



UNIVERSITÀ
CATTOLICA
del Sacro Cuore



DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS AND FINANCE Newsletter January-June 2022

FEATURED RESEARCH



Ghisolfi, S. 2022. “Market Access and Quality Upgrading: Evidence from Four Field Experiments”, forthcoming in *American Economic Review*.

Smallholder farming in many developing countries is characterized by low productivity and low quality output. Low quality limits the price farmers can command and their potential income. We conduct a series of experiments among maize farmers in Uganda to shed light on the barriers to quality upgrading and to study its potential. First, we document that quality is indeed low but partly observable with easy and quick procedures by the buyers, therefore it would be possible to reward farmers based on the quality of their produce. Second, we experimentally vary the quality of the maize produced and show that in the existing market the causal return to quality is zero, suggesting that the market for quality maize is effectively missing. Third, to understand if farmers would be willing and able to produce high quality maize when rewarded, we contract with a Ugandan vertically integrated agro trader to generate experimental variation in access to a market for premium quality maize. Following 200 farmers in 20 villages for 7 seasons (i.e. 3.5 years), we document that access to a market for high quality maize, combined with training on agricultural best-practices, produces large increases in maize quality (+60%) and in both farm productivity and income, increasing yields by 15% and mean profits by \$63-\$98 per season or 36%-81%. While the intervention also increased prices for lower quality maize in the treatment villages, the evidence suggests that the increase in output in the treatment group can fully be accounted for by the subgroup of farmers selling premium quality maize to the high quality buyer. Fourth, in a separate trial following 170 farmers for 6 seasons, we investigate the impact of the training program alone and find no evidence that farmers changed their farm practices, productivity or profits. Our findings reveal the importance of demand-side constraints in limiting rural income and productivity growth.

DEPARTMENT EVENTS

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Save the Date: The “Third Winter Symposium in Economics and Finance” organized by the Department of Economics and Finance of the *Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore* will take place on December 19th-20th, 2022, in Milan.

Monday, September 12th, h. 16.00, room G. 016

“Pasinetti and the Classical Keynesians: Nine Methodological Issues”

Book presentation

Friday, September 16th, h. 12.00, room G. 141

TOMOHIRO HIRANO (Royal Holloway University of London)

CLE Seminar

Wednesday, September 21st, h. 11.30, room G. 126

MICHAEL WEBER (Booth School of Business, University of Chicago)

Annual Lecture CLE

Monday, September 26th, h. 12.00

ALESSANDRA CASARICO (Bocconi University)

CIFREL Seminar

Friday, September 30th, h. 12.00, room G. 141

CAMILLE CORNAND (CNRS-University of Lyon)

CLE Seminar

Thursday, October 13th, h. 12.00, room C, Lanzone 29

OSKAR NORDSTRÖM SKANS (Uppsala University)

Department Seminar

Friday, October 14th, h. 12.00, room G. 019 bis

GIORGIO RICCHIUTI (Università di Firenze)

CLE Seminar

Thursday, October 20th, h. 12.00, room C, Lanzone 29

LUCA FLABBI (University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill)

Department Seminar

Friday, October 21st, h. 16.00

DANIELE CHECCHI (INPS)

CRILDA Seminar

Monday, October 24th, h. 12.00

MICHELA REDOANO (University of Warwick)

CIFREL Seminar



Tuesday, October 25th, h. 17.00, Cripta Aula Magna

“Quale energia per quale paese. La crisi del gas ci obbliga a compiere scelte importanti”

*Laboratorio di Analisi Monetaria dell'Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore
Associazione per lo Sviluppo degli Studi di Banca e Borsa*

Thursday, October 27th, h. 12.00, room C, Lanzone 29

MATTEO SANDI (Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore)

Internal Seminar

Friday, October 28th, h. 11.00, room G. 127

“Sostegno ai redditi e mercato del lavoro. Il XXI rapporto INPS”

CRILDA Seminar

Thursday, November 3rd, h. 12.00, room C, Lanzone 29

TIZIANO ROPELE (Bank of Italy)

Department Seminar

Thursday, November 10th, h. 12.00, room C, Lanzone 29

MOTI MICHAELI (University of Haifa)

Department Seminar

Thursday, November 10th, h. 16.00, room Pio XI

ALEX BRYSON (UCL)

“The future of Unions”

Lectio Magistralis

Thursday, November 17th, h. 12.00, room C, Lanzone 29

SELENE GHISOLFI (Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore)

Internal Seminar

Monday, November 21st, h. 12.00

ALBERT SOLE-OLLE (University of Barcelona)

CIFREL Seminar

Thursday, December 1st, h. 12.00, room C, Lanzone 29

LUDOVICA GAZZÈ (University of Warwick)

Department Seminar

December, 19th-20th

Third Winter Symposium in Economics and Finance

Department of Economics and Finance

For more details and updates check the Seminars Webpage at:

<https://dipartimenti.unicatt.it/economia-finanza-seminari-seminari-di-dipartimento>

PAST EVENTS

Thursday, January 20th, h. 12.00

ERAY CUMBUL (TOBB University of Economics and Technology, Ankara)

Department Seminar

Monday, January 24th, h. 12.00

PAOLO ROBERTI (University of Bolzano/Bozen)
CIFREL Seminar

Tuesday, January 25th, h. 12.00

JUHA TOLVANEN (University of Vienna)
Department Seminar

Thursday, January 27th, h. 15.00

SILVIO RAVAIOLI (Columbia University)
Department Seminar

Monday, January 31st, h. 12.00

TSZ-NING WONG (University of Mannheim)
Department Seminar

Thursday, February 3rd, h. 12.00

LUDMILA MATYSKOVÁ (University of Bonn)
Department Seminar

Tuesday, February 8th, h. 12.00

SELENE GHISOLFI (Università Bocconi, LEAP)
Department Seminar

Thursday, February 10th, h. 12.00

SULE ALAN (EUI)
Department Seminar

Tuesday, February 15th, h. 12.00

FEDERICO INNOCENTI (University of Mannheim)
Department Seminar

Friday, February 18th, h. 12.00

MAYA JALLOUL (Lebanese American University)
Department Seminar

Friday, February 18th, h. 14.00

IVAN SAVIN (Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona)
CLE Seminar

Thursday, February 24th, h. 12.00

ALESSANDRO PAVAN (Northwestern University)
Department Seminar

Monday, February 28th, h. 12.00

MIGUEL ALMUNIA (CUNEF)
CIFREL Seminar

Thursday, March 3rd, h. 12.00

JAN ECKHOUT (UPF)
Department Seminar

from March, 3rd to May, 23rd

“Economia per la polis. Pensiero economico e scelte pubbliche nell’arena della storia”

Associazione Francesca Duchini-Studio del Pensiero Economico e Dipartimento di Economia e Finanza

Ciclo di seminari

Friday, March 4th, h. 12.00

MARIA ENRICA VIRGILLITO (Sant’Anna Pisa)

CLE Seminar

Thursday, March 10th, h. 12.00

MARCO LE MOGLIE (Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore)

Internal Seminar

Friday, March 18th, h. 12.00

PHILIPP HARTING (Bielefeld University)

CLE Seminar

Monday, March 21st, h. 12.00

MAZHAR WASEEM (University of Manchester)

CIFREL Seminar

Thursday, March 24th, h. 12.00

CATALIN-FLORINEL DRAGOMIRESCU-GAINA (Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore)

Internal Seminar

Thursday, March 24th, h. 16.30, room Pio XI

Presentazione di Osservatorio Monetario 1/2022

“Il sistema finanziario quale motore della sostenibilità”

LAM - Laboratorio di Analisi Monetaria

ASSBB - Associazione per lo Sviluppo degli Studi di Banca e Borsa

Thursday, March, 31st, h. 12.00

CRISTINA BRATU (Aalto University School of Business)

Internal Seminar

Friday, April 1st, h. 12.00

ANNARITA COLASANTE (Unitelma Sapienza)

CLE Seminar

Tuesday, April 5th, h. 12.00

STEFANO LOMBARDI (VATT - Institute for Economic Research, Helsinki)

CRILDA Seminar

Thursday, April 7th, h. 12.00

GIACOMO CALZOLARI (European University Institute)

Department Seminar

Monday, April 11th, h. 12.00

EMANUELE BRACCO (University of Verona)
CIFREL Seminar

Thursday, April 21st, h. 12.00

MARCO MANACORDA (Queen Mary University of London and CEP)
Department Seminar

Friday, April 22nd, h. 12.00

EMANUELE CAMPIGLIO (Università di Bologna)
CLE Seminar

Thursday, April 28th, h. 12.00

ISABELA MANELICI (London School of Economics)
Department Seminar

Friday, May 6th, h. 12.00

ALBERTO CARDACI (Goethe University Frankfurt)
CLE Seminar

Monday, May 9th, h. 16.30, room G. 053

SILVIA MENDOLIA (University of Wollongong)
CRILDA Seminar

Thursday, May 12th, h. 12.00, room G. 122

EMANUELE TARANTINO (LUISS)
Department Seminar

Friday, May 13th, h. 12.00

ALBERTO BISIN (NY University)
CLE Seminar

Monday, May 16th, h. 12.00

CHIARA CANTA (Toulouse Business School)
CIFREL Seminar

Thursday, May 19th, h. 12.00, room G. 041

ATTILA LINDNER (University College London)
Department Seminar

Wednesday, June 1st, h. 12.00, room G. 251

PATRICK MELLACHER (University of Graz)
CLE Seminar

Thursday, June 16th, h. 12.00, room G. 041

ANNA MAYDA (Georgetown University)
Department Seminar

Monday, June 20th, h. 12.00

VALENTINO LARCINESE (London School of Economics)
CIFREL Seminar

WORKING PAPERS

N. 114 – “Education, health and health-related behaviors: Evidence from higher education expansion” - Massimiliano Bratti, **Elena Cottini**, and **Paolo Ghinetti** (February 2022).

N. 115 – “News and narratives: A cointegration analysis of Russian economic policy uncertainty” - **Andrea Boitani** and **Catalin Dragomirescu-Gaina** (April 2022).

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Balduzzi, P. 2022. *Storia del pensiero economico*, Milano: Rizzoli education.

Balduzzi, P., and M.F. Ambrosanio. 2022. “La finanza pubblica tra pandemia e guerra”, *Aggiornamenti sociali*, 4 (73): 238-247.

Colombo, L., K. Aktas, G. Argentin, **G.P. Barbetta**, and G. Barbieri. 2022. “High School Choices by Immigrant Students in Italy: Evidence from Administrative Data”, forthcoming in *The B.E. Journal of Economic Analysis and Policy*.

Colombo, L., and M. Botta. 2022. “Non-Linear Capital Structure Dynamics”, forthcoming in *Journal of Business Finance and Accounting*.

Colombo, L., **P. Balduzzi**, and **M. Bordignon**. 2022. “Pnrr, occorrono un monitoraggio e una valutazione diffusa”, *Vita e Pensiero*, 1: 71-77.

Corno, L., E. La Ferrara, and J. Burns 2022. “Interactions, Stereotypes and Performance. Evidence from South Africa”, accepted at *American Economic Review*.

Cottini, E., E. Iossa, **P. Ghinetti**, and P. Sacco. 2022. “Stress, effort and Incentives at work”, forthcoming in *Oxford Economic Papers*.

Gerotto, L., M. Costola, M. Donadelli, and I. Gufler. 2022. “Global Risks, the Macroeconomy, and Asset Prices”, forthcoming in *Empirical Economics*.

Gerotto, L., **L. Salmasi**, and **G. Turati**. 2021. “Mutamenti demografici, spesa sanitaria e politiche per la salute”, *Rivista di Politica Economica*, 2: 131-156.

Ghisolfi, S., T. Bold, F. Nsonzi, and J. Svensson. 2022. “Market Access and Quality Upgrading: Evidence from Four Field Experiments”, *American Economic Review*, 112 (8): 2518-52

Le Moglie, M., A. Aassve, and G. Daniele. 2022. “Never Forget the First Time: The Persistent Effects of Corruption and the Rise of Populism in Italy”, forthcoming in *Journal of Politics*.

Le Moglie, M., and D. Cipullo. 2022. “To Vote, or Not To Vote? On the Epidemiological Impact of Electoral Campaigns at the Time of COVID-19”, *European Journal of Political Economy*, 72, 102118.

Le Moglie, M., B. Arpino, and L. Mencarini. 2022. “What Tears Couples Apart: An Analysis of Union Dissolution in Germany with Machine Learning”, *Demography*, 59 (1): 161–186.

Le Moglie, M., L. Mencarini, and R. Piccareta. 2022. “M.Life-course perspective on personality traits and fertility with sequence analysis”, forthcoming in *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society - Series A*.

Lossani, M. 2022. *Dalla Iperglobalizzazione alla slowbalisation*. Milano: Vita e Pensiero. (in corso di pubblicazione).

Lossani, M. 2022. “Gli Effetti Economici delle Sanzioni alla Russia: Una Prima Valutazione”, *SIDIBlog*.

Lucifora, C., and A. Garnerò. 2022. “Turning a ‘Blind Eye’? Compliance with Minimum Wage Standards and Employment”, *Economica*.

Lucifora, C., D. Biancardi, and F. Origo. 2022. “Short-time work and unionization”, *Labour Economics*, 78, 102188.

Turati, G., R. Novaro, and M. Piacenza. 2022. “Does money laundering inflate residential house prices? Evidence from the Italian provincial markets”, *Kyklos*, 1– 20.

DEPARTMENT NEWS

AWARDS

• CRILDA Research Center announced a graduation award (amount € 1.500) in memory of Prof. Carlo Dell’Aringa reserved to graduates in a Master's degree course on labor market issues. The prize will be awarded during the *Lectio Magistralis* held by Prof. Alex Bryson on November, 10th 2022.

AFFILIATIONS & FELLOWSHIPS



We congratulate:

• **Elena Cottini** on her appointment as Associate Professor, Facoltà di Economia.

• **Elenka Brenna** on her appointment as RTD-A at the Department of Economics and Management, University of Pavia.

GRANTS & PROJECTS

• **Balduzzi P., Bordignon M., and Colombo L.:** in the LIBenter Project (Department of Political Sciences, *Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore*, Principal Investigator: Prof. Dino Rinoldi, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore Piacenza) participation at a research project funded by CNEL that produced the document: “Il monitoraggio del Piano nazionale di ripresa e resilienza (PNRR) a cura di comunità, associazioni, cittadini. Una proposta per la tutela della trasparenza, dell’integrità e della realizzazione degli investimenti pubblici”.

Project title: “Il monitoraggio del Piano nazionale di ripresa e resilienza (Pnrr) a cura di comunità, associazioni, cittadini: una proposta di lavoro”.

Executive Summary:

The National Recovery and Resilience Plan (Pnrr) in Italy started in 2021. It consists in a set of projects and investments that the Italian government plans to carry out over the next five years. The Pnrr will be financed almost entirely by the European recovery fund, namely resources composed of non-repayable transfers and loans granted at a subsidized rate. Given the characteristics of the funding system, the Pnrr is subject to some forms of conditionality. It is for this reason that the Pnrr establishes milestones, intermediate objectives and their deadlines. A mechanism of this type requires the ability, internal and external to the administration that manages the funds of the Plan, to monitor the activities and to assess whether they are proceeding correctly. For this reason, monitoring and evaluation must become two fundamental activities in the management of the Plan and affect not only the government and the administrations involved, but the entire civil society, which, ultimately, is the recipient of all projects. Therefore, there is an increasing need to develop a monitoring and, as far as possible, evaluation methodology that can be implemented by all those interested in doing so, even if they do not have specific skills. This project elaborates a methodological proposal for the monitoring of the Pnrr and suggests a possible “in itinere” evaluation process.

• **Catalin Dragomirescu-Gaina** (Principal Investigator) and Leandro Elia (Università Politecnica delle Marche).

Project title: “A look offshore: the pervasiveness of misinvoicing in international trade”.

Executive Summary:

This research project is financed by UNU-Wider in partnership with University of Copenhagen and the Norwegian Agency for Development and Cooperation. The main goal of the project is to study empirically whether misinvoicing in international trade is reflected in cross-border bank accounts, as reported by offshore centres. Some novel datasets are employed, spanning across a large sample of countries over the last two decades. Preliminary results show that residents hold more offshore wealth when local misinvoicing practices thrive. These findings are more statistically significant for developing and least developed countries lacking institutional capacity and surveillance tools to deter

those forms of capital associated with illicit practices that subtract financing which might otherwise promote local development and fair international trade. More information: <https://www.wider.unu.edu/project/detecting-and-counteracting-illicit-financial-flows>

• **Marco Le Moglie:** DARKSIDE Project – Unit’s coordinator, Italian Ministry of University and Research, P.I.: Prof. P. Pinotti. 2022 – Present.

Project title: “The Dark Side of the Money: Causes and Consequences of Organized Crime and Corruption”.

Executive Summary:

Crime imposes large economic and social costs. In particular, organized crime and corruption are the main obstacle to human development in many regions of the World. However, systematic empirical evidence about these phenomena remains relatively limited, for two main reasons. First, crime data typically entail a large degree of (non-classical) measurement error, as offenders do all they can to hide their actions from enforcement authorities. Second, randomized controlled trials are seldom available when studying crime, due to obvious ethical and political concerns. These challenges greatly complicate the identification of causal effects, which are most interesting from both a scientific and a policy perspective, and they are most severe when studying organized crime and corruption, as opposed to simpler types of crimes.

The present proposal will advance our understanding of organized crime and corruption in several directions. First, all projects in the proposal will exploit rich microdata across individuals, firms, and transactions (e.g., procurement contracts), whereby much of the previous research in this field has relied on aggregate, local-level data.

These data will be derived from several sources:

- survey experiments created ad-hoc for the purposes of our research and covering large representative samples of the population as well as specific groups of prison inmates – including members of criminal organizations;
- different types of registry data, most of which would be made available for research purposes for the first time;
- International data allowing for comparisons of corruption and organized crime across countries.

We would leverage these data together with experimental and quasi-experimental variation to achieve a credible identification of the causal effects of interest.

In principle, high internal validity may come at the expense of external validity. However, most projects in the proposal cover two countries, Italy and Brazil, which exemplify the negative consequences of crime in high- and middle-income countries, respectively. In addition, one project extends the analysis to a large panel of countries, addressing the issues that traditionally hamper cross-country comparisons thanks to an eclectic approach to measuring corruption – namely, using leaked data on offshore incorporations that are traditionally used as vehicles for bribes. This multi-country perspective is particularly important when studying organized crime, as most studies on this topic focus on Italy.

Finally, the quality of our data and research designs will make it possible to explore many mechanisms driving the causal effects of interest. For instance, unique data on all demands for credit by Italian firms – including credit that is eventually denied – would allow us to document the mediating role, if any, of

financial intermediaries in the relationship between economic shocks and firm capture by criminal organizations.

• **CRILDA** and **Claudio Lucifora** (Principal Investigator). Cariplo Research Grant, Fondazione Cariplo

Project title: “The Post-Covid-19 Syndrome: network building and innovative management to address a new public health emergency”.

Executive Summary:

The post-acute Covid Syndrome (PASC) is an emergent chronicity which has the potential to heavily impact not only individual health, but also local communities. Its features and burden are not well defined, nor are the models and protocols for its care by Health Care Systems. These challenges require a multidisciplinary approach, in order to define PASC in magnitude and describe it in features. A plan for systematic, structured intervention must be devised and implemented. This plurality of tasks requires the involvement of different institutions, with the construction of a network to deal with such a demanding work.

The overarching aim of the present project is to develop a solid network linking local health providers (ASSTs), a Scientific Institute for Research, Hospitalization and Health care (IRCCS), central health institutions (ATSS), General Practitioners and Universities to fill the current gap of knowledge on PASC from an epidemiological, clinical, and public health perspective. This multidisciplinary approach will be crucial for the design of effective intervention plans for the monitoring and management of PASC. The project will also explore the impact of the pandemic on contraction and changes in the provision of health-care services (namely outpatient services and screening tests) and disrupted care management of fragile patients, to locate priorities of intervention, particularly for the continued care of persons with chronicity and/or fragility.

In order to investigate the main features of the PASC, the project will first perform an epidemiological study on administrative health data regarding Covid-19 patients, from the beginning of the epidemic on, to characterize patients in terms of severity of the disease, path of care and PASC characteristics. Based on the epidemiological study, it will design and develop a clinical follow-up study on Covid-19 patients to determine the real incidence of PASC, its known and possibly yet-unknown manifestations in the population residing in the territories of the partner ASSTs and IRCCS. A GDPR-compliant digital infrastructure, available to all ATSS, will be created to show to the clinicians of each ASST and IRCCS the list of patients to followup and the visit or exams they need to perform. The same platform will allow the clinicians to visualize patients' information from administrative databases concerning the primary infection, previous hospitalization for Covid-19, comorbidities and vaccination status. The platform will allow to collect the results of the examinations planned during the follow-up and the data of interest from previous clinical records.

The epidemiological and clinical data from the first two studies will be integrated with clinical databases on Covid-19 patients already existing in the partner ASSTs and IRCCS. Such integration would serve not only for the objectives of the present project, but it will also be the basis for a prospective, observational, longperiod cohort study which will follow Covid-19 patients in their various

outcomes of disease. The so acquired information will be used to develop plans for the monitoring and management of the new PASC-related chronicity, both at patient- and system-level, with a strong focus on organizational models and digital health solutions, which can support the network and monitoring activities. The feasibility and efficacy of such intervention plans will be then evaluated and validated together with GP cooperatives included in the network. Finally, administrative health data will be used to evaluate the indirect effects of the epidemic on the Health-Care System, in terms of contraction and changes in health services (outpatient services and screening) and the short-term effects on emergency care access and emergency hospitalization due to a decrease in preventive services.

PEOPLE

Welcome to the new researchers joining the Department!

• **Selene Ghisolfi (Assistant Professor – RTD-A, Facoltà di Economia)**



I am an Economics Assistant Professor at Catholic University in Milan, and faculty affiliate at LEAP, Laboratory for Effective Anti-poverty Policies, Bocconi. I obtained my PhD in Economics at the Institute for International Economic Studies, Stockholm University.

I work in Development and Behavioural Economics. I am interested in agricultural markets in developing countries, educational poverty and inequalities in disadvantaged contexts, and in social norms, fairness preferences and bargaining.

I have been working in Italy, Bangladesh, Uganda, India and South Africa implementing randomized control trials and lab or field experiments. I also work on predicting the severity of COVID-19 and its effect, with particular focus on low and middle-income countries.

- **Matteo Sandi** (Assistant Professor – RTD-B, Facoltà di Economia *from September, 1st 2022*)



Dr Matteo Sandi has been a Research Economist at the Centre for Economic Performance (LSE) since October 2015 and is an RTDB-holder at Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore as well as a CEP (LSE) Visiting Fellow since September 2022. Matteo completed his ESRC-funded PhD in Economics at the University of Sussex in June 2016 and, during his PhD, he consulted the World Bank on the unintended impact of restrictive migration policies on labour markets and school enrolment in Indonesia. Matteo has been a member of the Experts Panel of the Youth Endowment Fund since 2019 and a CESifo affiliate since 2021. His current research focuses on the

determinants of crime and the crime-reducing effects of schooling, policing and early childhood interventions, as well as on the use of discipline sanctions in school and their impact on student performance and criminal activity. As part of this research agenda, Matteo is leading the LSE's Education Policy and Youth Crime in England (EPYCE) project.

VISITING RESEARCHERS

Cristina Bratu, Aalto University School of Business: January-June 2022.

Stefano Lombardi, Institute for Economic Research, Helsinki: January-June 2022.

LEAVING

A post-doc researcher left the Department. We thank him for all the work he has done and wish him all the best for his future careers.

Bernardo Fanfani (Post-doc Research Fellow, Facoltà di Economia) has moved to Università di Torino as Researcher.

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