# 5 Extreme value theory

- 5.1 Maxima
- 5.2 Threshold exceedances

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### 5.1 Maxima

Consider a series of financial losses  $(X_k)_{k \in \mathbb{N}}$ .

#### 5.1.1 Generalized extreme value distribution

# Convergence of sums

Let  $(X_k)_{k\in\mathbb{N}}$  be iid with  $\mathbb{E}(X_1^2)<\infty$  (mean  $\mu$ , variance  $\sigma^2$ ) and  $S_n=\sum_{k=1}^n X_k$ . As  $n\to\infty$ ,  $\bar{X}_n\overset{\text{a.s.}}{\to}\mu$  by the Strong Law of Large Numbers (SLLN), so  $(\bar{X}_n-\mu)/\sigma\overset{\text{a.s.}}{\to}0$ . By the CLT,

$$\sqrt{n}\frac{X_n-\mu}{\sigma} = \frac{S_n-n\mu}{\sqrt{n}\sigma} \underset{n\uparrow\infty}{\overset{\mathrm{d}}{\longrightarrow}} \mathrm{N}(0,1) \text{ or } \lim_{n\to\infty} \mathbb{P}\Big(\frac{S_n-d_n}{c_n} \leq x\Big) = \Phi(x),$$

where the sequences  $c_n = \sqrt{n}\sigma$  and  $d_n = n\mu$  give normalization and where  $\Phi(x) = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2\pi}} \int_{-\infty}^x e^{-z^2/2} dz$ . More generally  $(\sigma^2 = \infty)$ , the limiting distributions for appropriately normalized sums are the class of  $\alpha$ -stable distributions  $(\alpha \in (0,2]; \alpha = 2$ : normal distribution).

# Convergence of maxima

QRM is concerned with maximal losses (orst-case losses). Let  $(X_i)_{i\in\mathbb{N}}\stackrel{\text{ind.}}{\sim} F$  (can be relaxed to a strictly stationary time series) and F continuous. Then the *block maximum* is given by

$$M_n = \max\{X_1, \dots, X_n\}.$$

One can show that, for  $n \to \infty$ ,  $M_n \stackrel{\text{a.s.}}{\to} x_F$  (similar as in the SLLN) where  $x_F := \sup\{x \in \mathbb{R} : F(x) < 1\} = F^{\leftarrow}(1) \le \infty$  denotes the *right endpoint* of F (similar to the SLLN).

Question: Is there a "CLT" for block maxima?

Idea CLT: What about linear transformations (the simplest possible)?

### Definition 5.1 (Maximum domain of attraction)

Suppose we find normalizing sequences of real numbers  $(c_n) > 0$  and  $(d_n)$  such that  $(M_n - d_n)/c_n$  converges in distribution, i.e.

$$\mathbb{P}((M_n - d_n)/c_n \le x) = \mathbb{P}(M_n \le c_n x + d_n) = F^n(c_n x + d_n) \underset{n \uparrow \infty}{\to} H(x),$$

for some *non-degenerate* df H (not a unit jump). Then F is in the maximum domain of attraction of H ( $F \in MDA(H)$ ).

One can show that H is determined up to location/scale, i.e. H specifies a unique type of distribution. This is guaranteed by the convergence to types theorem; see the appendix.

**Question:** What does H look like?

# Definition 5.2 (Generalized extreme value (GEV) distribution)

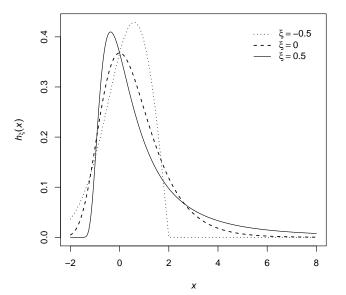
The (standard) generalized extreme value (GEV) distribution is given by

$$H_{\xi}(x) = \begin{cases} \exp(-(1+\xi x)^{-1/\xi}), & \text{if } \xi \neq 0, \\ \exp(-e^{-x}), & \text{if } \xi = 0, \end{cases}$$

where  $1 + \xi x > 0$  (MLE!). A three-parameter family is obtained by a location-scale transform  $H_{\xi,\mu,\sigma}(x) = H_{\xi}((x-\mu)/\sigma), \ \mu \in \mathbb{R}, \ \sigma > 0.$ 

- $\blacksquare$  The parameterization is continuous in  $\xi$  (simplifies statistical modelling).
- $\blacksquare \ \ \text{The larger $\xi$, the heavier tailed $H_\xi$ (if $\xi>0$, $\mathbb{E}(X^k)=\infty$ iff $k\geq \frac{1}{\xi}$). }$
- $\xi$  is the *shape* (determines moments, tail). Special cases:
  - 1)  $\xi < 0$ : the Weibull df, short-tailed,  $x_{H_{\xi}} < \infty$ ;
  - 2)  $\xi=0$ : the Gumbel df,  $x_{H_0}=\infty$ , decays exponentially;
  - 3)  $\xi > 0$ : the Fréchet df,  $x_{H_{\xi}} = \infty$ , heavy-tailed  $(\bar{H}_{\xi}(x) \approx (\xi x)^{-1/\xi})$ , most important case for practice

# Density $h_{\xi}$ for $\xi \in \{-0.5, 0, 0.5\}$ (dotted, dashed, solid)



### Theorem 5.3 (Fisher–Tippett–Gnedenko)

If  $F \in \mathrm{MDA}(H)$  for some non-degenerate H, then H must be of GEV type, i.e.  $H = H_{\xi}$  for some  $\xi \in \mathbb{R}$ .

*Proof.* Non-trivial. For a sketch, see Embrechts et al. (1997, p. 122).  $\Box$ 

- Interpretation: If location-scale transformed maxima converge in distribution to a non-degenerate limit, the limiting distribution must be a GEV distribution.
- We can always choose normalizing sequences  $(c_n) > 0$ ,  $(d_n)$  such that  $H_{\xi}$  appears in standard form.
- All commonly encountered continuous distributions are in the MDA of a GEV distribution.

# Example 5.4 (Exponential distribution)

For  $(X_i)_{i\in\mathbb{N}}\stackrel{\text{ind.}}{\sim} \operatorname{Exp}(\lambda)$ , choosing  $c_n=1/\lambda$ ,  $d_n=\log(n)/\lambda$ , one obtains

$$F^{n}(c_{n}x + d_{n}) = \left(1 - \exp(-\lambda((1/\lambda)x + \log(n)/\lambda))\right)^{n}$$
$$= (1 - \exp(-x)/n)^{n} \underset{n \uparrow \infty}{\to} \exp(-e^{-x}) = H_{0}(x) \text{ (Gumbel)}$$

### Example 5.5 (Pareto distribution)

For 
$$(X_i)_{i\in\mathbb{N}}\stackrel{\mathrm{ind.}}{\sim} \operatorname{Par}(\theta,\kappa)$$
 with  $F(x)=1-(\frac{\kappa}{\kappa+x})^{\theta},\ x\geq 0,\ \theta,\kappa>0$ , choosing  $c_n=\kappa n^{1/\theta}/\theta,\ d_n=\kappa(n^{1/\theta}-1),\ F^n(c_nx+d_n)$  equals 
$$\left(1-\left(\frac{\kappa}{\kappa+x\kappa n^{1/\theta}/\theta+\kappa(n^{1/\theta}-1)}\right)^{\theta}\right)^n = \left(1-\left(\frac{1}{1+xn^{1/\theta}/\theta+n^{1/\theta}-1}\right)^{\theta}\right)^n = \left(1-\left(\frac{1}{n^{1/\theta}(1+x/\theta)}\right)^{\theta}\right)^n = \left(1-\frac{(1+x/\theta)^{-\theta}}{n}\right)^n_{n\uparrow\infty} \exp(-(1+x/\theta)^{-\theta}) = H_{1/\theta}(x) \text{ (Fréchet)}$$

Therefore,  $F \in MDA(H_{1/\theta})$ .

### 5.1.2 Maximum domains of attraction

All commonly applied continuous F belong to  $\mathrm{MDA}(H_\xi)$  for some  $\xi \in \mathbb{R}$ .  $\mu, \sigma$  can be estimated, but how can we characterize/determine  $\xi$ ? All  $F \in \mathrm{MDA}(H_\xi)$  for  $\xi > 0$  have an elegant characterization involving the following notions.

### Definition 5.6 (Slowly/regularly varying functions)

- 1) A positive, Lebesgue-measurable function L on  $(0,\infty)$  is slowly varying at  $\infty$  if  $\lim_{x\to\infty}\frac{L(tx)}{L(x)}=1$ , t>0. The class of all such functions is denoted by  $\mathcal{R}_0$ ; e.g.  $c,\log\in\mathcal{R}_0$ .
- 2) A positive, Lebesgue-measurable function h on  $(0,\infty)$  is *regularly varying at*  $\infty$  *with index*  $\alpha \in \mathbb{R}$  if  $\lim_{x \to \infty} \frac{h(tx)}{h(x)} = t^{\alpha}$ , t > 0. The class of all such functions is denoted by  $\mathcal{R}_{\alpha}$ ; e.g.  $x^{\alpha}L(x) \in \mathcal{R}_{\alpha}$ .

If  $\bar{F} \in \mathcal{R}_{-\alpha}$ ,  $\alpha > 0$ , the tail of F decays like a power function (Pareto like).

### The Fréchet case

# Theorem 5.7 (Fréchet MDA, Gnedenko (1943))

For  $\xi > 0$ ,  $F \in \mathrm{MDA}(H_{\xi})$  if and only if  $\bar{F}(x) = x^{-1/\xi}L(x)$  for some  $L \in \mathcal{R}_0$ . If  $F \in \mathrm{MDA}(H_{\xi})$ ,  $\xi > 0$ , the normalizing sequences can be chosen as  $c_n = F^{\leftarrow}(1 - 1/n)$  and  $d_n = 0$ ,  $n \in \mathbb{N}$ .

*Proof.* Non-trivial. For a sketch, see Embrechts et al. (1997, p. 131). □

- Interpretation: Distributions in  $MDA(H_{\xi})$ ,  $\xi > 0$ , are those whose tails decay like power functions;  $\alpha = 1/\xi$  is known as *tail index*.
- If  $X \sim F \in \mathrm{MDA}(H_{\xi})$ ,  $\xi > 0$ ,  $X \geq 0$ , then  $\mathbb{E}(X^k) < \infty$  if  $k < \alpha = 1/\xi$ ,  $\mathbb{E}(X^k) = \infty$  if  $k > \alpha = 1/\xi$ ; see Embrechts et al. (1997, p. 568).
- Examples in  $MDA(H_{\xi})$ ,  $\xi > 0$ : Inverse gamma, Student t, log-gamma, F, Cauchy,  $\alpha$ -stable with  $0 < \alpha < 2$ , Burr and Pareto

### **Example 5.8 (Pareto distribution)**

For  $F=\operatorname{Par}(\theta,\kappa)$ ,  $\bar{F}(x)=(\kappa/(\kappa+x))^{\theta}=(1+x/\kappa)^{-\theta}=x^{-\theta}L(x)$ ,  $x\geq 0$ ,  $\theta,\kappa>0$ , where  $L(x)=(\kappa^{-1}+x^{-1})^{-\theta}\in\mathcal{R}_0$ . We (again) see that  $F\in\operatorname{MDA}(H_\xi)$ ,  $\xi>0$ .

### The Gumbel case

- The characterization of this class is more complicated; see the appendix and Embrechts et al. (1997, p. 142).
- Essentially  $\mathrm{MDA}(H_0)$  contains dfs whose tails decay roughly exponentially (*light-tailed*), but the tails can be quite different (up to moderately heavy). All moments exist for distributions in the Gumbel class, but both  $x_F < \infty$  and  $x_F = \infty$  are possible.
- **Examples in**  $MDA(H_0)$ : Normal, log-normal, exponential, gamma (exponential, Erlang,  $\chi^2$ ), standard Weibull, Benktander type I and II, generalized hyperbolic (except Student t).

### The Weibull case

### Theorem 5.9 (Weibull MDA)

For  $\xi < 0$ ,  $F \in \mathrm{MDA}(H_{\xi})$  if and only if  $x_F < \infty$  and  $\bar{F}(x_F - 1/x) = x^{1/\xi} L(x)$  for some  $L \in \mathcal{R}_0$ ; the normalizing sequences can be chosen as  $c_n = x_F - F^{\leftarrow}(1 - 1/n)$  and  $d_n = x_F$ ,  $n \in \mathbb{N}$ .

*Proof.* Non-trivial. For a sketch, see Embrechts et al. (1997, p. 135). □

**Examples in**  $MDA(H_{\xi})$ ,  $\xi < 0$ : beta (uniform). All  $F \in MDA(H_{\xi})$ ,  $\xi < 0$ , share  $x_F < \infty$ .

### 5.1.3 Maxima of strictly stationary time series

What about maxima of strictly stationary time series?

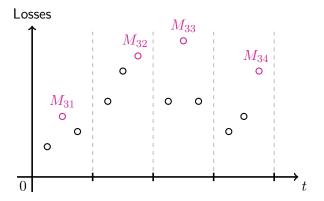
■ Let  $(X_k)_{k \in \mathbb{Z}}$  denote a strictly stationary time series with stationary distribution  $X_k \sim F$ ,  $k \in \mathbb{Z}$ .

- Let  $\tilde{X}_k \stackrel{\text{ind.}}{\sim} F$ ,  $k \in \mathbb{Z}$ , and  $\tilde{M}_n = \max\{\tilde{X}_1, \dots, \tilde{X}_n\}$ . For many processes one can show that there exists a real number  $\theta \in (0,1]$  such that  $\lim_{n \uparrow \infty} \mathbb{P}((M_n d_n)/c_n \le x) = H^{\theta}(x)$  if and only if  $\lim_{n \uparrow \infty} \mathbb{P}((\tilde{M}_n d_n)/c_n \le x) = H(x)$  (non-degenerate);  $\theta$  is known as the extremal index.
- If  $F \in \mathrm{MDA}(H_{\xi})$  for some  $\xi \Rightarrow M_n$  converges in distribution to  $H_{\xi}^{\theta}$ . Since  $H_{\xi}^{\theta}$  is of the same type as  $H_{\xi}$ , the limiting distribution of the block maxima of the dependent series is the same as in the iid case (only location/scale may change).
- For large n,  $\mathbb{P}((M_n-d_n)/c_n \leq x) \approx H^{\theta}(x) \approx F^{n\theta}(c_nx+d_n)$ , so the distribution of  $M_n$  from a time series with extremal index  $\theta$  can be approximated by the distribution  $\tilde{M}_{n\theta}$  of the maximum of  $n\theta < n$  observations from the associated iid series.  $\Rightarrow n\theta$  counts the number of roughly independent clusters in n observations ( $\theta$  is often interpreted as "1/mean cluster size").

- If  $\theta = 1$ , large sample maxima behave as in the iid case; if  $\theta \in (0,1)$ , large sample maxima tend to cluster.
- **Examples** (see Embrechts et al. (1997, pp. 216, pp. 415, pp. 476))
  - Strict white noise (iid rvs):  $\theta = 1$ ;
  - ARMA processes with  $(\varepsilon_t)$  strict white noise:  $\theta=1$  (Gaussian);  $\theta\in(0,1)$  (if df of  $\varepsilon_t$  is in  $\mathrm{MDA}(H_\xi)$ ,  $\xi>0$ );
  - ▶ GARCH processes:  $\theta \in (0,1)$ .

# 5.1.4 The block maxima method (BMM)

The basic idea in a picture based on losses  $X_1, \ldots, X_{12}$ :



Consider the maximal loss from each block and fit  $H_{\xi,\mu,\sigma}$  to them.

### Fitting the GEV distribution

■ Suppose  $(x_i)_{i \in \mathbb{N}}$  are realizations of  $(X_i)_{i \in \mathbb{N}} \stackrel{\text{ind.}}{\sim} F \in \text{MDA}(H_\xi)$ ,  $\xi \in \mathbb{R}$ , or of a process with an extremal index such as GARCH. The Fisher—Tippett–Gnedenko Theorem implies that

$$\mathbb{P}(M_n \leq x) = \mathbb{P}((M_n - d_n)/c_n \leq (x - d_n)/c_n) \underset{n \text{ large}}{\approx} H_{\xi, \mu = d_n, \sigma = c_n}(x).$$

- For fitting  $\theta = (\xi, \mu, \sigma)$ , divide the realizations into m blocks of size n denoted by  $M_{n1}, \ldots, M_{nm}$  (e.g. daily log-returns  $\Rightarrow$  monthly maxima)
- Assume the block size n to be sufficiently large so that (regardless of whether the underlying data are dependent or not), the block maxima can be considered independent.
- The density  $h_{\xi}$  of  $H_{\xi}$  is

$$h_{\xi}(x) = \begin{cases} (1 + \xi x)^{-1/\xi - 1} H_{\xi}(x) I_{\{1 + \xi x > 0\}}, & \text{if } \xi \neq 0, \\ e^{-x} H_{0}(x), & \text{if } \xi = 0. \end{cases}$$

The log-likelihood is thus

$$\ell(\boldsymbol{\theta}; M_{n1}, \dots, M_{nm}) = \sum_{i=1}^{m} \log \left( \frac{1}{\sigma} h_{\xi} \left( \frac{M_{ni} - \mu}{\sigma} \right) I_{\{1 + \xi(M_{ni} - \mu)/\sigma > 0\}} \right).$$

Maximize w.r.t.  $\boldsymbol{\theta} = (\xi, \mu, \sigma)$  to get  $\hat{\boldsymbol{\theta}} = (\hat{\xi}, \hat{\mu}, \hat{\sigma})$ .

#### Remark 5.10

- 1) Sufficiently many/large blocks require large amounts of data.
- 2) Bias and variance must be traded off (bias-variance tradeoff):
  - Block size  $n \uparrow \Rightarrow \mathsf{GEV}$  approximation more accurate  $\Rightarrow \mathsf{bias} \downarrow$
  - Number of blocks  $m \uparrow \Rightarrow$  more data for MLE  $\Rightarrow$  variance  $\downarrow$
- 3) There is no general best strategy known to find the optimal block size.
- 4) MLE regularity conditions for consistency and asymptotic efficiency were shown by Smith (1985) for  $\xi > -1/2$  (fine for practice).

# Return levels and stress losses (exceedances)

Let  $M_n \sim H$  (exact or estimated). H can be used to estimate the...

- 1) ... size of an event with prescribed frequency (return-level problem)
  - The level  $r_{n,k}$  which is expected to be exceeded in one out of every k blocks of size n satisfies  $\mathbb{P}(M_n > r_{n,k}) = 1/k$  (e.g. 10-year return level  $r_{260,10}$  = level exceeded in one out of every 10y; 260d  $\approx$  1y).
  - $r_{n,k} = H^{\leftarrow}(1-1/k) \text{ is known as } \frac{k}{n} \text{ } \frac{n\text{-block return level}}{\hat{\xi}} \text{ with parametric estimator } \hat{r}_{n,k} = H^{\leftarrow}_{\hat{\xi},\hat{\mu},\hat{\sigma}}(1-1/k) = \hat{\mu} + \frac{\hat{\sigma}}{\hat{\xi}}((-\log(1-1/k))^{-\hat{\xi}}-1).$
- 2) ... frequency of an event with prescribed size (return-period problem)
  - The number  $k_{n,u}$  of n-blocks for which we expect to see a single n-block exceeding u satisfies  $r_{n,k_{n,u}} = u$ .
  - $k_{n,u}=1/\bar{H}(u)$  is known as *return period* of the event  $\{M_n>u\}$  with parametric estimator  $\hat{k}_{n,u}=1/\bar{H}_{\hat{\mathcal{E}},\hat{u},\hat{\sigma}}(u)$ .

### Example 5.11 (Block maxima analysis of S&P500)

Suppose it is Friday 1987-10-16; the Friday before Black Monday (1987-10-19). The S&P 500 index fell by 10.0% this week. On that Friday alone the index is down 5.4%. We fit a GEV distribution to (bi)annual maxima of daily negative log-returns  $X_t = \log(S_t/S_{t-1})$  since 1960-01-01.

- Analysis 1: Annual maxima (m=28; including the latest from the incomplete year 1987):  $\hat{\theta}=(0.30,0.02,0.007)\Rightarrow$  heavy-tailed Fréchet distribution (infinite fourth moment). The corresponding standard errors are  $(0.21,0.002,0.001)\Rightarrow$  High uncertainty (m small) for estimating  $\xi$ .
- **Analysis 2:** Biannual maxima (m=56):  $\hat{\theta}=(0.34,0.02,0.006)$  with standard errors (0.14,0.0009,0.0008)  $\Rightarrow$  Even heavier tails. In what follows we work with the annual maxima.
- What is the probability that next year's maximal risk-factor change exceeds all previous ones?  $1-H_{\hat{\mathcal{E}},\hat{\mu},\hat{\sigma}}($ "all previous maxima")

- Was a risk-factor change of the size as of Black Monday foreseeable?
  - ▶ Based on data up to and including Friday 1987-10-16, the 10-year return level  $r_{260,10}$  is estimated as  $\hat{r}_{260,10}=4.42\%$ .
  - ▶ Index drop Black Monday: 25.7%  $\Rightarrow X_{t+1} = 22.9\% \gg \hat{r}_{260,10}$ .
  - One can show that 22.9% is in the 95% confidence interval of  $r_{260,50}$  (estimated as  $\hat{r}_{260,50}=7.49\%$ ), but the 28 maxima are too few to get a reliable estimate of a once-in-50-years event.
- Based on the available data, what is the (estimated) return period of a risk-factor change at least as large as on Black Monday?
  - ▶ The estimated return period  $k_{260,0.229}$  is  $\hat{k}_{260,0.229} = 1877$  years.
  - ▶ One can show that the 95% confidence interval encompasses everything from 45y to essentially never! ⇒ Very high uncertainty!
- $\Rightarrow$  On 1987-10-16 we did not have enough data to say anything meaningful about such an event. Quantifying such events is difficult.

### 5.2 Threshold exceedances

The BMM is wasteful of data (only the maxima of large blocks are used). It has been largely superseded in practice by methods based on threshold exceedances (peaks-over-threshold (POT) approach), where all data above a designated high threshold u are used.

#### 5.2.1 Generalized Pareto distribution

### Definition 5.12 (Generalized Pareto distribution (GPD))

The generalized Pareto distribution (GPD) is given by

$$G_{\xi,\beta}(x) = \begin{cases} 1 - (1 + \xi x/\beta)^{-1/\xi}, & \text{if } \xi \neq 0, \\ 1 - \exp(-x/\beta), & \text{if } \xi = 0, \end{cases}$$

where  $\beta>0$ , and the support is  $x\geq 0$  when  $\xi\geq 0$  and  $x\in [0,-\beta/\xi]$  when  $\xi<0$ .

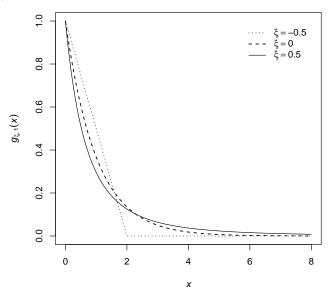
- The parameterization is continuous in  $\xi$ .
- The larger  $\xi$ , the heavier tailed  $G_{\xi,\beta}$  (if  $\xi > 0$ ,  $\mathbb{E}(X^k) = \infty$  iff  $k \geq \frac{1}{\xi}$ ; if  $\xi < 1$ , then  $\mathbb{E}X = \beta/(1-\xi)$ ).
- $\xi$  is known as *shape*;  $\beta$  as *scale*. Special cases:
  - 1)  $\xi > 0$ : Par $(1/\xi, \beta/\xi)$
  - 2)  $\xi = 0$ : Exp $(1/\beta)$
  - 3)  $\xi < 0$ : short-tailed Pareto type II distribution
- The density  $g_{\xi,\beta}$  of  $G_{\xi,\beta}$  is given by

$$g_{\xi,\beta}(x) = \begin{cases} \frac{1}{\beta} (1 + \xi x/\beta)^{-1/\xi - 1}, & \text{if } \xi \neq 0, \\ \frac{1}{\beta} \exp(-x/\beta), & \text{if } \xi = 0, \end{cases}$$

where  $x \ge 0$  when  $\xi \ge 0$  and  $x \in [0, -\beta/\xi)$  when  $\xi < 0$  (MLE!).

•  $G_{\xi,\beta} \in \mathrm{MDA}(H_{\xi}), \ \xi \in \mathbb{R}.$ 

Density  $g_{\xi,1}$  for  $\xi \in \{-0.5,0,0.5\}$  (dotted, dashed, solid)



# Definition 5.13 (Excess distribution over u, mean excess function)

Let  $X \sim F$ . The excess distribution over the threshold u is defined by

$$F_u(x) = \mathbb{P}(X - u \le x \mid X > u) = \frac{F(x + u) - F(u)}{1 - F(u)}, \quad x \in [0, x_F - u).$$

If  $\mathbb{E}|X| < \infty$ , the *mean excess function* is defined by

$$e(u) = \mathbb{E}(X - u \,|\, X > u)$$
 (i.e. the mean w.r.t.  $F_u$ )

### Interpretation

 $F_u$  describes the distribution of the excess loss over u, given that u is exceeded. e(u) is the mean of  $F_u$  as a function in u.

- $\bullet$  One can show the useful formula  $e(u)=\frac{1}{\bar{F}(u)}\int_{u}^{x_{F}}\bar{F}(x)\,dx.$
- For continuous  $X \sim F$  with  $\mathbb{E}|X| < \infty$ , the following formula holds:

$$\mathrm{ES}_{\alpha}(X) = e(\mathrm{VaR}_{\alpha}(X)) + \mathrm{VaR}_{\alpha}(X), \quad \alpha \in (0,1)$$
 (10)

# Example 5.14 ( $F_u$ , e(u) for $\mathrm{Exp}(\lambda)$ , $G_{\xi,\beta}$ )

- 1) If F is  $\operatorname{Exp}(\lambda)$ , then  $F_u(x) = 1 e^{-\lambda x}$ ,  $x \ge 0$  (so again  $\operatorname{Exp}(\lambda)$ ; lack-of-memory property). The mean excess function is  $e(u) = 1/\lambda = \mathbb{E}X$ .
- 2) If F is  $G_{\xi,\beta}$ , then  $F_u(x) = G_{\xi,\beta+\xi u}(x)$ ,  $x \geq 0$  (so again GPD, with the same shape, only the scale grows linearly in u). The mean excess function of  $G_{\xi,\beta}$  is

$$e(u) = \frac{\beta + \xi u}{1 - \xi}$$
, for all  $u : \beta + \xi u > 0$ ,

which is linear in u (this is a characterizing property of the GPD and used to determine u). Note that  $\xi$  determines the slope of e(u).

### Theorem 5.15 (Pickands-Balkema-de Haan (1974/75))

There exists a positive, measurable function  $\beta(u)$ , such that

$$\lim_{u\uparrow x_F} \sup_{0\leq x < x_F-u} |F_u(x) - G_{\xi,\beta(u)}(x)| = 0.$$

if and only if  $F \in \mathrm{MDA}(H_{\xi})$ ,  $\xi \in \mathbb{R}$ .

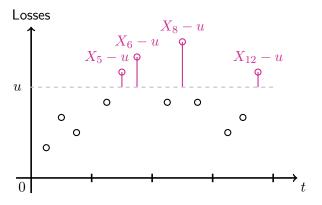
*Proof.* Non-trivial; see, e.g. Pickands (1975) and Balkema and de Haan (1974).  $\Box$ 

### Interpretation

- GPD = Canonical df for modelling excess losses over high u.
- The result is also a characterization of  $\mathrm{MDA}(H_{\xi})$ ,  $\xi \in \mathbb{R}$ . All  $F \in \mathrm{MDA}(H_{\xi})$  form a set of df for which the excess distribution converges to the GPD  $G_{\xi,\beta}$  with the same  $\xi$  as in  $H_{\xi}$  as the threshold u is raised.

### 5.2.2 Modelling excess losses

The basic idea in a picture based on losses  $X_1, \ldots, X_{12}$ .



Consider all excesses over u and fit  $G_{\xi,\beta}$  to them.

### The method

- Given losses  $X_1, \ldots, X_n \sim F \in \mathrm{MDA}(H_{\xi})$ ,  $\xi \in \mathbb{R}$ , let
  - ▶  $N_u = |\{i \in \{1, ..., n\} : X_i > u\}|$  denote the *number of exceedances* over the (given; see later) threshold u;
  - $\tilde{X}_1, \dots, \tilde{X}_{N_u}$  denote the *exceedances*; and
  - $Y_k = \tilde{X}_k u$ ,  $k \in \{1, \dots, N_u\}$ , the corresponding excesses.
- If  $Y_1, \ldots, Y_{N_u}$  are iid and (roughly) distributed as  $G_{\xi,\beta}$ , the log-likelihood is given by

$$\ell(\xi, \beta; Y_1, \dots, Y_{N_u}) = \sum_{k=1}^{N_u} \log g_{\xi, \beta}(Y_k)$$
$$= -N_u \log(\beta) - (1 + 1/\xi) \sum_{k=1}^{N_u} \log(1 + \xi Y_k/\beta)$$

 $\Rightarrow$  Maximize w.r.t.  $\beta > 0$  and  $1 + \xi Y_k/\beta > 0$  for all  $k \in \{1, \dots, N_u\}$ .

# **Excesses over higher thresholds**

Once a model is fitted to  $F_u$ , we can infer a model for  $F_v$ ,  $v \ge u$ .

#### **Lemma 5.16**

Assume, for some u,  $F_u(x) = G_{\xi,\beta}(x)$  for  $0 \le x < x_F - u$ . Then  $F_v(x) = G_{\xi,\beta+\xi(v-u)}(x)$  for all  $v \ge u$ .

Proof. Recall that 
$$F_u(x) = \mathbb{P}(X - u \le x \,|\, X > u) = \frac{F(u+x) - F(u)}{\bar{F}(u)}$$
, so  $\bar{F}_u(x) = \bar{F}(u+x)/\bar{F}(u)$ . For  $v \ge u$ , we have 
$$\bar{F}_v(x) = \frac{\bar{F}(v+x)}{\bar{F}(v)} = \frac{\bar{F}(u+(v+x-u))}{\bar{F}(u)} \frac{\bar{F}(u)}{\bar{F}(u+(v-u))}$$
 
$$= \frac{\bar{F}_u(v+x-u)}{\bar{F}_u(v-u)} = \frac{\bar{G}_{\xi,\beta}(x+v-u)}{\bar{G}_{\xi,\beta}(v-u)} = \bar{G}_{\xi,\beta+\xi(v-u)}(x) \quad \Box$$

 $\Rightarrow$  The excess distribution over  $v \geq u$  remains GPD with the same  $\xi$  (and  $\beta$  growing linearly in v); makes sense for a limiting distribution for  $u \uparrow$ .

If  $\xi < 1$  (so if it exists), the mean excess function is given by

$$e(v) = \frac{\xi}{1 - \xi} v + \frac{\beta - \xi u}{1 - \xi}, \quad v \in [u, \infty) \text{ if } \xi \in [0, 1), \tag{11}$$

and  $v \in [u, u - \beta/\xi]$  if  $\xi < 0$ . This forms the basis for a graphical method for choosing u.

### Sample mean excess plot and choice of the threshold

Definition 5.17 (Sample mean excess function, mean excess plot)

Based on positive loss data  $X_1, \ldots, X_n$ , the sample mean excess function is defined by

$$e_n(v) = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n (X_i - v) I_{\{X_i > v\}}}{\sum_{i=1}^n I_{\{X_i > v\}}}, \quad v < X_{(n)}.$$

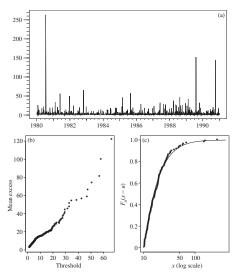
The *mean excess plot* is the plot of  $\{(X_{(i)},e_n(X_{(i)})):1\leq i\leq n-1\}$ , where  $X_{(i)}$  denotes the ith order statistic.

- If the data supports the GPD model over u,  $e_n(v)$  should become increasingly "linear" for higher values of  $v \geq u$ . An upward/zero/downward trend indicates whether  $\xi > 0/\xi = 0/\xi < 0$ .
- Select u as the smallest point where  $e_n(v)$ ,  $v \ge u$ , becomes linear. Rule-of-thumb: One needs a couple of thousand data points and can often take u around the 0.9-quantile.
- The sample mean excess plot is rarely perfectly linear (particularly for large *u* where one averages over a small number of excesses).
- The choice of a good threshold u is as difficult as finding an adequate block size for the Block Maxima method. There are data-driven tools (e.g. sample mean excess plot), but there is no general method to determine an optimal threshold (without second-order assumptions on  $L \in \mathcal{R}_0$ ).
- One should always analyze the data for several u and check the sensitivity of the choice of u.

# Example 5.18 (Danish fire loss data)

- 2156 fire insurance losses over 1M Danish kroner from 1980-01-03 to 1990-12-31; combined loss for a building and its contents, in some cases also a loss of business earnings. The losses are inflation adjusted to reflect values as of 1985.
- The mean excess function shows a "kink" below 10; "straightening out" above  $10 \Rightarrow \text{Our choice is } u = 10$  (so 10M Danish kroner).
- MLE  $(\hat{\xi}, \hat{\beta}) = (0.50, 7.0)$  (with standard errors (0.14, 1.1))  $\Rightarrow$  very heavy-tailed, infinite-variance model
- We can then estimate the expected loss given exceedance of 10M kroner or any higher threshold (via e(v) in (11) based on  $\hat{\xi}, \hat{\beta}$  and the chosen u), even beyond the data.
  - ⇒ EVT allows us to estimate "in the data" and then "scale up".

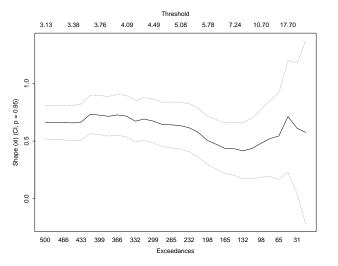
(a): Losses (> 1M; in M); (b):  $e_n(u)$  (†); (c) empirical  $F_u(x-u)$ ,  $G_{\hat{\xi},\hat{\beta}}$ 



 $\Rightarrow$  Choose the threshold u=10.

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# Sensitivity of the estimated shape parameter $\hat{\xi}$ to changes in u:



 $\Rightarrow$  The higher u, the wider the confidence intervals (also support u=10).

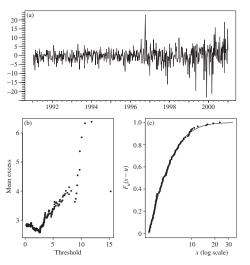
### Example 5.19 (AT&T weekly loss data)

■ Let  $(X_t)$  denote weekly log-returns and consider the percentage one-week loss as a fraction of  $S_t$ , given by

$$100L_{t+1}/S_t = 100(-S_t(\exp(X_{t+1}) - 1))/S_t = 100(1 - \exp(X_{t+1})).$$

- We have 521 such losses (period 1991–2000).
- The estimated GPD parameters are  $\hat{\xi} = 0.22$  and  $\hat{\beta} = 2.1$  (MLEs) with standard errors 0.13 and 0.34, respectively. The fitted model is thus close to having an infinite fourth moment.
- Note that we ignored here that monthly data over 1993–2000 is not consistent with the iid assumption (absolute values of log-returns reject the hypothesis of serial uncorrelatedness via the Ljung–Box test).

(a): % losses (1991–2000); (b):  $e_n(u)$ ; (c): empirical  $F_u(x-u)$ ,  $G_{\hat{\xi},\hat{\beta}}$ .



 $\Rightarrow$  Choose the threshold u=2.75% (102 exceedances)

## 5.2.3 Modelling tails and measures of tail risk

- How can the fitted GPD model be used to estimate the tail of the loss distribution F and associated risk measures?
- Assume  $F_u(x) = G_{\xi,\beta}(x)$  for  $0 \le x < x_F u$ ,  $\xi \ne 0$  and some u.
- We obtain the following GPD-based formula for tail probabilities:

$$\begin{split} \bar{F}(x) &= \mathbb{P}(X>u)\mathbb{P}(X>x\,|\,X>u) \\ &= \bar{F}(u)\mathbb{P}(X-\frac{u}{2}>x-\frac{u}{2}\,|\,X>u) = \bar{F}(u)\bar{F}_u(x-u) \\ &= \bar{F}(u)\Big(1+\xi\frac{x-u}{\beta}\Big)^{-1/\xi}, \quad x\geq u. \end{split}$$

■ Assuming we know  $\bar{F}(u)$ , inverting this formula for  $\alpha \geq F(u)$  leads to

$$VaR_{\alpha} = F^{\leftarrow}(\alpha) = u + \frac{\beta}{\xi} \left( \left( \frac{1 - \alpha}{\bar{F}(u)} \right)^{-\xi} - 1 \right), \tag{12}$$

$$ES_{\alpha} = \frac{VaR_{\alpha}}{1 - \xi} + \frac{\beta - \xi u}{1 - \xi}, \quad \xi < 1.$$
 (13)

The formula for  $\mathrm{ES}_{lpha}$  can also be obtained from  $e(\cdot)$  via (10) and (11).

- $\bar{F}(x)$ ,  $\mathrm{VaR}_{\alpha}$  and  $\mathrm{ES}_{\alpha}$  are all of the form  $g(\xi,\beta,\bar{F}(u))$ . If we have sufficient samples above u, we obtain semi-parametric plug-in estimators via  $g(\hat{\xi},\hat{\beta},N_u/n)$ .
- We hope to gain over empirical estimators by using a kind of extrapolation based on the GPD for more extreme tail probabilities and risk measures.
- In this spirit, Smith (1987) proposed the *tail estimator*

$$\hat{\bar{F}}(x) = \frac{N_u}{n} \left( 1 + \hat{\xi} \frac{x - u}{\hat{\beta}} \right)^{-1/\xi}, \quad x \ge u;$$

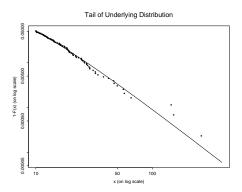
also known as the *Smith estimator* (note that it is only valid for  $x \ge u$ ). It faces a bias-variance tradeoff: If u is increased, the bias of parametrically estimating  $\bar{F}_u(x-u)$  decreases, but the variance of it and the nonparametrically estimated  $\bar{F}(u)$  increases.

■ Similarly, GPD-based  $\widehat{\mathrm{VaR}}_{\alpha}$ ,  $\widehat{\mathrm{ES}}_{\alpha}$  for  $\alpha \geq 1 - N_u/n$  can be obtained from (12), (13).

■ Confidence intervals for  $\bar{F}(x)$ ,  $x \geq u$ ,  $\mathrm{VaR}_{\alpha}$ ,  $\mathrm{ES}_{\alpha}$  can be obtained likelihood-based (neglecting the uncertainty in  $N_u/n$ ): Reparametrize the GPD model in terms of  $\phi = g(\xi, \beta, N_u/n)$  and construct a confidence interval for  $\phi$  based on the likelihood ratio test.

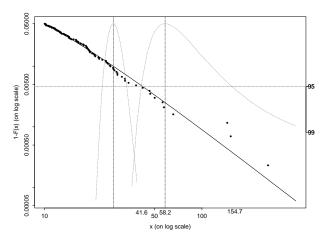
## Example 5.20 (Danish fire loss data (continued))

The semi-parametric Smith/tail estimator  $\bar{F}(x)$ ,  $x \ge u$  is given by:



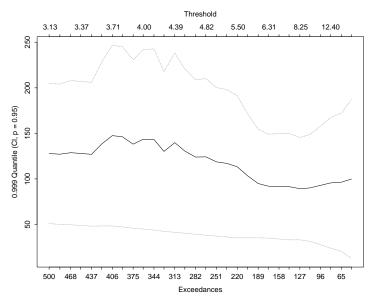
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Here are  $\widehat{F}(x)$ ,  $x \geq u$ ,  $\widehat{\mathrm{VaR}}_{0.99}$ ,  $\widehat{\mathrm{ES}}_{0.99}$  including confidence intervals.

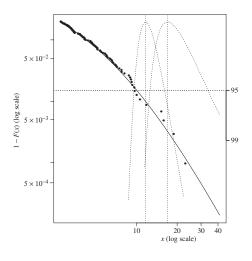


Log-log scale often helpful: If  $\bar{F}(x) = x^{-\alpha}L(x)$ ,  $\log \bar{F}(x) = -\alpha \log(x) + \log L(x)$  which is approximately linear in  $\log x$ .

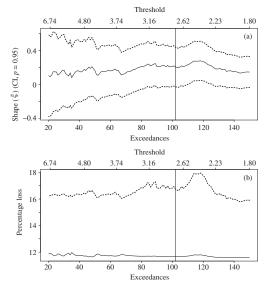
It is important to check the sensitivity of  $\hat{F}$  (or  $\widehat{VaR}_{\alpha}$ ,  $\widehat{ES}_{\alpha}$ ) w.r.t. u.



# Example 5.21 (AT&T weekly loss data (continued))



- Fitted GPD model as in Example 5.19.
- Plot of  $\hat{\bar{F}}(x)$ .
- $\blacksquare$  Vertical lines:  $\widehat{\mathrm{VaR}}_{0.99}, \ \widehat{\mathrm{ES}}_{0.99}$



- Sensitivity w.r.t. *u*
- **Top:**  $\hat{\xi}$  for different u or  $N_u$ , including a 95% CI based on standard error
- **Bottom:** Corresponding  $\widehat{\text{VaR}}_{0.99}$  (solid line),  $\widehat{\text{ES}}_{0.99}$  (dotted line)

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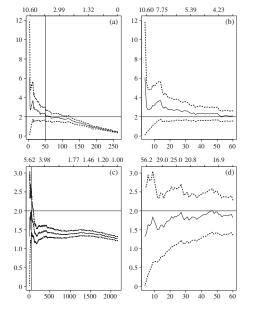
#### 5.2.4 The Hill estimator

- Assume  $F \in MDA(H_{\xi})$ ,  $\xi > 0$ , so that  $\bar{F}(x) = x^{-\alpha}L(x)$ ,  $\alpha > 0$ .
- The standard form of the *Hill estimator* of the tail index  $\alpha$  is

$$\hat{\alpha}_{k,n}^{(\mathsf{H})} = \left(\frac{1}{k}\sum_{i=1}^k \log X_{i,n} - \log X_{k,n}\right)^{-1}, \quad 2 \leq k \leq n, \ k \text{ sufficiently small}.$$

**Idea:** This can be derived by noting that the mean excess function  $e(\log u)$  of  $\log X$  at  $\log u$  is roughly  $1/\alpha$  for large u (by Karamata's Theorem), then using  $e_n(\log X_{k,n})$  as an estimator for  $e(\log u)$  and solving for  $\alpha$ ; see the appendix. Note:  $X_{1,n} \geq \cdots \geq X_{n,n}$ .

- Choosing k: Find a small k where the Hill plot  $\{(k, \hat{\alpha}_{k,n}^{(\mathsf{H})}) : 2 \leq k \leq n\}$  stabilizes (typically,  $k = \lceil \beta n \rceil$ ,  $\beta \in [0.01, 0.05]$ ).
- Interpreting Hill plots can be difficult. If F does not have a regularly varying tail (or if it has serial dependence), Hill plots can be very misleading.



- Hill plots showing estimates of  $\alpha = 1/\xi$  for (a), (b) the AT&T data and (c),(d) the Danish fire loss data (rhs = zoomed-in version of the lhs).
- (a),(b) suggest estimates of  $\alpha \in [2,4]$  ( $\xi \in [1/4,1/2]$ ; clarger than the estimated  $\hat{\xi} = 0.22$ , see Example 5.19); (c),(d) suggest estimates of  $\alpha \in [1.5,2]$  ( $\xi \in [1/2,2/3]$  (infinite variance!); close to the estimated  $\hat{\xi} = 0.50$ , see Example 5.18)

#### Hill-based tail and risk measure estimates

- Assume  $\bar{F}(x) = cx^{-\alpha}$ ,  $x \ge u > 0$  (replacing L by a constant). Estimate  $\alpha$  by  $\hat{\alpha}_{k,n}^{(\mathsf{H})}$  and u by  $X_{k,n}$  (for k sufficiently small).
- Note that  $c=u^{\alpha}\bar{F}(u)$  so  $\hat{c}=X_{k,n}^{\hat{\alpha}_{k,n}^{(H)}}\hat{\bar{F}}_n(X_{k,n})\approx X_{k,n}^{\hat{\alpha}_{k,n}^{(H)}}\frac{k}{n}$ . We thus obtain the semi-parametric Hill tail estimator

$$\hat{\bar{F}}(x) = \frac{k}{n} \left(\frac{x}{X_{k,n}}\right)^{-\hat{\alpha}_{k,n}^{(\mathsf{H})}}, \quad x \ge X_{k,n}.$$

■ From this result we obtain the semi-parametric *Hill VaR estimator* 

$$\widehat{\mathrm{VaR}}_{\alpha}(X) = \left(\frac{n}{k}(1-\alpha)\right)^{-\frac{1}{\alpha}\frac{1}{(k+1)}} X_{k,n}, \quad \alpha \ge F(u) \approx 1 - \frac{k}{n},$$

and, for  $\hat{\alpha}_{k,n}^{(\mathrm{H})}>1$  ,  $\alpha\geq F(u)\approx 1-\frac{k}{n}$  , the semi-param. Hill ES estimator

$$\widehat{\mathrm{ES}}_{\alpha}(X) = \frac{\left(\frac{n}{k}\right)^{-\frac{1}{\hat{\alpha}_{k,n}^{(\mathsf{H})}}} X_{k,n}}{1-\alpha} \int_{\alpha}^{1} (1-z)^{-\frac{1}{\hat{\alpha}_{k,n}^{(\mathsf{H})}}} dz = \frac{\widehat{\alpha}_{k,n}^{(\mathsf{H})}}{\widehat{\alpha}_{k,n}^{(\mathsf{H})} - 1} \widehat{\mathrm{VaR}}_{\alpha}(X).$$

## 5.2.5 Simulation study of EVT quantile estimators

We compare estimators for  $\xi$  (Study 1) and  $VaR_{0.99}$  (Study 2) based on

$$MSE(\hat{\theta}) = \mathbb{E}((\hat{\theta} - \theta)^2) = \mathbb{E}((\hat{\theta} - \mathbb{E}[\hat{\theta}) + \mathbb{E}(\hat{\theta}) - \theta)^2]$$

$$= \mathbb{E}((\hat{\theta} - \mathbb{E}[\hat{\theta}))^2] + \mathbb{E}(2(\hat{\theta} - \mathbb{E}[\hat{\theta}))(\mathbb{E}(\hat{\theta}) - \theta)] + \mathbb{E}((\mathbb{E}[\hat{\theta}) - \theta)^2]$$

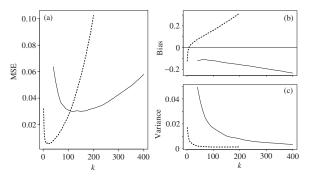
$$= (\mathbb{E}(\hat{\theta}) - \theta)^2 + var(\hat{\theta}) = bias(\hat{\theta})^2 + var(\hat{\theta})$$

with a Monte Carlo study (based on 1000 samples from a  $t_4$  distribution with corresponding true  $\xi=1/4$ ) since analytical evaluation of bias and variance is not possible.

## Study 1: Estimating $\xi$

We estimate  $\xi$  with a fitted GPD (via MLE;  $k \in \{30, 40, \dots, 400\}$ ) and with the Hill estimator ( $\hat{\xi} = 1/\hat{\alpha}_{k,n}^{(\mathrm{H})}$ ;  $k \in \{2, 3, \dots, 200\}$ ). Note that the  $t_4$  distribution has a well-behaved regularly varying tail.

(a):  $\widehat{\mathrm{MSE}}(\hat{\xi})$ ; (b):  $\widehat{\mathrm{bias}}(\hat{\xi})$ ; (c):  $\widehat{\mathrm{var}}(\hat{\xi})$  (solid: GPD; dotted: Hill)

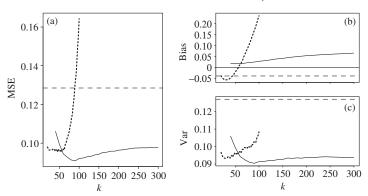


- The Hill estimator outperforms the GPD estimator (optimal k around 20–30) according to the variance for small k (number of order statistics)
- The biases are closer: the Hill (GPD) estimator tends to overestimate (underestimate)  $\xi$ .
- lacktriangle For the GPD method, the optimal u is around 100–150 exceedances.

# Study 2: Estimating $VaR_{0.99}$

Estimate  $VaR_{0.99}$  based on a fitted GPD, with the Hill VaR estimator and with the empirical quantile estimator. Here the situation changes.

(a):  $\widehat{\mathrm{MSE}}(\widehat{\mathrm{VaR}}_{0.99})$ ; (b):  $\widehat{\mathrm{bias}}(\widehat{\mathrm{VaR}}_{0.99})$ ; (c):  $\widehat{\mathrm{var}}(\widehat{\mathrm{VaR}}_{0.99})$  (solid: GPD; dotted: Hill; dashed: empirical quantile estimator)



- The empirical  $VaR_{0.99}$  estimator has a negative bias.
- The Hill  $VaR_{0.99}$  estimator has a negative bias for small k but a rapidly growing positive bias for larger k.
- The GPD  $VaR_{0.99}$  estimator has a positive bias which grows much more slowly.
- The GPD  $VaR_{0.99}$  estimator attains lowest MSE for a value of k around 100, but the MSE is very robust to the choice of k (because of the slow growth of the bias)  $\Rightarrow$  Choice of u less critical
- The Hill  $VaR_{0.99}$  estimator performs well for  $20 \le k \le 75$  (we only use k values that lead to a quantile estimate beyond the effective threshold  $X_{k,n}$ ) but then deteriorates rapidly.
- Both EVT methods outperform the empirical quantile estimator.

#### 5.2.6 Conditional EVT for financial time series

- The GPD method is an unconditional approach for estimating  $\bar{F}$  and associated risk measures. A conditional (time-dependent) risk-measurement approach may be more appropriate.
- We now consider a simple adaptation of the GPD method to obtain conditional risk-measure estimates in a GARCH context.
- Assume  $X_{t-n+1}, ..., X_t$  are negative log-returns generated by a strictly stationary time series process  $(X_t)$  of the form

$$X_t = \mu_t + \sigma_t Z_t,$$

where  $\mu_t$  and  $\sigma_t$  are  $\mathcal{F}_{t-1}$ -measurable and  $Z_t \stackrel{\text{ind.}}{\sim} F_Z$ ; e.g. ARMA model with GARCH errors. Furthermore, let  $Z \sim F_Z$ .

•  $VaR^t_{\alpha}$  and  $ES^t_{\alpha}$  based on  $F_{X_{t+1}|\mathcal{F}_t}$  are given by

$$\operatorname{VaR}_{\alpha}^{t}(X_{t+1}) = \mu_{t+1} + \sigma_{t+1} \operatorname{VaR}_{\alpha}(Z),$$
  
 $\operatorname{ES}_{\alpha}^{t}(X_{t+1}) = \mu_{t+1} + \sigma_{t+1} \operatorname{ES}_{\alpha}(Z).$ 

- To obtain estimates  $\widehat{\operatorname{VaR}}_{\alpha}^t(X_{t+1})$  and  $\widehat{\operatorname{ES}}_{\alpha}^t(X_{t+1})$ , proceed as follows:
  - 1) Fit an ARMA-GARCH model (via exponential smoothing or QMLE based on normal innovations (since we do not assume a particular innovation distribution))  $\Rightarrow$  Estimates of  $\mu_{t+1}$  and  $\sigma_{t+1}$ .
  - 2) Fit a GPD to  $F_Z$  (treat the residuals from the GARCH fitting procedure as iid from  $F_Z$ )  $\Rightarrow$  GPD-based estimates of  $VaR_\alpha(Z)$  (see (12)) and  $ES_\alpha(Z)$  (see (13)).

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