

# Mortgage Rates and the Price-to-Rent Ratio Across Space\*

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## Abstract

This paper develops a parsimonious housing market model that conceptualizes residential real estate as both a non-tradable consumption good and an investment asset. The framework embeds households' joint location–tenure choices, which shape local price-to-rent ratios. I test its predictions using a granular dataset of Italian housing prices and rents and a shift-share instrumental variable design exploiting heterogeneity in mortgage uptake across age groups. The results show that mortgage rate shocks induce spatially asymmetric responses in prices, rents, price-to-rent ratios, population, and tenure choices, consistent with the implications of the model. A structural estimation reproduces these heterogeneous effects and indicates that a positive mortgage rate shock alleviates spatial welfare inequality and narrows the divide between renters and homeowners.

**JEL Codes:** E22, G12, G21, R21, R23, R31

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# 1 Introduction

Housing plays a dual role in household portfolios. It provides both consumption services and serves as a financial asset yielding returns through rents and capital gains. This duality gives rise to two distinct interpretations of the price-to-rent ratio for residential properties. The *financial interpretation* views housing as an investment asset: investors equate the property price to the discounted stream of expected rents, in line with the Gordon Growth Valuation Formula. Under no-arbitrage conditions, local price-to-rent ratios should therefore be constant across space and invariant to monetary policy shocks.

An alternative *relative preference interpretation* emphasizes the consumption dimension of housing. In this view, the price-to-rent ratio summarizes the relative desirability of owning versus renting. When buyers and renters have heterogeneous preferences and face market segmentation, local differences in ownership composition can themselves generate variation in observed price-to-rent ratios. This interpretation suggests that housing market outcomes depend not only on asset valuation but also on the spatial distribution of tenure choices.

Across Italian housing markets, price-to-rent ratios display pronounced spatial heterogeneity, both across and within cities. Standard asset-pricing frameworks, grounded in the financial interpretation, struggle to reconcile these differences. Additionally, if prices simply capitalized rents under no-arbitrage, monetary policy should be neutral across space and tenure. This observation motivates the central question of this paper: do mortgage interest rate shocks affect housing prices and rents symmetrically across space, and can these responses be reconciled with standard asset valuation models? If so, are there heterogeneous welfare responses across space and tenure-status?

I show that the classical Gordon Growth Valuation Formula cannot fully account for the spatial variation in price-to-rent ratios or their responses to changes in mortgage rates. I develop an augmented valuation framework that embeds tenure composition and ownership preferences within the pricing relation. The model predicts that the equilibrium price-to-rent ratio depends not only on local expectations of rents and interest rates, but also on the share of homeowners, which captures the relative strength of ownership demand. In this framework, the price-to-rent ratio serves as a sufficient statistic for the local welfare differential between owners and renters.

To formalize these insights, I construct a static spatial model in which heterogeneous households jointly choose location and tenure. Housing units are supplied by a competitive construction sector, and homeowners decide what fraction of their housing holdings to consume or rent out. They derive utility from three sources: consumption of housing services, rental income, and an ownership-related

utility component, akin to a “warm-glow” motive. The augmented valuation formula emerging from this model nests the standard Gordon Growth relation as a special case. It implies that local price-to-rent ratios vary systematically with ownership composition, even in the absence of expectation shocks or market frictions.

The empirical analysis tests these predictions by examining how local housing prices and rents respond to changes in mortgage interest rates across Italian municipalities. The standard asset-pricing formulation predicts that an increase in mortgage rates should lower prices and raise rents proportionally, leaving the gross price-to-rent ratio unchanged. By contrast, the augmented model implies that local reallocation across tenure and space can generate heterogeneous and potentially correlated movements in prices and rents, depending on the local characteristics.

Two empirical challenges arise in testing these predictions. The first is selection into market segments: properties are not randomly allocated between rental and ownership markets, and rental units often differ in unobserved quality. To address this issue, I use granular data from the Italian Fiscal Agency, which collects detailed information on all property transactions and rental contracts and aggregates them by location and quality. The dataset enables within-municipality comparisons of similar units across markets. This rich granularity mitigates concerns of non-random quality and supply differences.

The second challenge is endogeneity between prices, rents, and local mortgage rates, which complicates causal inference. I address this using a shift-share instrumental variable strategy. The share component exploits variation in the age composition of local populations: younger households are more likely to finance home purchases with mortgages than older ones. Consequently, municipalities with a larger share of young residents are more exposed to mortgage-rate fluctuations. The shift component instruments regional mortgage interest rate movements using Eurozone-level mortgage rate shocks, capturing exogenous financial supply conditions. This approach yields plausibly exogenous variation in local mortgage interest rate exposure across space.

Empirically, I find that local gross price-to-rent ratios respond systematically to mortgage-rate shocks, contradicting the neutrality implied by the classical Gordon Growth relation. A one percentage point increase in local mortgage rates leads to heterogeneous adjustments in both prices and rents: in some areas, both decline; in others, both increase. These asymmetric responses are strongly correlated with local wages, consistent with the augmented valuation framework. Locations with higher wages exhibit smaller declines, or even increases, in prices and rents following a mortgage-rate hike.

Further evidence supports the underlying mechanism of spatial and tenure reallocation. Following a national mortgage interest rate increase, households adjust both their location and tenure status: households are less likely to be homeowners in high wage municipalities and tend to move toward lower wage locations. These reallocations imply heterogeneity in local price-to-rent ratio responses and explain why monetary policy shocks propagate unevenly across space.

To quantify welfare implications, I structurally estimate the model and simulate the effects of the observed increase in mortgage rates between 2021 and 2023. The model replicates the spatial dispersion in housing price and rent responses and indicates that higher mortgage rates reduce both spatial and tenure-status inequalities. The tightening of borrowing conditions increased cross-regional differences in housing affordability and narrowed welfare gaps between owners and renters.

This paper makes three main contributions. First, it provides a theoretical framework that extends the standard Gordon Growth Valuation Formula by embedding tenure composition and ownership utility, offering a unified interpretation of the price-to-rent ratio as a sufficient statistic for local welfare differences between home-owners and renters. Second, it delivers causal evidence that mortgage-rate shocks generate spatially heterogeneous and positively correlated responses of prices and rents, challenging the neutrality implied by traditional asset-pricing models. Third, it links housing-market dynamics to the distributional footprint of monetary policy, showing that mortgage-rate increases can reduce spatial and tenure-status inequalities by inducing reallocations across municipalities and tenure groups.

These findings contribute to the literature on the interaction between housing and monetary policy, highlighting that the transmission of interest rate changes operates through both asset and consumption channels. They also underscore the importance of local tenure structures for understanding the heterogeneous spatial effects of macroeconomic shocks.

The remainder of the paper proceeds as follows. Section 2 reviews related literature on the price-to-rent ratio and the effects of monetary policy on housing markets. Section 3 introduces the theoretical framework and derives the augmented valuation formula. Section 4 describes the data and empirical strategy. Section 5 presents the main results, and Section 6 develops the structural estimation and counterfactual analysis. Section 7 concludes.

## 2 Literature Review

Housing has long occupied a central place in economic research because it combines features of both a consumption good and an investment asset. It represents the largest component of household wealth and a primary channel through which monetary policy affects real activity. The 2008 financial crisis renewed attention to the mechanisms linking housing markets, credit, and macroeconomic dynamics (Piazzesi and Schneider, 2016). This paper contributes to three related strands of literature: the valuation of housing through the price-to-rent ratio, the transmission of mortgage-rate and monetary-policy shocks to housing prices and rents, and the spatial distribution of housing market outcomes.

The first strand examines the determinants and interpretation of the price-to-rent ratio, a key indicator of housing market valuation. Early analyses by Henderson and Ioannides, 1983 and Poterba, 1984 modeled housing demand and tenure choice under U.S. tax rules, highlighting how the no-arbitrage condition equates the purchase price of housing to the discounted stream of expected rents. Building on Gordon and Shapiro, 1956, subsequent studies formalized this link between prices and expected returns in equilibrium asset-pricing models for housing (Krainer and LeRoy, 2002; Campbell, Davis, Gallin, and Martin, 2009; Sommer, Sullivan, and Verbrugge, 2013). More recent quantitative approaches, such as Favilukis, Ludvigson, and Van Nieuwerburgh, 2025, extend these frameworks to incorporate credit frictions and risk premia, yet the underlying interpretation remains the same.

Parallel research has emphasized the consumption and tenure-choice dimensions of housing. Gervais, 2002 and Chambers, Garriga, and Schlagenhauf, 2009 examined how housing taxation and credit constraints shape the ownership decision, while Iacoviello, 2005 integrated borrowing constraints into a monetary-business-cycle model. These studies underscore that renters and owners face heterogeneous constraints and preferences, but they do not link tenure composition directly to asset valuation. The present paper bridges these two perspectives by augmenting the Gordon Growth Valuation Formula to include ownership preferences and local tenure composition, providing a unified interpretation of the price-to-rent ratio as both a financial and a welfare statistic.

A second strand studies how mortgage interest rates and broader monetary conditions affect housing prices and rents. Traditional models predict that higher mortgage rates reduce prices through higher discounting while increasing rents via tighter financing constraints. Empirical evidence generally supports these channels: Gete and Reher, 2018 find that mortgage-rate increases raise rents, while Dias and Duarte, 2019 and Akgündüz, Dursun-de Neef, Hacihasanoğlu, and Yilmaz, 2023 document that rate cuts stimulate house prices. Beraja, Fuster, Hurst, and Vavra, 2019 show that these

effects vary substantially across U.S. regions depending on the distribution of housing equity. Despite these advances, existing frameworks typically assume homogeneous agents or spatially uniform transmission, implying that price-to-rent ratios adjust proportionally to mortgage-rate movements. The empirical evidence in this paper challenges that neutrality by showing that price-to-rent ratios respond asymmetrically across space, with the direction and magnitude of local adjustments depending on tenure composition and ownership intensity.

The third strand connects this work to the literature on spatial equilibrium and the geography of housing markets. Roback, 1982 provided the seminal framework equating inter-regional differences in wages and housing prices under no-arbitrage. The baseline approach has informed a wide variety of papers, such as the one of Glaeser, Gyourko, Morales, and Nathanson, 2014 which introduces local expectations, and was augmented with extreme value distributed shocks to give rise to the recent literature on large spatial models (i.e. Ahlfeldt, Redding, Sturm, and Wolf, 2015; Redding and Rossi-Hansberg, 2017)

Recent contributions have emphasized either spatial dynamics or capital accumulation but rarely both. Van Nieuwerburgh and Weill, 2010, Vanhapelto, 2022, and Greaney, Parkhomenko, and Van Nieuwerburgh, 2025 model regional residential price and rent dispersions using asset-pricing principles. Conversely, Kleinman, Liu, and Redding, 2023 incorporate spatial capital accumulation but maintain simplifying assumptions on tenure. The present paper complements this literature by retaining joint location-tenure choice within a tractable static spatial model. It thereby links the equilibrium price-to-rent ratio directly to the local share of homeowners, yielding a new interpretation of the ratio as a sufficient statistic for relative welfare between tenure groups.

Empirical analyses of prices and rents face two well-known challenges: selection into market segments and endogeneity of financing conditions. Rental units often differ systematically from owner-occupied ones, typically being of lower quality or in different locations (Moktan, 2025). Researchers have addressed this issue by using detailed micro-data on property characteristics (Ahlfeldt, Hebllich, and Seidel, 2023; Begley, Loewenstein, and Willen, 2019) or by employing repeat-sales or natural-experiment designs (Bracke, 2015). This paper exploits granular data from the Italian Fiscal Agency, allowing for within-area comparisons of observably similar units and mitigating quality-selection concerns.

Causal identification of the effect of mortgage-rate shocks poses a second challenge due to the joint determination of local rates, prices, and rents. To address this, the empirical strategy adopts a shift-share instrumental-variable approach following Borusyak, Hull, and Jaravel, 2022, refined by

Almuzara and Sancibrián, 2025 and Hahn, Kuersteiner, Santos, and Willigrod, 2025. The instrument combines variation in mortgage uptake across demographic groups with exogenous changes in Euro-area mortgage supply conditions, generating quasi-random local exposure to financing shocks. This approach enables credible estimation of how mortgage-rate changes affect prices, rents, and price-to-rent ratios across space.

In summary, this paper contributes to three debates. First, it extends the valuation-based approach to housing by integrating tenure composition and ownership preferences into the price-to-rent relationship. Second, it enriches the literature on the transmission of monetary policy to housing by documenting heterogeneous, spatially correlated responses of prices and rents to mortgage-rate shocks, in contrast to the neutrality implied by standard asset-pricing models. Third, it bridges the gap between spatial equilibrium and tenure-choice frameworks, offering a tractable model in which local ownership shares shape both housing valuation and welfare distribution.

By combining a theoretical augmentation of the Gordon Growth Valuation Formula with micro-level empirical evidence, the paper links the financial and consumption aspects of housing to spatial heterogeneity and welfare inequality. In doing so, it connects the asset-pricing, monetary-policy, and quantitative-spatial literatures and provides a unified framework for analyzing how housing markets mediate the distributional effects of macroeconomic policy.

### 3 Theoretical Framework

Standard models with housing tenure choices imply the Classical Gordon Growth Valuation Formula (CGGVF), a no-arbitrage condition, between home-ownership prices versus rents.<sup>1</sup>

$$(1 + \tau_i)p_i = r_i \quad (1)$$

The financial implication the the CGGVF is that the consumer price of the housing asset, the left-hand side in equation 1, is equal to the expected stream of rents, the right-hand side of the same equation.

$$\frac{p_i}{r_i} = \frac{1}{1 + \tau_i} \quad (2)$$

Where  $p_i$  is the local housing prices,  $r_i$  is the expected stream of rents, and  $(1 + \tau_i)$  is measure of wedges between the two different markets. In the context of the current paper the main wedge

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<sup>1</sup>See for instance Henderson and Ioannides, 1983

between the two are the mortgage repayments for home-owners, which increase the cost of housing with respect to rent.

Models which imply the CGGVF, explain variations in price-to-rent ratios across locations with two possible mechanisms. Higher local price-to-rent ratios imply either lower wedges between the two markets, or higher future expected rents. Once these two forces are accounted, the price-to-rent ratios should be indifferent to other local current factors. This is against the observed facts: price-to-rent ratio not only vary across different locations, but also within the same municipality, where I would expect the same expectations and financial market conditions.<sup>2</sup> In the OLS regression in table 1 I report the coefficients for the OLS regression where the local price-to-rent ratios are regressed on local reported income and local interest rates.<sup>3</sup> In order to account for local expectations and financial market conditions I include a battery of municipality fixed effects and a battery of time - local labor market fixed effects.

	Price-to-Rent Ratios			
	National	South	North	Income < Median
Log of Income	0.0665*** (0.0178)	0.0814** (0.0354)	0.0627*** (0.0143)	0.433*** (0.0155)
Interest Rates	-0.0482 (0.0296)	-0.229*** (0.0689)	0.115** (0.0463)	0.112*** (0.0336)
OMI Zone FE	YES	YES	YES	YES
Semester × LLM FE	YES	YES	YES	YES
N	1'214'365	440'599	592'882	555'942
R-sq	0.765	0.799	0.748	0.804

Table 1: The dependent variable is in log terms. A '\*' indicates coefficients significant at the 0.1 level. A '\*\*' indicates coefficients significant at the 0.05 level. A '\*\*\*' indicates coefficients significant at the 0.01 level. Standard errors are reported in parenthesis. Results are robust to local property quality.

As implied by the CGGVF there is a negative correlation between price-to-rent ratios and local

<sup>2</sup>In the appendix I provide two maps of spatial variation, respectively 4 for the variation across different local labor markets and 5 for the variation within the municipality of Milan.

<sup>3</sup>Data is collected from the Osservatorio Mercato Immobiliare, a research unit within the Italian Tax Agency, which collects prices and rents from transaction and rental contracts respectively. I will describe these data more in detail in the next section. Outstanding loans mortgage interest rates are collected by the Bank of Italy.

mortgage interest rates, but even accounting for local trends, there remains a correlation between local wages and local price-to-rent ratios, which cannot be explained by the standard model.

The aim of the model is to incorporate three forces that have been considered separately by the literature. First, a model has to take into account that prices are positively correlated with rents. This fact follows from the financial interpretation of housing, where rents are the returns of the residential asset, and with the idea that rents capture the underlying cost of the housing good. Second, it has to account for different preferences for owning and renting which should be captured in the ratio between the two tenure choices. Lastly, it has to incorporate the non-tradable nature of housing by incorporating a location choice.

The joint presence of these three forces, generates an augmented version of the Gordon Growth Valuation Formula, which accounts for the relative utility preferences.

### 3.1 Model

I define a static model where  $Pop \in \mathbb{R}_+$  agents face a simultaneous location-tenure choice. There exists  $I$  different locations indexed by  $i \in \{1, \dots, I\}$  each characterized by a local exogenous wage  $w_i$  and a local supply of residential properties  $H_i^s$  provided by a class of builders. Given that it is not the focus of the current study and the Italian institutional context, I do not allow for the possibility of firm intermediaries between builders and renters.<sup>4</sup> Households decide whether to be home-owners or renters. Renters consume housing units  $H_i^c$  and a generic consumption good  $c_i$  that is internationally traded without frictions. Home-owners, face a similar problem to the renter, but additionally they decide the share of housing asset to supply on the rental market  $H_i^r$  and consume the rest. In addition, they have a preference for owned assets, similar to the warm-glow bequest utility in the wealth distribution literature as in Benhabib and Bisin, 2018. I normalize the generic consumption good price to 1 across each location.

Thus, for a given location choice, the problem of the renter is:

$$\begin{aligned} & \text{Max}_{c_i, H_i^c} \quad \log A_i + \phi_1 \log c_i + (1 - \phi_1) \log H_i^c \\ & \text{s.t.} \quad w_i = r_i H_i^c + c_i \\ & \quad H_i^c, c_i \geq 0 \end{aligned} \tag{3}$$

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<sup>4</sup>The document *Gli Immobili in Italia*, 2023 drafted by the Italian fiscal agency on the state of the Italian residential market reports that 85% of the residential property under rent are provided by individual households rather than firms. As such the choice of dropping intermediary firms is consistent with the Italian institutional context.

Where  $0 < \phi_1 < 1$ . The problem of the home-owner, instead, is:

$$\begin{aligned}
& \text{Max}_{c_i, H_i, H_i^r, H_i^c} \quad \log A_i + \phi_1 \log c_i + (1 - \phi_1) \log (\mu_i H_i^c) + \beta \log H_i. \\
& \text{s.t.} \quad w_i + r_i H_i^r = (1 + \tau)p_i H_i + c_i. \\
& \quad H_i^c + H_i^r = H_i. \\
& \quad H_i, H_i^r, H_i^c, c \geq 0.
\end{aligned} \tag{4}$$

The home-owners, in addition to the consumption allocation between the generic consumption good and the housing good, enjoy a form of utility from owning an asset and enjoy a financial return from supplying housing on the rental market. I assume that home-owners supply properties on the rental market in the same locations where they live. Thus, the model captures the intrinsic dual nature of residential real estate properties, between investment assets and consumption goods. Lastly, the cost of a residential property is augmented by a wedge equal to  $1 + \tau$  which can be seen as the additional cost of mortgage loan repayments.

There are two ways in which home-owners enjoy higher utility from housing than the renters. On the one hand, I assume that home owners enjoy a higher utility from each unit of housing by a location specific parameter  $\mu_i$ , which is equivalent, given the functional form to a location specific additional amenity for home-owners. On the other hand, home-owners enjoy utility simply from owning the housing asset, governed by the parameter  $\beta$ . It is possible to rearrange the budget constraint of the home-owner problem such that:

$$\begin{aligned}
& \text{Max}_{c_i, H_i, H_i^r, H_i^c} \quad \log A_i + \phi_1 \log c_i + (1 - \phi_1) \log (\mu_i H_i^c) + \beta \log H_i. \\
& \text{s.t.} \quad w_i = ((1 + \tau)p_i - r_i) H_i + r_i H_i^c + c_i. \\
& \quad H_i^c, c_i \geq 0 \quad H_i \geq H_i^c.
\end{aligned} \tag{5}$$

Rearranging the budget constraints, rents are equivalent to the cost of housing consumption, equating this aspect between the renter and the home-owner problem. The difference between the housing prices and the rents is equivalent to the cost of the additional utility home-owners enjoy.

The optimal consumption bundle for the rental problem is standard and is:

$$c_{i,\text{renter}}^* = \phi_1 w_i, H_{i,\text{renter}}^{c^*} = \frac{1 - \phi_1}{r_i} w_i. \tag{6}$$

Similarly, the optimal bundle, if internal, of the home-owner is:

$$c_{i,buyer}^* = \frac{\phi_1}{1+\beta} w_i, H_{i,buyer}^c = \frac{1-\phi_1}{1+\beta} \frac{w_i}{r_i}, H_{i,buyer}^* = \frac{\beta}{1+\beta} \frac{w_i}{(1+\tau)p_i - r_i}. \quad (7)$$

The problem further allows for the possibility that within a location the rental market does not exist due to a supply market failure. As such I define the condition under which this failure happens, which derives from the asset allocation budget constraint of the home-owners in problem 4:

$$(1+\beta)r_i \geq (1-\phi_1)(1+\tau)p_i. \quad (8)$$

The higher the investment return of the asset,  $r_i$ , and the home-ownership additional utility for home-owners,  $\beta$ , the more likely the local rental market exists. On the other hand, the higher the cost of the asset,  $(1+\tau)p_i$ , and the utility incentive to housing consumption,  $\phi_2$ , the less likely the rental market exists.

The location and tenure choices of the households are further mediated by an idiosyncratic nested Gumbel shock following Rodríguez-Clare, Ulate, and Vásquez, 2022. Compared to the standard Gumbel shocks of the literature the nested one allows me to include two different parameters, one for the tenure choice and one for the location one. In particular I define the inverted tenure elasticity as  $\sigma_t$  and the inverted location elasticity as  $\sigma_l$ . The stochastic nature of the two household choices, allows me to define the expected share of agents with a specific tenure choice  $t$ , given a location choice  $i$ , and the expected share of agents in a given location  $i$ . I define the former by  $\lambda_{t|i}$  and the latter as  $\lambda_i$ :

$$\lambda_{t|i} = \frac{\exp U_{t,i}^{\frac{1}{\sigma_t}}}{\sum_{k \in \{buyer,renter\}} \exp U_{k,i}^{\frac{1}{\sigma_t}}}. \quad (9)$$

Similarly:

$$\lambda_i = \frac{\left( \sum_{k \in \{buyer,renter\}} \exp U_{k,i}^{\frac{1}{\sigma_t}} \right)^{\frac{\sigma_t}{\sigma_l}}}{\sum_{j=0}^I \left( \sum_{k \in \{buyer,renter\}} \exp U_{k,j}^{\frac{1}{\sigma_t}} \right)^{\frac{\sigma_t}{\sigma_l}}}. \quad (10)$$

It is then possible to define the share of agents in location  $i$  and tenure choice  $t$ :

$$\lambda_{i,t} = \lambda_i \lambda_{t|i}. \quad (11)$$

As such, the expected share of agents who pick location choice  $i$  and tenure choice  $t$  is a function of the relative utility between home-owners and renters. Due to the non-omothetic preference for

home-owners, it follows that a higher local wage implies a higher share of home-owners.

Lastly, we need to define the local builder problem. In each location there exists a competitive building sector where a representative builder supplies housing units. The builder solves by choosing the optimal amount of labor production units,  $n$ , and local land,  $\bar{H}_i^s$ , in order to maximize the profits:

$$\text{Max}_n \quad p_i H_i^s - w_i n - \bar{p}_i \bar{H}_i. \quad (12)$$

$$\text{s.t.} \quad H_i^s = n_i^\rho \bar{H}_i^{1-\rho}. \quad (13)$$

Where  $0 < \rho < 1$ . Builders acquire local land and a set of labor units in order to generate housing units. We define  $\bar{p}_i$  in order to clear the local market of land which is given.  $\rho_i$  is the local technology parameter, the lower it is, the more inelastic the supply of housing is. Taking into account this equilibrium condition we solve the problem through the zero profit condition. As such the housing units provided by the representative builder is equal to:

$$H_i^s = \left( \frac{\rho_i p_i}{w_i} \right)^{\frac{\rho_i}{1-\rho_i}} \bar{H}_i \quad (14)$$

Having defined all elements of the model, I can now define the equilibrium conditions. I define the equilibrium conditions as a set of prices and rents  $\{p_i, r_i\}_{i \in \{1, \dots, I\}}$  such that:

- Home-owners and renters maximise their respective utility.
- Builders maximise their profits.
- The housing property markets clear in each location.
- The rental markets clear in each location.

In order to simplify notation i define as  $Pop_{i,t}$  as local population in  $i$  who pick tenure choice  $t$ . First I define the equations clearing the market for residential properties:

$$H_i^s = Pop_{i,buyer} \frac{\beta}{1+\beta} \frac{w_i}{(1+\tau)p_i - r_i} \quad (15)$$

Secondly, I define the market clearing condition for the rental market:

$$Pop_{i,buyer} \left( \frac{\beta}{1+\beta} \frac{w_i}{(1+\tau)p_i - r_i} - \frac{1-\phi_1}{1+\beta} \frac{w_i}{r_i} \right) = Pop_{i,renter} \frac{1-\phi_1}{r_i} w_i \quad (16)$$

The specific functional form chosen, allows me to obtain the following equation:

$$(1 + \tau)p_i = r_i + \frac{w_i}{H_i} \frac{\beta}{1 + \beta} Pop_{i,buyer}. \quad (17)$$

Which is an augmented Gordon Growth Valuation Formula (AGGVF). The consumer price of the residential properties are defined by the stream of rents  $r_i$ , which is consistent with the CGGVF interpretation of price-to-rent ratios, with the addition of an addend that is a function of the local population of buyers. What drives this difference between prices and rents is a direct consequence of the additional utility of home-owners preference for owning asset properties. The different slope of demand curves between owners and renters drives the different impact the two populations have on prices and rent, which is consistent with different demand functions from owners and renters.<sup>5</sup>

The market clearing conditions can be rearranged to obtain a clearer picture of the local determinants of prices and rents. First, the equation for local prices:

$$(1 + \tau)p_i = \frac{w_i}{H_i^s} \left( (1 - \phi_1)Pop_{i,renter} + \frac{1 - \phi_1 + \beta}{1 + \beta} Pop_{i,buyer} \right) \quad (18)$$

As expected, higher wages and larger local populations, both owners and renters, increase local prices, while a larger local housing availability reduces them. The equation for rents is similar:

$$r_i = \frac{w_i}{H_i^s} \left( (1 - \phi_1)Pop_{i,renter} + \frac{(1 - \phi_1)}{1 + \beta} Pop_{i,buyer} \right) \quad (19)$$

The determinants of local rents are similar to those of local prices, with the asymmetric effect of local home-ownership population on prices and rents. Prices and rents are locally correlated in their responses but the local price-to-rent ratio responses and the relative spatial elasticities depend on the local population distribution. We can further define the price to rent ratio formula for the model.

$$\frac{(1 + \tau)p_i}{r_i} = 1 + \frac{\beta}{(1 - \phi_1)(1 + \beta)} \frac{Pop_{i,buyer}}{(Pop_{i,renter} + \frac{1}{1+\beta}Pop_{i,buyer})}. \quad (20)$$

Notice that in this context, price-to-rent ratio capture, not only the standard information of the CGGVF, but are also a sufficient statistic for the local relative welfare between home-owners and renters. To better show this relationship, I rearrange equation 20, accounting for the fact that  $Pop_{t,i} = \lambda_i \lambda_{t|i} Pop$ :

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<sup>5</sup>A different formulation that would drive a similar discrepancy would be to introduce non-linear costs of owning properties. While the additional utility from home-ownership implies that  $p_i > r_i$ , the non-linear costs would imply that  $p_i < r_i$ .

$$\frac{(1+\tau)p_i}{r_i} = 1 + \frac{\beta}{(1-\phi_1)(1+\beta)} \frac{1}{(\lambda_{\text{renter}|i}/\lambda_{\text{buyer}|i} + \frac{1}{1+\beta})}. \quad (21)$$

Given that the local share for a given tenure choice is a function of the local utility of home-owners and renters. It follows that the price-to-rent ratio is a sufficient statistic for relative welfare of renters with respect to home-owners. Given that locations with higher wages are more likely, in the model, to be home-owners, the model is consistent with the facts reported in table 1.

## 4 Data and Empirical Strategy

The aim of the empirical section of the paper is to validate the model with respect to the CGGVF, in particular with respect with local mortgage rate shocks. In fact the standard no arbitrage condition implies that

$$\frac{\partial(1+\tau)p_i/r_i}{\partial\tau} = 0. \quad (22)$$

Furthermore, if there are no location-tenure readjustments by the households, the model implies a null or negative correlation in local responses of both prices and rents. In fact, once if there is no supply side reduction in housing, then rents should not be affected by a mortgage rate shock. In that case, as  $\tau$  increases,  $p_i$  should decline in order for equation 22 to hold. On the other hand, if there is a supply side reduction (as the wedge between buyers and builders widens) given a fall in local prices, then rents should increase due to the reduction in  $H_i^s$ . The opposite is true if local supply of housing increases.

On the other hand, the AGGVF can take into account possible deviations from equation 22, by taking into account the spatial and tenure reallocation of agents.

It is then possible to test whether the CGGVF holds, by estimating the local causal effect of mortgage rate shocks on both prices, rent and price-to-rent ratios.

There are two difficulties in running this estimation, the first one relies on the quality of the underlying data and the second one regards the endogeneity between prices, rents, and price-to-rent ratios and the local mortgage interest rates. In the next paragraph I'll show how this paper solves both in a novel way.

The historical problem of working with data regarding the price-to-rent ratios revolves around the assumption that the traded properties on the two markets are comparable and do not differ

in either size or quality. If different properties were traded on the two markets, then the price-to-rent ratios would capture not only the financial information and the local preferences, but also the intrinsic property differences between the two goods. In order to avoid the issue I leverage a novel dataset provided by the Italian cadastral authority. The *Osservatorio Mercato Immobiliare* (OMI) aggregates information from the contracts regarding both residential transactions and rental ones registered at the Italian cadaster which allows me to compare similar properties across the two markets.<sup>6</sup>

The second issue regards the endogeneity between the mortgage interest rates and the prices and rents. In order to isolate the effect of mortgage interest rates on prices and rents I will run a shift-share instrumental variable regression based on different mortgage pick up rates across different demographic groups.

I recover the data from different sources. The main source is the OMI dataset which collects data on prices and rents of all properties registered in the Italian cadaster based on their registered purpose and quality. The OMI divides quality into three categories (low, normal, and high) and purpose in four categories. By law all real estate transactions have to be registered at the cadaster as most rental contracts.<sup>7</sup> The cadastral agency provides the data each semester starting from the first semester of 2004 until the second semester of 2023 dividing the whole national territory in different OMI zones, defined as socially and economically homogeneous.<sup>8</sup> These OMI zones are sub-municipal, for instance there are between 40 and 50 OMI zones in the city of Milan and over 200 for the city of Rome.<sup>9</sup> Collecting prices and rents for similar properties across time, we are able to overcome the difficulties of comparing properties of similar qualities on the two different market.

I use, then, data from the Italian statistical agency (ISTAT) on yearly municipal population between 19 and 70 years old by age from 2003 to 2023. I aggregate them over the following age groups: 19-25, 26-30, 31-40, 41-50, 51-60, and 61-70. From the ISTAT I also download the yearly municipal pre-tax local average wages collected between 2012 and 2021, the yearly provincial inflation rates, and the yearly regional rates of home-ownership.

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<sup>6</sup>Real estate property transactions and rental contracts, for period that are above 30 days, are required to be registered in the Italian cadastre by law.

<sup>7</sup>Only below 30 days rental contracts are excluded. By convention, in Italy, most residential contracts are of the '4+4' type, where the parties agree on a 4 years rental contract to be renewed with precedence for another 4 years.

<sup>8</sup>The OMI provides minimum and maximum local prices and rents. Given the spatial construction I assume that local properties do not differ within purpose and quality in each OMI zone. Given this construction it is reasonable to assume that local prices and rents are uniformly distributed and we can take the average of the bounds.

<sup>9</sup>As an example, I report in the appendix figure 6 the OMI zones for 2019 in Milan overlayed on the city map.

From the Italian Central Bank I use the regional mortgage rates, aggregated by semester. Similarly, I download from the European Central Bank the set of semestral mortgage interest rates in each country of the Eurozone.

In order to assess the spatial heterogeneity of mortgage rates I leverage the Italian local labor markets. The Italian statistical agency constructs these spatial aggregation of municipalities based on local commuting patterns every 10 years, which should capture the areas where households work and live. I consider the 2011 labor market map which I report in the appendix figure 7.

#### 4.1 Empirical Strategy

Our relationship of interest is the causal effect of mortgage interest rates on both prices and rents. I will first describe the OLS regression equivalent before presenting the causal shift-share instrumental variable approach. The regression equation is:

$$\log y_{i,t,q} = \alpha + \beta \log \tau_R + \gamma_m + \gamma_{LLM,t} + \gamma_q + \varepsilon_R. \quad (23)$$

Where I index with  $i$  the OMI zone, with  $m$  the municipality, with  $R$  the region, and with  $q$  the quality and purpose of an observation. I also add a battery of semester fixed effects, one per local labor market in order to account for the local economic trends. I indicate with  $y$  the variables of interest, in our case prices, rents, and the price-to-rent ratios. The independent variable of interest  $\tau_R$  is the local mortgage rate. Lastly, standard errors are clustered at the regional level.

It is clear that such regression would suffer from endogeneity and would not capture the local causal effect of mortgage rate changes on prices and rents. Consider the context of asymmetrical regional growth during an economic expansion, regions where the growth is more pronounced will experience both higher interest rates and residential properties prices and rents. To do so we need an identification strategy to overcame the potential endogeneity. I will leverage an instrumental variable shift-share approach (SSIV).

A shift-share regression relies on different levels of exposure to a shock by different groupings of observations. There are two interpretations of the SSIV which influence the interpretation of the results and the necessary assumptions and conditions for the validity of the estimation: either the shares are exogenous, or the shocks are quasi-randomly assigned. I will follow the latter strategy, described by Borusyak et al., 2022. In this case, we need to assume that the shocks are distributed quasi-randomly with respect to the unobservables, or in other words that the shocks are not assigned strategically, that the shocks are mutually uncorrelated given the unobservable, and that the sample

is large enough for the shock-level IV. Notice how it is not a requirement for the shares to be exogenous with respect to the realization of the shocks.

The novel SSIV strategy I deploy relies on the observed relationship between mortgages take up rates across demographic groups and the different spatial concentrations of demographic segments across Italy. Regarding the first relationship, the OMI reports that the likelihood of households relying on mortgage financing varies across ages. In particular, it increases initially as younger agents become more likely to overcome the borrowing constraints, reaching the highest likelihood for agents between 31 and 40 years old, and then starts declining as the accumulated savings allows some households to buy residential properties without financing. In addition to these lifecycle considerations, several Italian banks have policies of not awarding mortgages to households that would finish repaying after turning a specific age (often between 70 and 80) or require an additional life insurance.

Age class	Percentage of borrowers
Up to 30	64%
31 - 40	70%
41 - 50	56%
51 - 60	36%
61 - 70	18%
Over 70	5%

Table 2: Distribution of buyers per age class who take a mortgage when buying a residential property. Source: Ghiraldo and Marignoli, 2023, published by the OMI, based on transaction level data.

Given the observed data, it is reasonable to assume that in municipalities with a younger population, buyers will be more likely to be affected by shifts in mortgage rates. Consider, in this sense, two locations, one populated by older agents and one by thirty years old, the same mortgage rate hike should lower the demand in housing, in a partial equilibrium, in the second location more than in the first one. Given that the Italian population is not distributed equally across the country according to their age, a national mortgage rate hike will have a different impact across different locations.<sup>10</sup> In figure 1 one can observe that the younger population is concentrated in the Po Valley in the north, around Rome in the center, and around the main urban areas in the south. Conversely,

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<sup>10</sup>The quasi-random shock interpretation of the SSIV allows for endogenous local shares.

the older Italian population is concentrated in mountainous areas across the country.

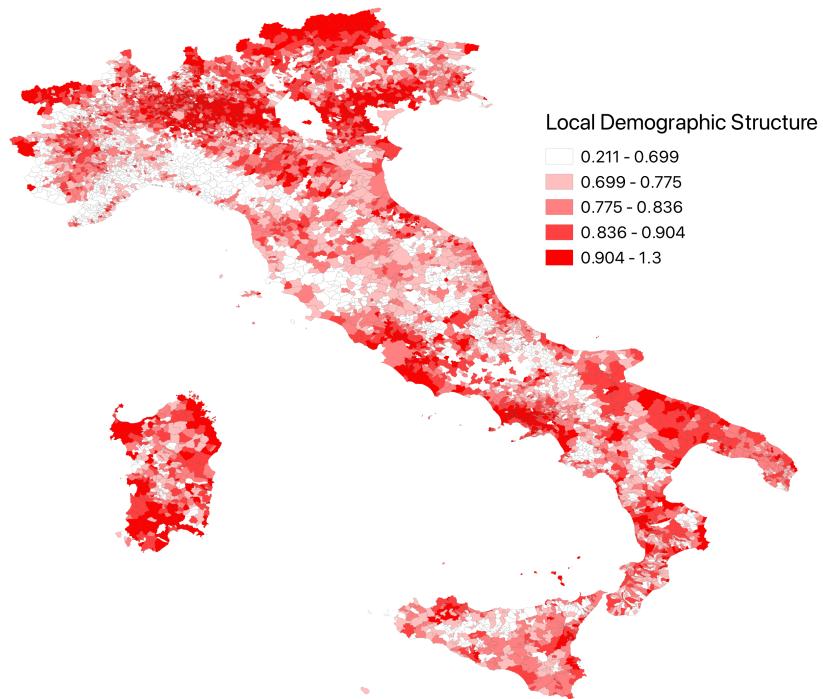


Figure 1: Map of Italian municipalities highlighted on the rate of 18-50 years old residents with respect to everyone else.

I will use the rates in table 2 together the demographic composition in order to construct the exposure shares in the SSIV estimation. It is possible, though, that the local demographic composition also affects the market for residential properties dampening the estimated relationship between mortgage rates and demographic shares. The key assumption of this strategy is that locations that are relatively younger tend to be more affected by shifts in local mortgage rates. However, if the residential market is driven by older agents, there is a risk that changes in the mortgage rate would not shift prices as much as required in order to compute a valid estimation. In such a case, in fact, the segment of buyers affected by different financing conditions would not imply large shifts in the aggregated demand for housing. The data reported in table 3 shows that, contrary to the previous thought experiment, most of the Italian residential property buyers are in the 31-50 age group.

Age class	Share of buyers
Up to 30	12%
31 - 40	24%
41 - 50	25%
51 - 60	21%
61 - 70	12%
Over 70	6%

Table 3: Share of buyers of a specific age class. Source: Ghiraldo and Marignoli, 2023, published by the OMI, based on transaction level data.

I can, thus, construct the exposure rate for each Italian municipality in a given year with the following formula:

$$e_m = \sum_a s_{m,a} t_a \quad (24)$$

Where I index with  $m$  the municipality and with  $a$  the age group. I indicate with  $s_{m,a}$  the share of residents of municipality  $m$  of age group  $a$ , and with  $t_a$  the mortgage take-up rates as reported in table 2. Local age exposure is computed for year 2004. Additionally, I exclude from the local population agents that are either below 19 years old or are over 70 years old. Thus, the shift-share OLS regression would be:

$$\log y_{i,t,q}^{e_i} = \alpha + \beta \log \tau_R^{e_m} + \gamma_i + \gamma_{LLM,t}^{s_m} + \gamma_q^{s_m} + \varepsilon_R. \quad (25)$$

Where the superscript  $e_m$  indicates the variable is interacted with the exposure shares and the superscript  $s_m$  indicates the variable is interacted with the local sum of shares, as required by Borusyak et al., 2022, in case that the sum of shares used to construct the exposure share does not sum to one. In this context, I exclude the population that are less than 19 years old and more than 70 years old. It is important to highlight that the interpretation of  $\beta$  as the causal elasticity of prices and rents with respect to changes in mortgage rates is unaffected due to the inclusion of the exposure shares on both sides of the equation.

The last component of the empirical strategy is an instrumental variable regression in order to capture the causal effect of mortgage interest rates on prices and rents. I leverage an identification

strategy analogous in spirit to the one used by Autor, Dorn, and Hanson, 2013. I construct an index of Eurozone commercial mortgage rates with which I then instrument the Italian local mortgage interest rates. If the European mortgage markets are hit by the same supply shift, and we control for local time trends, I should be able to correctly isolate exogenous shift with respect to local housing and rental market. A possible example would be a shift in the ECB monetary policy which would hit all Eurozone countries equally and should not be driven strategically taking into consideration the spatial distribution of Italian price-to-rent ratios and the local demographic distribution.

I, additionally, run a set of robustness checks as described in the literature. In particular, in order to test the random assignment of the shocks, I run the same regression as described in equation 25 considering the lagged prices and rents by 5 years. A significant estimated relationship in the pre-trend estimation would not be consistent with the shift-share assumption described in the previous section.

The theoretical prediction of the CGGVF, as seen in 22, is that the price-to-rent, including the mortgage interest rate, should be invariant to exogenous changes to the mortgage interest rates.

The regression analysis described in equation 25 should capture the aggregate effect of mortgage interest rates on local prices and rents. The price-to-rent ratio described in equation 20, though, implies that different locations will respond differently to the same local mortgage rate shock. To account for this I introduce a slope shifter across different municipalities based on the local pre-tax wage as observed in 2012. The regression equation described in 25 is, thus, augmented in the following manner:

$$\log y_{i,t,q}^{e_m} = \alpha + \beta \log \tau_R^{e_m} + \beta_m w_{2012,m} \log \tau_R^{e_m} + \gamma_m + \gamma_{LLM,t}^{s_m} + \gamma_q^{s_m} + \varepsilon_R. \quad (26)$$

The aim is to capture only the income ordering of Italian municipalities and avoid potential correlation of local wages with the unobservables.<sup>11</sup> The current estimation loses interpretability of the results, in favor of capturing the potential local heterogeneity in price and rent responses. Given this loss, it is important to stress that I am interested chiefly in the sign of  $\beta_m$ , which governs the heterogeneity in responses.

Lastly, I repeat the empirical estimations described in equations 26 with a battery of additional dependent variables. Specifically, I consider local population density and the local share of renters. A set of significant estimated parameters would be consistent with a redistribution of agents across

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<sup>11</sup>The underlying assumption is that in the past 25 years the income ordering of Italian municipalities has not changed significantly.

locations and tenure choices, thus indicating that any mechanism explaining heterogeneity in prices and rents responses should account for the possibility of household reallocation.

## 5 Regression Analysis

### 5.1 OLS Regression Analysis

The objective of this paper is to estimate the causal relationship between local mortgage rates and residential properties prices, rents, and price-to-rent ratios. First, I provide in table 4 the estimated parameters of the OLS regression described in equation 23. Table 4 provides result both for the regression at the national level for prices, rents and price-to-rent ratios respectively in columns (1), (3), and (5), and for the heterogeneous local elasticities respectively in columns (2), (4), and (6).

	Prices		Rents		Price-to-Rent	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Interest Rates	-0.0462	-0.413*	-0.180	-0.355	1.134***	-0.0583
	(0.275)	(0.220)	(0.391)	(0.264)	(0.135)	(0.164)
Interest Rates		0.0374***		0.0178		0.0196
× Log of Income		(0.0132)		(0.0140)		(0.0125)
Quality FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Municipality FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Semester × LLM FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
N	2'229'959	2'229'959	2'229'959	2'229'959	2'229'959	2'229'959
R-sq	0.888	0.888	0.864	0.864	0.958	0.754

Table 4: All variables are in log terms. Income is measured as in 2012. A '\*' indicates coefficients significant at the 0.1 level. A '\*\*' indicates coefficients significant at the 0.05 level. A '\*\*\*' indicates coefficients significant at the 0.01 level. Standard errors, reported in parenthesis, are clustered at the regional level for columns (1), (3), and (5), and at the municipal level for columns (2), (4), and (6).

The regression reports a significant coefficient for the elasticity between price-to-rent ratios, including the mortgage rate, and the local mortgage interest rates. In particular, the point estimate

of the elasticity is greater than 1 which implies that the price-to-rent ratios, without the mortgage rate wedge, increase. This is a result that would not be accounted in a CGGVF framework.

The regression analysis described in table 4, though, suffer from potential endogeneity between local prices and rents and the local mortgage interest rates. To account for this endogeneity I introduce the SSIV framework described in the previous section.

## 5.2 SSIV Regression Analysis

As I have described, the OLS regressions may suffer from endogeneity. As such I need to proceed with an identification strategy that would allow me to isolate the causal effect from mortgage rates to prices, rents and price-to-rent ratios. Therefore, I leverage the demographic SSIV strategy I described in the previous section, where I employ an exposure identification strategy which relies on the observation that agents of different ages tend to have different mortgage pick-up rates. In particular, as the local demographic composition varies across locations, older municipalities tend to be less exposed to a change in mortgage rates. For the two following regression I will not focus on the levels of the parameters estimated, rather on the spatial heterogeneity that is highlighted by the results. In table 5 I provide the results of the regression highlighted in equations 25 and 26.

	Prices		Rents		Price-to-Rent	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Interest Rates	-0.117	-0.633***	-0.146	-0.594**	0.786***	0.720***
	(0.136)	(0.205)	(0.144)	(0.236)	(0.0549)	(0.178)
Interest Rates		0.0525***		0.0458**		0.00675
× Log of Income		(0.0175)		(0.0197)		(0.0169)
50 <sup>th</sup> Percentile		-0.121		-0.148		0.720
Quality FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Municipality FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Semester × LLM FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
N	2'226'042	2'226'042	2'226'042	2'226'042	2'226'042	2'226'042
R-sq	0.944	0.944	0.874	0.864	0.971	0.754

Table 5: All variables are in log terms. Income is measured as in 2012. A '\*' indicates coefficients significant at the 0.1 level. A '\*\*' indicates coefficients significant at the 0.05 level. A '\*\*\*', indicates coefficients significant at the 0.01 level. Standard errors, reported in parenthesis, are clustered at the regional-year level for columns (1), (3), and (5), and at the municipal-year level for columns (2), (4), and (6).

As in the OLS analysis the estimates of table 5 suggest the presence of spatial heterogeneity in the effect of interest mortgage rates on prices and rents. The results of columns (2) and (4) suggest that both prices and rent respond to a mortgage rate shock, in an heterogeneous manner across different locations. Furthermore the responses of prices and rents are positively correlated between them. Together with the results of column (5), which imply a price-to-rent ratio response, the estimated coefficient of table 5 suggest that the CGGVF is not able to explain the responses of prices and rents to a mortgage rate shock. In fact, the CGGVF would have implied no response in the price-to-rent ratio and a negative correlation between price and rent elasticities.

### 5.3 Additional Results

In order to shed some additional lights on the underlying mechanism behind the local responses in prices and rents two additional SSIV regressions, as described in equation 26, with local population and the local share of renters as dependent variables. If the AGGVF interpretation holds, I should

observe some causal movement of households across the location-tenure choices in response to a mortgage rate shock. Even though I don't expect the full Italian population to reallocate across tenure and municipalities after a mortgage rate shock, those households that face these decisions will optimize accordingly. I report the results of these two regressions in table 6. In column (1) I report the estimation taking the local population as the dependent variable, while in column (2) I report the estimation taking the local share of renters as the dependent variable.

	Population	Share of Renters
	(1)	(2)
Interest Rates	0.752*** (0.120)	-0.159*** (0.0453)
Interest Rates × Log of Income	-0.189** (0.0209)	0.00905* (0.00482)
Municipality FE	Yes	Yes
Semester × LLM FE	Yes	Yes
50 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	-1.087	-0.0709
N	282'242	282'236
R-sq	0.999	0.996

Table 6: Regression in column (1) has the municipal population as the dependent variable, regression in column (2) has the local renter share as the dependent variable. All variables are in log terms. A '\*' indicates coefficients significant at the 0.1 level. A '\*\*' indicates coefficients significant at the 0.05 level. A '\*\*\*' indicates coefficients significant at the 0.01 level. Standard errors are clustered at the municipality-year level.

The results suggest that households respond to mortgage rate shifts by changing their tenure and location choices, which is consistent with the AGGVF interpretation of the price-to-rent ratio. In particular, there seems to be a population shift from richer, and more densely populated, locations in favor to poorer, and less populated, ones, when there is a positive mortgage rate shock. Similarly, in poorer locations there is an increase in the share of home-owners against an increase of renters in richer locations.

## 5.4 Robustness Checks

I will run a set of robustness checks regarding the SSIV strategy in order to test its assumptions. Following Borusyak et al., 2022, I will run a set of pre-trend regressions in order to capture whether the shocks are quasi-randomly distributed across locations.

The literature on shift-share highlights the importance of checking whether the regression is not significant when lagging the dependent variable or considering proxies of the unobserved variables, a 'pre-trend' test. In the context of the random shock shift share framework, as opposed to the independent shares one, the 'pre-trend' test allows us to check whether the shocks are truly randomly distributed. Given that past outcomes should not be influenced by a truly exogenous shock, a rejection of the null hypothesis would imply that either the shocks are distributed accordingly to the previous outcome variables, or that the shocks are distributed strategically across different locations. There is a trade-off when deciding the amount of lags in the dependent variables, in particular when considering sticky ones such as real estate property prices and rents, and the loss in sample size. The specific bliss point I take is five years. I report the results in table 7, where columns (1) and (2) are the lagged equivalent of the SSIV with prices as the dependent variables, columns (3) and (4) are the lagged equivalent of the SSIV with rents as the dependent variables, and columns (5) and (6) are the lagged equivalent of the SSIV with price-to-rent ratios as the dependent variables. Additionally, I report in columns (1), (3), and (5) the results of the homogeneous SSIV described by equation 25, and in the remaining columns I report the results of the spatially heterogeneous SSIV described by equation 26.

	Prices		Rents		Price-to-Rent Ratio	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Interest Rates	0.499 (8207)	4.093 (148899)	3.610 (149427)	3.604 (166246)	-1.126 (75619)	-1.016 (39406)
Interest Rates		-0.0581		0.00337		-0.0614
× Log of Income			(12.961)		(14.471)	(3.44)
Quality FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
OMI zone FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Semester × LLM FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
N	35'144	51'724	51'724	51'724	51'724	51'724
R-sq	0.817	0.730	0.653	0.653	0.740	0.739

Table 7: All variables are in log terms. Outcome variables are lagged by 5 years. Standard errors, clustered at the OMI zone level, are reported in parenthesis. A '\*' indicates coefficients significant at the 0.1 level. A '\*\*' indicates coefficients significant at the 0.05 level. A '\*\*\*' indicates coefficients significant at the 0.01 level. Columns (1) and (2) report results with prices as the dependent variable. Columns (3) and (4) report results with rents as the dependent variable, and columns (5) and (6) report results with the price-to-rent ratio as the dependent variable. Columns (1), (3), and (5) report results for the homogeneous SSIV described in equation 25, while the remaining columns report the results for the spatially heterogeneous SSIV described in 26. Standard errors are clustered at the region-year level in columns (1), (3), and (5) and at the municipality-year level in the other specifications

Given that we fail to reject the null hypothesis, the 'pre-trend' equations are consistent with the assumptions of the SSIV framework of the paper. I run a set of similar equations with respect to the additional results. I report the results in table 8.

	Population	Share of Renters
Interest Rates	-0.444 (0.981)	-2.532 (1.498)
Interest Rates	0.0400	0.214
$\times$ Log of Income	(0.929)	(0.159)
Municipality FE	Yes	Yes
Year $\times$ LLM FE	Yes	Yes
N	51'724	51'724
R-sq	0.968	0.899

Table 8: All variables are in log terms. Outcome variables are lagged by 5 years. A  $^{**}$  indicates coefficients significant at the 0.1 level. A  $^{***}$  indicates coefficients significant at the 0.05 level. A  $^{****}$  indicates coefficients significant at the 0.01 level. Standard errors are clustered at the municipal-year level.

## 5.5 Interpretation of the Empirical Estimates

The estimated coefficients of the empirical analysis are not consistent with the CGGVF. The classical interpretation, in fact, implies that the price-to-rent ratios, when including the mortgage interest rate, should be invariant to a mortgage rate shock. Or, in other words a fall (increase) in price-to-rent ratios should fully counteract an increase (fall) in mortgage interest rates. Additionally, if we consider the naive model where the equilibrium tenure-location distribution is not affected by a similar increase in mortgage interest rates across different locations, then the response of price-to-rent ratio in a location should move in different directions.

The CGGVF can be interpreted as a financial no-arbitrage condition, where, in a context of perfect competition, the cost of an asset is equal to the expected stream of returns. The empirical estimations, instead, imply that the local price-to-rent ratios respond to national mortgage interest rate shocks in an asymmetric manner that is not consistent with this no-arbitrage assumption, under which we should not observe any response.<sup>12</sup> In addition, I find that the equilibrium location-tenure distribution of households is also affected by the mortgage rate shock.

The alternative explanation provided by the AGGVF, instead, allows for an asymmetric response

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<sup>12</sup>This is true also under the simple dynamic model I show in the appendix.

in local price-to-rent ratios as long as households reallocate across different location-tenure choices with respect to the initial allocation. If the CGGVF captures exclusively the financial interpretation of the price-to-rent ratio, where the ratio is equivalent to the cap-rate of the residential asset, the AGGVF, instead, captures the different local preferences between renting and owning.

It is now possible to rationalize the empirical result in light of the theoretical model. The initial response of the model would be that an increase in mortgage interest rate implies a fall in home-ownership welfare which in turn would increase the share of renters across all locations. Given the lower consumption of housing in cities with higher housing costs and higher wages, home-ownership welfare falls more than in less costly locations. As such, we should observe a movement of agents from richer locations to poorer ones with a higher increase in the share of renters in richer locations.

I will now further validate the model by running a model counterfactual measuring the local price and rent responses to a sizable mortgage rate shock.

## 6 Structural Estimation

The results of the empirical section, imply that prices and rents react to a common mortgage rate shock in a geographical asymmetric manner. In particular locations with higher income tend to observe higher price, rent, and share of renters responses, while observing lower population ones.<sup>13</sup> This asymmetric response suggests that households in different locations might receive different welfare shocks from an exogenous mortgage rate shock. If this is the case, then any policy that affects the national residential property market, has to take into account the possibility that there are relative spatial welfare transfers.

In order to test this hypothesis I will calibrate the model considering the mortgage rate hikes that happened across the developed countries in the years 2021 and 2023. As I show in graph 2, the increase in mortgage rates, while not to their all time high, was fast enough to rattle households and governments. It is realistic, then, to expect that such an increase to have lead households to change their previous behaviors. Additionally, the graph highlights, that while different locations have different mortgage interest rates, the direction of the local trends are similar across locations and in particular for the period after 2015. Thus, the mortgage rate increase under scrutiny is tantamount to a national mortgage rate shock.

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<sup>13</sup>In the additional results provided in the appendix I also observe a larger price-to-rent ratio responses in richer locations.

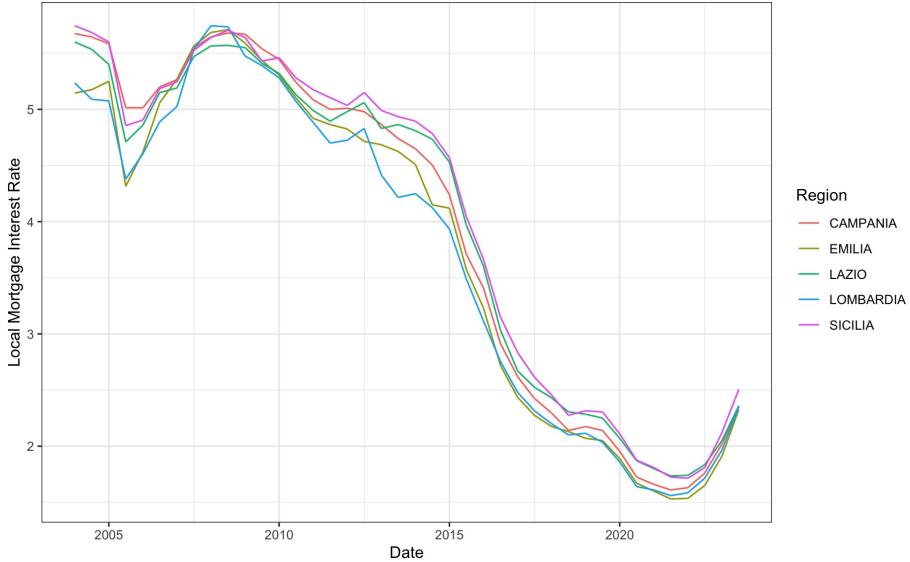


Figure 2: The graph reports the local mortgage rates between 2004 and 2023 in Italy across five different regions covering most of the Italian population: Lombardia, Emilia-Romagna, Lazio, Sicilia, and Campania.

The objective of the estimation is, thus, to test that a sizable mortgage rate shock has an asymmetric spatial effect on both prices and rents and, furthermore, on the welfare of households. Given the simplicity of the model, I will not expect to correctly estimate the levels of the welfare and the responses of the variables of interest, rather at how wide is the distribution of these estimates across locations.

### 6.1 Targeted Parameters

Before estimating the parameters of interest I rearrange the model, in order to better estimate  $\mu_i$  as a location specific home-owner amenity. Thus the utility of a home-owner agent given the choice of location  $i$  is:

$$U(i, buyer) = \log A_i + \log A_{i,buyer} + \phi_1 \log c_i + (1 - \phi_1) \log H_i^c + \beta \log H_i$$

I set  $A_i = 1$  for  $i =$  Padova. I select four hundreds and twenty locations, four hundreds of which are local labor markets, while the twenty remaining are defined as the residual municipalities grouped by administrative region. I pick the four hundreds local labor market by picking the LLM associated to the administrative capital of each region and the remaining ones by picking those associated

to the one hundred and eighty most populous remaining municipalities and the two hundreds less populous ones. I report the map of the selected locations in figure 3.



Figure 3: The map reports the 420 different locations of the structural model. In red I highlight the 400 local labor markets, while the area in white are aggregated along their administrative region.

I estimate four preference parameters that are common to each location. Two of these are the preference weights of the household of the different types of consumption:  $\phi_1$  is the parameter for the generic consumption good and  $\beta$  is the parameter associated to the intrinsic utility a home-owner draws simply from owning the asset. The remaining two parameters, are the Gumbel parameters  $\sigma_t$  and  $\sigma_l$ , respectively the parameter for the Gumbel preference shock associated to the tenure choice and the location choice.

The remaining variables to be estimated are location specific: the location amenities  $A_i$ , the local home-ownership amenities  $A_{i,buyer}$ , the local land availability  $\bar{H}_i$  and the local parameter governing the local construction technology  $\rho_i$ . Local wages, local consumption prices, and local mortgage interest rates are taken as given by considering population weighted LLM average. Local residential supply and population are taken as the sum of the local municipal supplies and residents by LLM.

## 6.2 Algorithm

I will now describe the algorithm used to estimate the parameters. I will focus on the observations of year 2014. The first step is to estimate from the data the parameters  $\phi_1$  and  $\phi_2$ . As it is standard in the literature, I recover these two parameters through the share of expenditure of renters on housing.

I now set an outer shell, by guessing a value for  $\beta$ ,  $\sigma_t$ , and  $\sigma_l$ . Having these values it is possible to recover exactly the values of  $p_i$  and  $r_i$  through the two local market clearing conditions for every location. I can then invert the model extracting the amenities in order to match the local tenure choice shares and population shares. The specific functional form I adopted allows me to estimate the two sets of amenities separately. First, I revert the local home-ownership amenities by inverting the local share of renters

$$\lambda_{r|i} = \frac{\exp(\ln A_i + u_{i,r})^{1/\sigma_t}}{\exp(\ln A_i + u_{i,r})^{1/\sigma_t} + \exp(\ln A_i + \ln A_{i,b} + u_{i,b})^{1/\sigma_t}}$$

Rearranging the equation and simplifying equation, it is possible to obtain

$$A_{i,b} = \exp\left(\ln\left(\frac{\exp(\ln A_i + u_{i,r})^{1/\sigma_t}}{\lambda_{r|i}} - \exp(\ln A_i + u_{i,r})^{1/\sigma_t}\right)^{\sigma_t} - \ln A_i - u_{i,b}\right)$$

Due to the log-linear form of the optimized utility, as shown in the theoretical section, and due to the properties of logarithms and exponential it is possible to rearrange the above equation in order to simplify  $A_i$  canceling it. Thus, I am able to retrieve  $A_{i,b}$  without having estimated  $A_i$ . Finally I conclude the static part of the inner shell, by retrieving the local amenities  $A_i$  in order to match the initial distribution of the population.<sup>14</sup>

Having measured the local prices and rents and the local amenities, it is possible now to perturbate the model. As such, I increase the local interest rates by 1% and I recover the local elasticity of supply by matching the local price elasticities with the ones measured through SSIV as in the empirical section by restricting the sample to each LLM.<sup>15</sup> Having now recovered the supply after the perturbation it is possible to recover  $\rho_i$  and  $\bar{H}_i$ . Defining  $H'_i$  and  $p'_i$  as the outcomes of the perturbated model, I can exploit the 14 to isolate  $\rho_i$ . To do so I consider

$$\frac{H'_i}{H_i} = \left(\frac{p'_i}{p_i}\right)^{\frac{\rho_i}{1-\rho_i}}$$

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<sup>14</sup>As stated before I set Padova to be the reference LLM, setting  $A_{Padova=1}$ .

<sup>15</sup>The distribution of the results is reported in the appendix.

Applying the logarithm function to both side, I am able to recover the local value of  $\rho_{oi}$ , where I restrict, if necessary, its value to  $0 \leq \rho_i < 1$ . Having computed  $\rho_i$  for all locations I can recover  $\bar{H}_i$ .

Once the inner shell is computed it is possible to estimate the objective value for the outer shell. I aim to minimize

$$\sum_x \left( \sum_i |\varepsilon_i^x| - \sum_i |\epsilon_i^x| \right) \quad (27)$$

Where I indicate with  $\epsilon_i^x$  the empirically estimated elasticity of the variable  $x$  with respect to local mortgage interest rates in location  $i$ . Where the target elasticities are obtained by running the SSIV estimation as in the empirical section with a restricted sample for each LLM. Similarly, I indicate with  $\varepsilon_i^x$  the structurally estimated elasticity of the variable  $x$  with respect to local mortgage interest rates in location  $i$ . The set of variables indicated with  $x$  is local rents, local population and local share of renters. Given that the outer shell aims to estimate three global parameters, I aim to match the average size of the local responses.

Having estimated all the parameters, it is possible to run the counterfactual of the 2021-2023 mortgage interest rate hikes. To do so, I estimate the local amenities for the year 2021 in similar manner to the 2014 estimation, in order to capture local trends. Additionally I recover the local  $\bar{H}_i$  from the 14. I then compute local prices and rents with the local 2023 interest rates.

Summarizing the algorithm:

- Recover  $\phi_1$  and  $\phi_2$  from the observed shares of expenditures on housing paid by renters.
- Set the outer shell by guessing  $\beta$ ,  $\sigma_l$  and  $\sigma_t$ .
  - Set the inner shell by solving the problem for the year 2014 by computing local prices and rents with the guessed parameters.
  - Retrieve  $A_i$  and  $A_{i,b}$  by matching local tenure choice shares and local population shares.
  - Perturbate the model by increasing  $\tau_i$  by 1%.
  - Retrieve the supply elasticities by matching the local price elasticites.
  - Retrieve  $\rho_i$  and  $\bar{H}_i$  through the computed supply elasticities.
- Iterate the inner shell in order to select  $\beta$ ,  $\sigma_l$  and  $\sigma_t$  to minimize the objective function.

- Solve the problem for the year 2021 by computing local prices and rents, with the computed parameters.
- Retrieve  $A_i$ ,  $A_{i,b}$ , and  $\bar{H}_i$  by matching local tenure choice shares, local population shares, and local housing supplies.
- Run the counterfactual by setting the mortgage interest rates observed in 2023 and solving the model by computing prices, rents, population tenure and location distributions and the respective welfare.

### 6.3 Estimation

Having run the algorithm described in the previous section it is now possible to state the estimated parameters and the variation of the variables of interest after a mortgage rate shock comparable to the one observed between 2021 and 2023.

The overall objective is to test whether the model is able to capture the asymmetric responses of prices, rents, location, and tenure choices that I have observed in the empirical section of the paper. The second order objective is to test whether there is an asymmetric response in welfare as well. Given the simplicity of the model, I do not expect to match exactly the elasticities estimated in the empirical section of the paper. The aim of this structural exercise is to observe a spread in the counterfactual responses positively correlated with the local wages.

First let me state the estimated global variables. I report the results in table 9.

Parameter	Estimation
$\beta$	0.0074
$\sigma_t$	4.011
$\sigma_l$	24.973

Table 9: In the table I report the estimated global variables.  $\beta$  is associated to the home-ownership value for households.  $\sigma_t$  and  $\sigma_l$  are the two Gumbel distribution parameters, the first associated with the tenure choice of households, while the second is associated with the location choice.

Before delving into the estimated responses, given that I recover prices and rents from the model, it is important to test whether the market clearing conditions generate a vector of prices and a vector of rents that are consistent with those observed. It is important to keep in mind that the prices

and rents generated by the model are drawn from a simple single period environment. Given that yearly wages are taken as exogenous, one way to think about the model generated price and rents is that these are normalized to a one-year time horizon, centered around the current yearly wages and current available supply. What the model is currently unable to capture is the dynamic nature of housing choices and the local future expectations as seen, for instance, in Vanhapelto, 2022.<sup>16</sup> Additionally, prices capture the home-ownership cost associated with a real estate property. I report in table 10 the correlation between the model generated prices and rents and the observed ones for both years 2014 and 2021.

Year	Price correlation	Rent correlation
2014	0.217	0.319
2021	0.193	0.361

Table 10: In the table I report the correlation between the model generated vectors of prices and rents and the observed ones for both 2014 and 2021. The prices and rents generated by the model are thus consistent with the observed distribution of prices and rents.

The model is able to generate realistic distributions of both prices and rents, as indicated by the positive sign of the correlation between the model generated prices and rents and the observed ones. As highlighted before, the correlation is not perfectly 1 as the simplification of the model ignores important aspects of the residential markets, such as dynamic life cycle aspects or expectations.

The next step would be to compare the results of the empirical section with the elasticities estimated in the counterfactual of the structural exercise. In particular, I will report the correlations between the estimated elasticities and the 2021 observed wages. Given the results of the empirical section, I expect a positive correlation between local wages and the responses of prices, rents, and local share of renters and a negative one with respect to population responses. I report a summary of the correlations in table 11.

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<sup>16</sup>The main objective of the present paper is not to solve the dimensionality issue affecting dynamic spatial models with capital accumulation. It is important to stress, though, that finding novel ways to solve the need of having agents accumulating their own capital, both mobile and immobile, while optimizing their lifetime location trajectory is a necessary step for better capturing the interactions between rental and home-ownership markets.

Variable	Correlation
Price	0.052
Rent	0.110
Price-to-Rent	-0.145
Population	-0.221
Share of Renters	0.059

Table 11: In the table I report the correlation between the model generated elasticities with respect to local mortgage rates and the local wages. Given the result of the empirical section, I would expect the correlations of price, rent, and share of renters responses to be positive. On the other hand, I expect the correlation of population responses to be negative. The model is able to recreate the estimated correlations. In addition, the model predicts a negative correlation between the price-to-rent ratio, including the mortgage interest rates, and the local wages.

An additional confirmation of the results, is that the elasticities of prices and rents are positively correlated, which is consistent with the financial aspect of the AGGVF described in the previous sections of the paper.

Lastly, I report the welfare responses of the counterfactual. While this structural exercise does not have the pretense of being a full welfare analysis due to the simplicity of the model, it is still valuable to explore the utility responses to a mortgage hike in order to observe the distribution of responses and to validate the model. First, I observe that both the aggregate utility for buyers and renters fall, with a larger proportional fall for the renters. Second, I report the correlation between the utility responses with the local wages in table 12.

Variable	Correlation
Home-Owner Welfare	-0.105
Renter Welfare	-0.179

Table 12: In the table I report the correlation between the model generated elasticities of local welfare with respect to local mortgage rates and the local wages.

The preliminary evidence of this structural exercise suggests that a mortgage rate hike has consequences for both home-owners and renters. In particular, the lion share of the utility hit is passed through to renters, through higher rents, which attenuates the effect of higher mortgage interest rates on home-owners. On the other hand, a national mortgage rate hike reduces the spatial

inequalities through residential consumption. This spatial effect is consistent with the Howard and Liebersohn, 2023 paper and their line of research, even though in their paper it is a consequence of construction elasticity, which is not the case in the present structural exercise.<sup>17</sup>

#### 6.4 Interpretation of the Structural Estimates

The objective of the present structural exercise was twofold. First, I am interested in validating whether a stripped down spatial model with tenure choice was able to recreate, at least with respect to prices and rents, the responses to a common mortgage interest rate shocks. The second objective was to recover a preliminary evidence on the potential spatial welfare distribution consequences of such a model.

Consistently with the empirical estimation, the responses of both prices and rents to a positive mortgage rate hike are positively correlated with the local wages. In the same manner I observe a positive correlation between the response in the share of renters and the local wages. Overall, the model is able to recreate the empirical results of the paper, implying that the joint location-tenure choice in a household-landlord environment is able to provide a sound basis for a structural model which aims to recreate the complex dynamics between geography and the residential real estate market.

The second objective was to compute the distribution of the local welfare responses and to gather a preliminary result regarding the impact of a national mortgage rate shock on the spatial welfare inequality. We can draw two conclusions, in this regard, with respect to the welfare distribution. First, I observe a larger percentage fall in the national utility of buyers than the one of renters. Second, I observe a larger fall in utility for both buyers and renters in richer locations than poorer ones. Overall, the model predicts two inequality consequences of a mortgage interest rate hike. On the one hand, it decreases the inequality between home-owners, who can offset partially the impact of higher property prices through higher rents, and renters.<sup>18</sup> On the other hand, the spatial inequality is reduced, as agents reallocate across different locations due to an asymmetric response in both prices and rents.

This structural exercise opens a set of research paths in order to further deepen and understand the complex interactions between households tenure choices and their location choices. A first step

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<sup>17</sup>The estimated correlation between  $\rho_i$  and the local wage is positive in the present research.

<sup>18</sup>Notice that this effect would be amplified if home-owners care not only about the ownership of a residential property in itself, but care also about the expected future asset price.

would be to provide a dynamic model, which would allow me to capture the dynamic interactions between rental properties and owner-occupied ones. Additionally, introducing the heterogeneity of agents would allow to further study the interaction between age and the residential ladder, which would be captured in the AGGVF.<sup>19</sup> A further building block of an augmented model is the construction side of the market, which is simply sketched in the present model, but is key in generating the asymmetric results observed in the empirical section. Lastly, the model focuses in the interaction between different locations in different local labor markets and not in the interaction between locations within a local labor market. We observe in the exercise a movement of agents toward poorer local labor markets, but I am not capturing the within local labor market movements.

## 7 Conclusion

This paper examines how the dual nature of housing, as both a consumption good and a financial asset, shapes the response of housing markets to mortgage interest rate shocks. The analysis shows that the standard asset-pricing approach, grounded in the standard Gordon Growth Valuation Formula, cannot account for the spatial variation in price-to-rent ratios observed across housing markets or for their heterogeneous reactions to changes in financing conditions. By incorporating ownership preferences and tenure composition into a tractable valuation framework, the paper provides an augmented interpretation of the price-to-rent ratio as a sufficient statistic for local welfare differences between homeowners and renters.

Empirically, I exploit granular data covering property prices and rents across Italy to estimate the differential responses to mortgage-rate changes. Using a shift-share identification strategy that isolates exogenous variation in local mortgage exposure, I find that local prices and rents adjust heterogeneously across space and their ratios do not remain constant as predicted by the standard model. In many locations, prices and rents move in the same direction following a mortgage-rate shock, revealing a breakdown of the classical no-arbitrage condition. These patterns are strongly correlated with local wages, consistent with the augmented valuation framework in which spatial and tenure reallocations drive local price and rent dynamics.

A counterfactual simulation based on the structural model replicates the asymmetric spatial responses observed in the data. It suggests that higher mortgage rates lead to heterogeneous welfare effects across locations but overall compress spatial and tenure-based disparities. Areas with higher

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<sup>19</sup>I provide in the appendix a simple model for both.

wages tend to have higher responses in both prices and rents. As a result, monetary tightening reduces the welfare gap between owners and renters and narrows cross-regional inequalities.

These findings carry important implications for the design of monetary, housing, and macro-prudential policy. First, the evidence that local price-to-rent ratios respond asymmetrically to mortgage-rate shocks challenges the conventional view that monetary policy is spatially neutral. Because price-to-rent ratios embed local tenure composition, changes in interest rates redistribute relative welfare across both tenure groups and locations. Evaluating the aggregate effects of monetary policy therefore requires accounting for these spatial and compositional channels.

Second, the analysis highlights that the geography of monetary transmission depends on demographic and institutional characteristics of local housing markets. Regions with younger, more mortgage-dependent households are more exposed to financial shocks and thus transmit policy changes more strongly. This heterogeneity provides central banks with a new perspective on the distributional footprint of monetary policy and informs the calibration of macroprudential tools such as loan-to-value limits or interest-rate buffers aimed at mitigating regional imbalances.

Finally, the results show that housing and credit policies are not distributionally neutral. Uniform mortgage subsidies or tax incentives for homeownership can amplify spatial welfare gaps, whereas tighter credit conditions may promote convergence by reducing disparities between high- and low-ownership areas. By embedding tenure composition into a transparent valuation framework, the paper provides policymakers with a simple diagnostic—the local price-to-rent ratio—to assess welfare disparities and the spatial incidence of housing and credit interventions.

More broadly, the paper advances the study of housing markets by bridging asset-pricing and spatial-economics perspectives. It highlights that local market equilibria emerge not only from financial valuation but also from heterogeneous preferences and demographic composition. Future research can extend this framework to dynamic settings, to study how expectations and mobility constraints shape the long-run distributional consequences of monetary and housing policies.

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## A Additional Figures

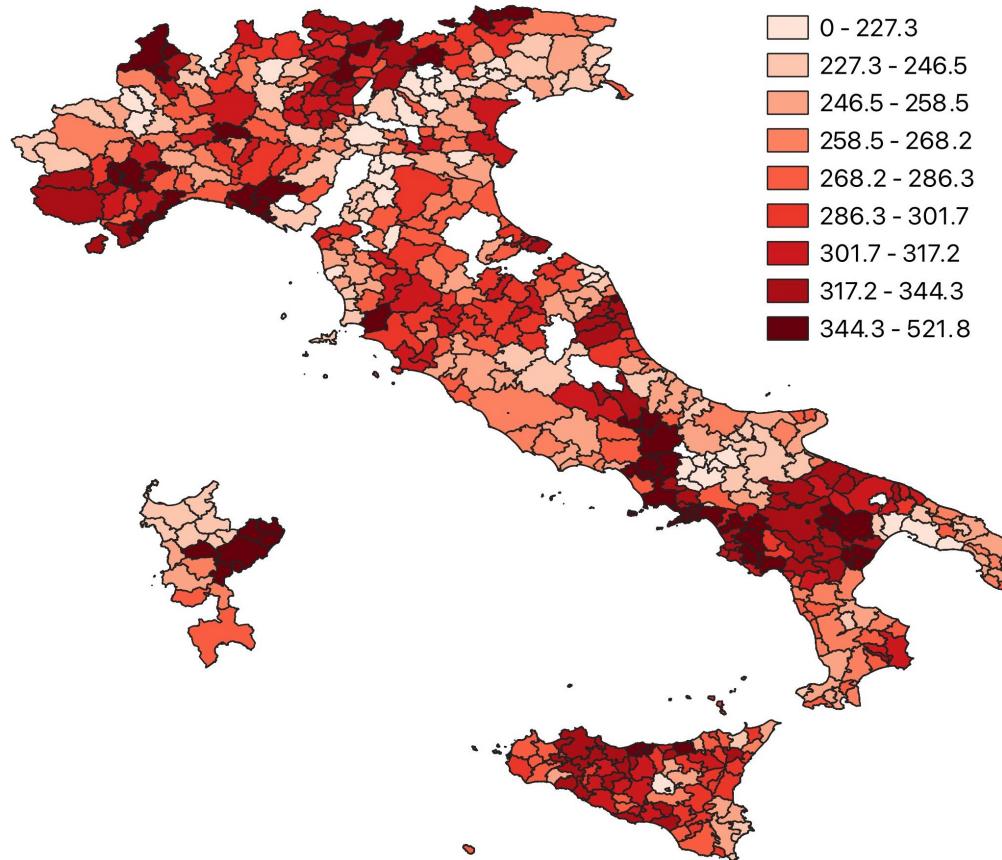


Figure 4: Weighted average of local price-to-rent ratios across different local labor markets in Italy for housing of similar quality in 2019

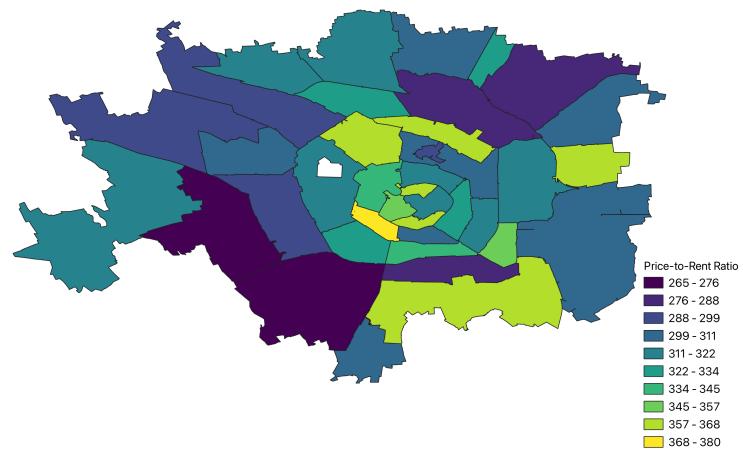


Figure 5: Local price-to-rent ratios across different neighborhoods in Milan for housing of similar quality in 2019

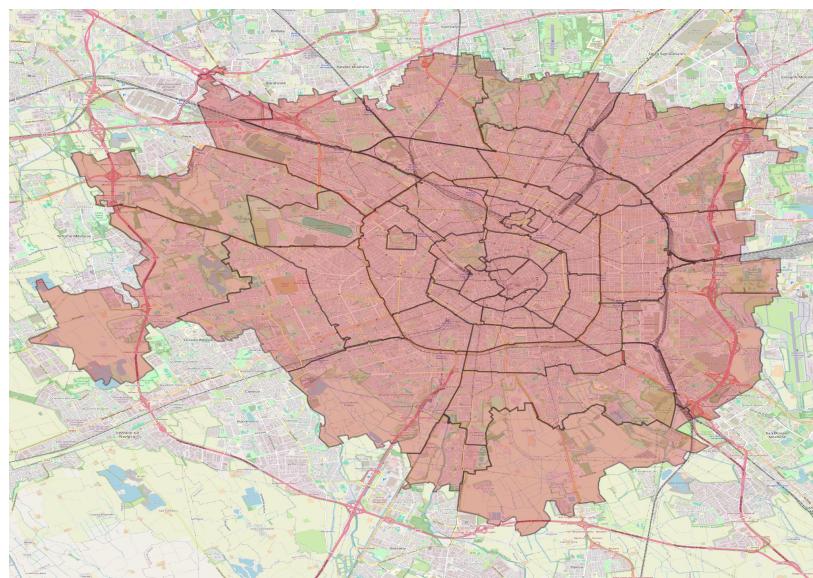


Figure 6: I plot the OMI zones for the municipality of Milan over the city map for the year 2019.

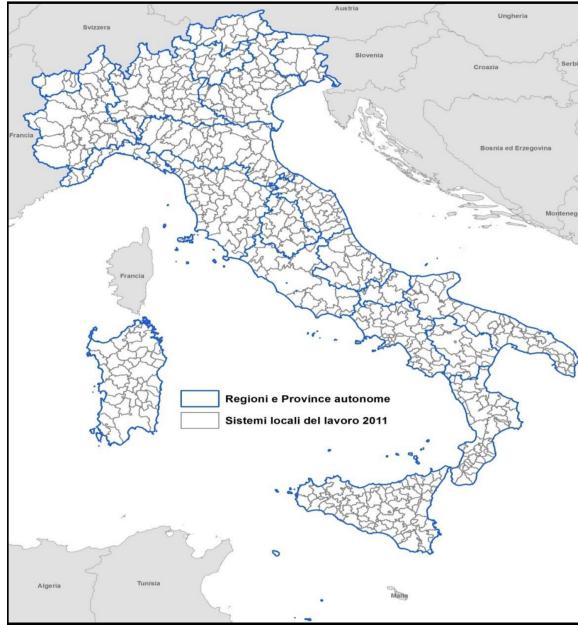


Figure 7: Istat divided the Italian territory in 612 local labor market based on local commuting patterns. The map reports the local labor markets overlayed on the administrative regional borders.

## B Model Extensions

### B.1 Heterogeneous Model Extension

In this section I provide an extension to the main model with heterogeneous agents. In addition to the environment described in the theoretical section, I introduce two different populations of agents,  $Pop^H$  and  $Pop^L$ , with the only difference that they can obtain different incomes in each location such that  $w_i^H > w_i^L$  for all locations. I index the wage level by  $\iota \in \{H, L\}$ . Agents face the same problems as in the main model and the stock of housing remain homogeneous.

Thus the only difference appears in the clearing conditions, and generate a different formulation for the price-to-rent ratio:

$$\frac{(1 + \tau)p_i}{r_i} = 1 + \frac{\beta}{(1 - \phi_1)(1 + \beta)} \frac{\sum_{\iota \in \{H, L\}} w_i^\iota Pop_{i, \text{buyer}}^\iota}{\sum_{\iota \in \{H, L\}} (w_i^\iota Pop_{i, \text{renter}}^\iota + \frac{w_i^\iota}{1 + \beta} Pop_{i, \text{buyer}}^\iota)} \quad (28)$$

The price-to-rent ratio in the model extension with heterogeneous agents, is still a sufficient equation for the local relative utility between home-owners and renters. In the context of heterogeneous agents with an income distribution, the price-to-rent ratio weighs more the utility of agents with

higher income.

## B.2 Dynamic Formulation of the CGGVF

I will now consider the standard formulation for the CGGVF, in the context of a dynamic model. Let me consider a context where at time  $t = 0$  prices in location  $i$  are equivalent to the expected future stream of rents, due to a competitive and complete financial market. The formulation would be

$$(1 + \tau_i^0) p_i^0 = \sum_{t=0}^{+\infty} \tilde{\beta}^t r_i^t \quad (29)$$

Where I measure with  $\tilde{\beta}$  the discount rate which is equal to the safe asset interest rate ( $1 + Rate$ ). Following Amaral, Dohmen, Kohl, and Schularick, 2023 and thus assuming that the households hold the shared expectation that the current local rent grows at a constant rate equal to  $g_i$  and that  $(1 + g_i) < (1 + Rate)$ , I can rearrange the equation such that

$$(1 + \tau_i^0) p_i^0 = r_i^0 \frac{1 + Rate}{Rate - g_i} \quad (30)$$

Thus I can obtain a simple formula for the current price-to-rent ratio

$$\frac{(1 + \tau_i^0) p_i^0}{r_i^0} = \frac{1 + Rate}{Rate - g_i} \quad (31)$$

The dynamic specification of the CGGVF does not alter the baseline assumption that changes in local mortgage interest rates should not be associated with changes of the left-hand side of equation 31.

The key assumption for the empirical estimation to hold is that the expected local growth rates of local rents does not vary, within a LLM, in a manner that is correlated with local municipal incomes.

## C Robustness Checks and Additional Estimations

In this section I report a set of robustness checks of the empirical analysis and a set of additional results to further test the main hypothesis of the paper.

I report in table 15 the first stage of the regression between the Eurozone composite mortgage interest rate and the regional Italian ones.

	Interest Rate	Interest Rate $\times$ Log of Income
Eurozone Interest Rates	1.048*** (0.140)	0.0322 (0.130)
Eurozone Interest Rates $\times$ Log of Income	0.000898*** (0.000140)	1.0543*** (0.141)
N	2'217'900	2'217'900
F-statistics	1'493'296	1'575'403
R-sq	0.997	0.997

Table 13: All variables are in log terms. Column (1) refers to the regression with the local interest rate as dependent variable, column (2) to the regression with the local interest rate  $\times$  the log of local income as dependent variable. A '\*' indicates coefficients significant at the 0.1 level. A '\*\*', indicates coefficients significant at the 0.05 level. A '\*\*\*' indicates coefficients significant at the 0.01 level. Standard errors are clustered at the municipality-year level.

As expected, the instrument is not weak. In both estimations all variables of interest are significant at the 0.01 level. Additionally the F-statistics allows us to reject the null hypothesis.

The current estimates take as a unit of measurement prices and rents in an OMI zone for a given period and quality. Given that the entire national territory is divided into these zones, it is important to take into account the oversampling of poorer locations, given that income is highly concentrated in few locations. To account for this oversampling I re-run the SSIV estimation described in table 5 with a weight based on the local municipal population divided by the number of municipal OMI zones. I report the results in table 14.

	Prices		Rents		Price-to-Rent	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Interest Rates	-0.372** (0.168)	-0.950** (0.341)	-0.543*** (0.173)	-1.133*** (0.236)	0.929*** (0.144)	0.941*** (0.224)
Interest Rates × Log of Income		0.0816** (0.0304)		0.0832** (0.0330)		-0.00169 (0.0196)
Quality FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Municipality FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Semester × LLM FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
N	2'226'042	2'226'042	2'226'042	2'226'042	2'226'042	2'226'042
R-sq	0.892	0.892	0.843	0.843	0.957	0.957

Table 14: All variables are in log terms. Income is measured as in 2012. Observations are weighted on the local municipal population divided by the number of municipal OMI zones. A '\*' indicates coefficients significant at the 0.1 level. A '\*\*' indicates coefficients significant at the 0.05 level. A '\*\*\*' indicates coefficients significant at the 0.01 level. Standard errors, reported in parenthesis, are clustered at the regional-year level for columns (1), (3), and (5), and at the municipal-year level for columns (2), (4), and (6).

The coefficients estimated in table 14 are consistent with those in table 5 but larger in magnitude, meaning that the results of the main estimation are biased by an oversampling of smaller municipalities with respect to richer ones.

I now proceed to adopt an alternative IV in order to run a sanity check on the specification of table 5. To do so, rather than considering a composite Eurozone mortgage interest rate, capturing a set of supply side mortgage rate shocks common the Eurozone, I consider a variation in the ECB overnight interest rates. The main assumption is that, while the ECB takes into account national trends in price-to-rent ratios, it would not take into account local, as in within LLM, variations in the housing market.<sup>20</sup> I report the results in table 15.

<sup>20</sup>Central banks account for the price-to-rent ratio as a statistic capturing whether there is a bubble in the real estate markets.

	Prices		Rents		Price-to-Rent	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Interest Rates	-0.320 (0.264)	-0.920 (0.554)	-0.302 (0.246)	-1.335 (0.891)	0.748*** (0.0764)	1.181** (0.457)
Interest Rates		0.0611* (0.0345)		0.105 (0.0709)		-0.0441 (0.0496)
× Log of Income						
Quality FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Municipality FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Semester × LLM FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
N	2'226'042	2'226'042	2'226'042	2'226'042	2'226'042	2'226'042
R-sq	0.944	0.944	0.874	0.873	0.971	0.971

Table 15: All variables are in log terms. Income is measured as in 2012. A '\*' indicates coefficients significant at the 0.1 level. A '\*\*' indicates coefficients significant at the 0.05 level. A '\*\*\*' indicates coefficients significant at the 0.01 level. Standard errors, reported in parenthesis, are clustered at the regional-year level for columns (1), (3), and (5), and at the municipal-year level for columns (2), (4), and (6).

The results are consistent with those estimated in table 5. As in the main estimation, I reject the null hypothesis of no response in price-to-rent ratios with respect to mortgage interest rate shocks, thus rejecting the CGGVF.

As an additional robustness check on the spatial distribution of the results, I run two further batteries of SSIV regressions. First I run two sets of SSIV regressions, as the one described by table 5, by restricting the samples based on two different criteria. In the first set of regressions, described in table 16 and 17, I restrict the sample based on local municipal wage. In table 16 I consider the municipality with local declared incomes lower than the 2012 median local income.

	Prices		Rents		Price-to-Rent	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Interest Rates	-0.122 (0.148)	0.232 (0.304)	-0.116 (0.110)	0.193 (0.323)	0.752*** (0.0729)	0.802*** (0.218)
Interest Rates		-0.0338		-0.0295		-0.00469
× Log of Income		(0.0295)		(0.0302)		(0.0217)
Quality FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Municipality FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Semester × LLM FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
N	376'301	376'301	376'301	376'301	376'301	376'301
R-sq	0.935	0.935	0.835	0.835	0.978	0.978

Table 16: All variables are in log terms. Income is measured as in 2012. A '\*' indicates coefficients significant at the 0.1 level. A '\*\*' indicates coefficients significant at the 0.05 level. A '\*\*\*' indicates coefficients significant at the 0.01 level. Standard errors, reported in parenthesis, are clustered at the regional-year level for columns (1), (3), and (5), and at the municipal-year level for columns (2), (4), and (6).

Again the result are consistent with the main estimation, in particular with respect to the behavior of the price-to-rent ratios. In table 17, instead, I restrict the sample to the top quintile of municipalities with respect to local 2012 incomes.

	Prices		Rents		Price-to-Rent	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Interest Rates	-0.207 (0.161)	-0.353 (0.412)	-0.284 (0.195)	-0.348 (0.457)	0.830*** (0.116)	0.751** (0.322)
Interest Rates		0.0176		0.00788		0.00969
× Log of Income		(0.0418)		(0.0451)		(0.0324)
Quality FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Municipality FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Semester × LLM FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
N	1'027'700	1'027'700	1'027'700	1'027'700	1'027'700	1'027'700
R-sq	0.868	0.868	0.807	0.807	0.958	0.958

Table 17: All variables are in log terms. Income is measured as in 2012. A '\*\*' indicates coefficients significant at the 0.1 level. A \*\*\*' indicates coefficients significant at the 0.05 level. A \*\*\*\*' indicates coefficients significant at the 0.01 level. Standard errors, reported in parenthesis, are clustered at the regional-year level for columns (1), (3), and (5), and at the municipal-year level for columns (2), (4), and (6).

Comparing the results of table 16 and 17, it is consistent with the spatial asymmetry of the main estimations. I observe a lower response in prices and rents with respect to mortgage interest rate when I restrict the estimation to the municipalities with higher local income, with respect to the estimations restricted to the municipalities with lower local income. Additionally, I point out that there seems to be a positive correlation between price-to-rent ratio responses and local wages, with the additional fact that there seems to be a positive response in price-to-rent ratio with respect to mortgage interest rates, which is an additional element which is not consistent with the CGGVF.

Lastly, I repeat the SSIV estimation as reported in equation 25 by restricting the sample to each LLM. I map the results of price and rent elasticities with respect to mortgage interest rates in figure 8

To test whether the results are consistent with the main results in table 5, I compute the correlation between the price and the rent elasticities. I should expect that the local price and rent elasticities are positively correlated. I plot in figure 9 the estimated LLM elasticities, with the price elasticities on the x-axis and the rent elasticities on the y-axis.

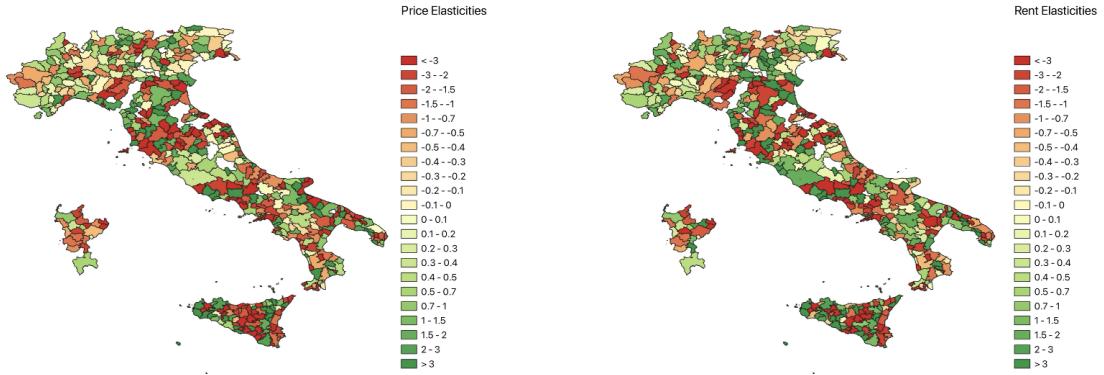


Figure 8: On the left I plot the estimated local price elasticities with respect to the local mortgage interest rates on the map of Italy. On the right I plot the estimated local rent elasticities with respect to the local mortgage interest rates. If the estimated elasticity is positive I plot the results in scales of green, while if the estimated elasticity is negative I plot the results in scales of red. I do not plot results of local labor market where the absence of data or matching issues lead to a failure of the local regression.

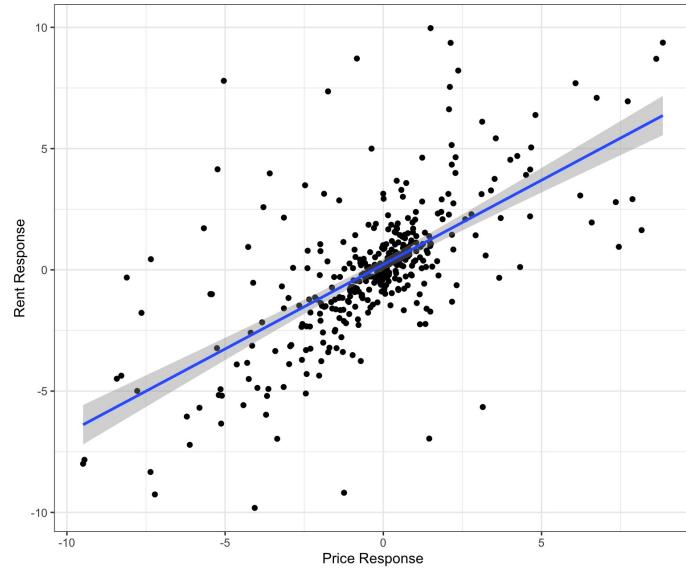


Figure 9: On the x-axis I plot the elasticities of prices with respect to local mortgage rates, on the y-axis I plot the elasticities of rents with respect to mortgage rates. Each dot represents an Italian local market.

As expected the results are consistent with the main results as there is a positive correlation between local price and rent elasticities. This result is not consistent with an environment where households do not respond across locations and tenure choices to a mortgage rate shock. I now map the estimated price-to-rent ratio elasticities with respect to the local mortgage interest rates in figure 10.

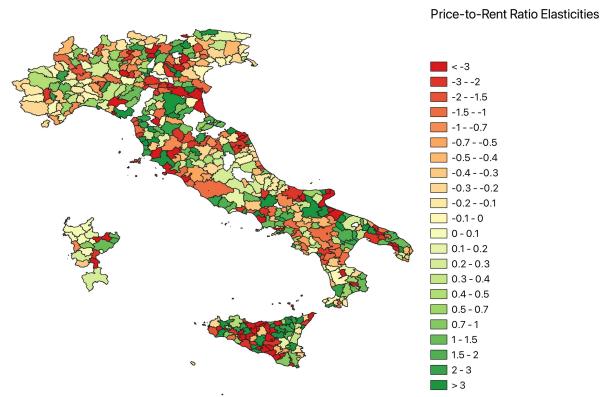


Figure 10: On the x-axis I plot the elasticities of prices with respect to local mortgage rates, on the y-axis I plot the elasticities of rents with respect to mortgage rates. Each dot represents an Italian local labor market.

In this case I observe that price-to-rent ratio responses are heterogeneous across locations and, consistent with the estimations reported in table 17, I observe that there are locations where the local elasticities of price-to-rent ratio with respect to mortgage interest rates are positive. This result is not consistent with the CGGVF and can be explained only with household that reallocate themselves across locations and tenure choices. To check whether these results are consistent with the previous estimations I regress the elasticities of prices, rents, and price-to-rent ratios with respect to the local municipal wage. I report the estimated coefficients in table 18.

	Price Elasticities	Rents Elasticities	Price-to-Rent Elasticities
Log of Income	4.820 (4.232)	1.205 (3.302)	3.595 (2.361)
N	420	420	420

Table 18: Income is measured as in 2014. A '\*' indicates coefficients significant at the 0.1 level. A '\*\*' indicates coefficients significant at the 0.05 level. A \*\*\*, indicates coefficients significant at the 0.01 level. Standard errors, reported in parenthesis, are clustered at the regional level

Even though the estimated coefficients are not significant at the 0.05 level, I observe that the direction of the correlation is consistent with that of the estimated coefficients of the main result as reported in table 5 and with the results of the counterfactual estimation.