities deriving from circumstances that are outside of the control of individuals. I mostly focus on the ways parental background shapes children's outcomes, from human capital to the time spent in paid work and housework as adults.

I first find that children of mothers with depressive symptoms have worse cognitive and non-cognitive outcomes; the identification strategy here relies on the mother's conditionally-exogenous genetic risk for depression. I then go on and consider how family size affects children's contribution to housework, showing that girls from larger families do more chores and that this effect persists into adulthood, with consequences for gender inequality. I then describe the relationship between family income changes and child human capital accumulation, finding that income losses and gains have an asymmetric effect. Last, I investigate income changes over time and document the evolution of income volatility, as compared to wealth volatility, across two longitudinal datasets.

TESTIMONIAL

Within MINLAB, I was provided with the ideal environment to develop my academic skills and to foster my research. The opportunities of professional growth I received through trainings and participation to international conferences would not have been possible without the support of MINLAB.



ALESSIO MONETTI

Thesis title

Applying Matching Models with Imperfect Transferable Utility to diverse markets

Supervisor

Prof. Dr. Arnaud Dupuy

Current position

Senior consultant at HACA PARTNERS

Research interests

Labor market



THESIS SUMMARY



The dissertation has presented several applications of matching model with imperfect transferable utility.

Chapter 1 deals with the preferences of the agents forming the Luxembourg childcare market, namely households and childcare providers. The findings show that the households improve their welfare by choosing providers with tiny pupil-teacher ratio values.

Chapter 2 measures the preferences of the agents forming the (US) labor market, namely workers and firms. The findings clearly indicate that the taxation is able to reduce dramatically the capacity of them to compensate for the disutility of the worker. The taxation may therefore trigger two contrasting effects on the jobs mismatch depending on the worker education: highly educated workers would tend to respond to the taxation by choosing jobs for which they are overeducated (increasing the jobs mismatch) while workers owning at most the high school diploma would react to taxation by choosing jobs more appropriate with their education level (decreasing the jobs mismatch).

Chapter 3 investigates the decision mechanisms underlying the fruitful collaborations between university department and firm in US. Overall, the findings reveal the potential substitutability between cognitive and geographic proximity.

TESTIMONIAL

The funding from MINLAB DTU was truly a great opportunity that enabled the gathering of motivated Ph.D. candidates, young and senior researchers, professors, guest scholars and other experts in the field to investigate and answer relevant and urgent questions for the economics of migration, through seminars, courses, research visits and social events.



SILVIA PERACCHI

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Thesis title

Essays on the Economics of International Migration

Supervisor

Prof. Dr. Michel Beine

Research webpage

<https://silvia-peracchi-econ.netlify.app/>

Current position

Postdoctoral researcher at LISER

Research interests

Migration Economics; Public economics; Political Economy; Applied econometrics; methods for causal inference.

Research Papers

The Migration Crisis in the Local News: Evidence from the French-Italian Border

<https://ssrn.com/abstract=4273444>

Genetic Diversity and Performance: Evidence from Football Data

<https://ssrn.com/abstract=3887252>



THESIS SUMMARY



In my thesis, I explored empirically several aspects of the economics of migration. My thesis is an empirical body of work and focused on the European scenario. In my first chapter, I worked with Michel Beine and Skerdilajda Zana to investigate the role of diversity on economic performance. We analyzed sports data and found a positive link between ancestral diversity and performance of national football teams affiliated to UEFA. In my second and third chapter, I focused on asylum migration. In chapter 2, I exploited a quasi-natural experiment to analyze how the news market is shaped by the presence of displaced migrants from the European migration crisis. I found that where the presence of displaced migrants is greater, migration is a more prevalent news topic. However, news are relatively more negative towards migration in areas in least direct exposure to migrants. This effect appears to be driven by a demand for ideology from the readership, and is matched with patterns in the local political economy. In my third chapter, co-authored with Melissa Tornari, I investigated the interdependence of government decisions in being more or less restrictive towards accepting asylum seekers. We adopted a flexible Spatial Dynamic Panel Data model that separates spatial from strong cross-sectional dependence and observed that asylum policies are strategic substitutes across countries. We also document spillover effects emerging from Germany's reception announcement in September 2015 and from the arrivals of migrants at the external EU borders.

TESTIMONIAL

The DTU was a great opportunity to be part of a hub of motivated researchers with a shared interest in the economics of migration. Within the programs, we were exposed to lectures and conversations with leading guest scholars, from whom we could gain many key insights.



MAXIMILIAN SCHIELE

Thesis title

Unequal Migrants: Systematic Selection and Its Consequences in the Context of Inequality

Supervisor

Prof. Dr. Louis Chauvel

Current position

Senior Researcher

Institute for Employment Research of the German Federal Employment Agency



THESIS SUMMARY



This dissertation aims to examine the relationship between international migration and social inequality by considering both fields of research together. The studies used various approaches to overcome the lack of cross-national data, including creating a novel dataset, simulating counterfactuals, and using multilevel modelling. The results of the studies reveal, that the selection, which occurs during the process of international migration, is complex and can be influenced by various factors, including patterns of inequality in the country of origin and the cost and hurdles of migration in the destination country. The results further suggest that the selection process can vary significantly depending on the context, with some migratory flows being driven more by social inequality and others being influenced more by personal preferences and utility maximization. The composition of immigrant minority groups can also have an impact on the intergenerational transmission of socio-economic status and long-term position in the host country's social hierarchy. Overall, the dissertation highlights the importance of understanding the selection process in order to better understand the inequality between migrants and locals in host countries, and the implications for researchers and policymakers.

TESTIMONIAL

One of the strengths of the institute is its international orientation, with a diverse community of PhD students from a variety of countries and cultural backgrounds. This international perspective enriches the research and enhances the institute's ability to understand and address global issues related to migration and social inequality. The innovative approaches and thorough analyses conducted by the MINLAB DTU have helped me to deepen my understanding of the complex issues surrounding the research field of migration and social inequality.



RHEA RAVENNA SOHST

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Thesis title

The Challenges of immigration to the European Union: Essays on social impacts and future outlooks

Supervisor

Prof. Dr. Philippe Van Kerm

Current position

Associate Policy Analyst at the Migration Policy Institute (MPI)

Research interests

International migration, integration, development, social mobility, inequality

Research papers

Future European Migration Scenarios in 2030: Plausible, Probable, and Relevant?
<http://bit.ly/3lVNheS>

Foreign-born households in the income distribution and their contribution to social indicators in European countries
<http://bit.ly/3XxSvI2>

How to Predict Future Migration: Different Methods Explained and Compared
https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-92377-8_28

Financing Responses to Climate Migration: The Unique Role of Multilateral Development Banks

Embedding Reintegration Assistance for Returning Migrants in the Local Context: The Role of Referrals
<https://www.migrationpolicyinstitute-europe.com/about/staff/ravenna-sohst>



THESIS SUMMARY



In my dissertation, I present three empirical studies on the social impacts and future outlooks of immigration in the European Union. The chapters ask big questions: How is immigration linked to inequality? Is it contributing to a growing polarization of incomes? How do natives feel when faced with immigration? What will future immigration to Europe look like? Will we see permanently high levels of asylum seekers coming to Europe, like we have seen in the wake of the Syrian war in 2015/16? Each of the chapters add a small part of evidence to those questions. Perhaps one especially relevant result in the current context shows that labour and high-skilled immigration are expected to rise substantially until 2030 whereas the number of asylum applications and irregular border crossings are expected to remain constant or increase only marginally.

TESTIMONIAL

It was great to have academic freedom with a growing and inspiring community of migration researchers



ALPER ÜNSAL

Thesis title

Three essays on the general equilibrium effect of human interactions

Supervisor

Prof. Dr. Bertrand Verheyden

Current position

PhD ongoing

Research interests

Labour Economics, Migration Economics, Health Economics



THESIS SUMMARY



In my first study, I quantify the effects of subsidizing immigrants' language acquisition costs on the labour market performance of immigrant and native workers. By using German data, I find that fully financing immigrants' language acquisition costs may decrease unemployment rate from 3.50% to 3.36% and increase productivity by 0.25%. This policy is expected to improve labour market performance of all immigrants and high-skilled natives with a minute expected loss for low-skilled natives.

My second study analyses the effects of social contact limitation policies against an unexpected epidemic on economic productivity, individuals' mental well-being, and epidemic evolution. I find that the timing of social contact limitations matters much more than their stringency, with earliest interventions resulting in lowest losses in economy and mental well-being for a given number of life losses.

In my third study, I simulate the effects of vaccine hesitancy on economy, life losses and mental well-being during an epidemic. I present upper thresholds of vaccine hesitancy rates for each disease transmission rate to avoid social contact limitations without overwhelming the health system.

TESTIMONIAL

MINLAB DTU gave us the opportunity to benefit from the expertise of top professors both from the University of Luxembourg and LISER. It provided sufficient funding for participation in workshops, doctoral summer schools and conferences.

DTU POST-DOC

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MELISSA TORNARI



Dr. Melissa E. Tornari has joined MINLAB as Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the end of 2020. She holds a PhD in Applied Social Sciences Research Methods and a PhD in Economics. Her research sets in the area of the Economics of Migration and focuses on both micro and macro implications of population movements. In particular, she has investigated the role of migration-led cultural diversity in affecting redistributive outcomes, bilateral trade and economic prosperity, and the impact of immigration on labor market structural changes. She is currently working on the role of information in affecting migration intentions, asylum policy spillovers across Europe and positive gender education biases in Lesotho. She is contributing to the design of Randomized Controlled Trials in Senegal. Melissa is part of the European COST Action ENIS, on International Students Mobility. As a MINLAB fellow, Melissa has contributed to both the development of research events, as a conference, seminar series and workshops - and research dissemination activities, including this brochure.



NOTES



Handwriting practice lines consisting of 20 horizontal rows. Each row is defined by two dotted lines, providing a guide for letter height and placement.



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<https://bit.ly/dtuminlab>

