

Alessandro Sovera
alessandro_sovera@brown.edu
+1-401 699 5397

Education:

PhD in Economics, Brown University, 2018 to present
MA in Economics, Brown University, 2019
MSc in Economics and Social Sciences, Bocconi University (*Summa cum laude*), 2016
BA in Economics and Social Sciences, Bocconi University, 2015

Teaching and Research Fields:

Public Economics, Political Economics

Teaching Experience:

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| Fall, 2021 – Fall, 2022 (four semesters) | ECON1629 Applied Research Methods for Economists, Brown University, teaching fellow for Professors Daniel Björkgren and Matthew Pecenco |
| Spring 2020 | ECON1620 Introduction to Econometrics, Brown University, Professor Stelios Michaelopoulos |
| Fall 2019 | ECON1860 Behavioral Economics, Brown University, Professor Geoffroy De Clippel |

Research Experience and Other Employment:

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| 2020-2021 | Brown University, Research Assistant for Professor John N. Friedman |
| 2019 | Brown University, Research Assistant for Professor Emily Oster |
| 2018 | Bocconi University, Research Assistant for Professor David Stuckler |
| 2017 | Bocconi University, Research Assistant for Professor Selim Gulesci and Simon Goerlach |
| 2017 | Action Institute, Research Associate |
| 2016 | Bocconi University, Research Assistant for Professor Selim Gulesci |

Professional Activities:

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| 2021 | Seminar Presentations: Brown Applied Micro Seminar, Brown Health Breakfast, Brown Applied Micro Breakfast, CSAE Conference. Organizer Brown Health Breakfast. |
| 2020 | Seminar Presentations: Brown Applied Micro Seminar, Brown Health Breakfast. Organizer Brown Applied Micro Lunch. |

Honors, Scholarships, and Fellowships:

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| 2020 | Population Studies and Training Center Summer Fellowship (\$1200) |
| 2019-2023 | Graduate Student Scholarship, Brown University |
| 2018-2019 | Graduate Student Fellowship, Brown University |

Skills: Stata, R, Python, LaTeX

Research Papers:

**Let the Water Flow: The Impact of Electrification on Agriculture (with Geetika Nagpal)
[submitted]**

Over one billion people worldwide live in rural areas without access to electricity. In developing countries, while governments use electrification programs to stimulate non-agricultural employment, they may also have benefits for the agricultural sector. We estimate the impacts of India's large-scale rural electrification program on agricultural output using a difference-in-difference design and a combination of administrative and satellite data. We find that electrification leads to a 1.7% increase in agricultural output which is largely driven by the rain-fed summer cropping season. Agriculture in electrified villages becomes less sensitive to rainfall shocks, which is of growing importance given worsening environmental conditions. We provide suggestive evidence that this decline in sensitivity is due to an increase in the uptake of electric shallow tube wells, particularly at the intensive margin.

A Contributory System of Unemployment Insurance: The Italian Experience [submitted]

Despite the extensive literature on unemployment benefits, little is known about how work histories can interact with changes in benefit duration. Using administrative data from Italy and a regression discontinuity design, I exploit a reform that generates an ambiguous change in the benefit duration of workers. I find that the new system makes workers spend 20 days less on unemployment and it increases their likelihood to get a permanent contract by 15%. Workers are also more likely to change employer and sector of occupation. These effects are driven by workers with temporary contracts, who suffer the most from the reform.

Domestic violence in Malawi: does education empower women? [submitted]

This paper investigates the causal link between education and domestic violence incidence through a Regression Discontinuity design, which exploits the 1994 Free Primary Education reform in Malawi. Using data from the 2015-16 of the Malawi Demographic and Health Survey, I find that the reform causes an increase of 0.9 years of education and 13 percentage points in primary school completion rate, with a stronger effect on the richer layers of the population. However, this increase does not translate into any effect on domestic violence. Therefore, I examine three potential mechanisms and I find there is no effect either on the labor or the marriage market, while it negatively affects acceptance of domestic violence, setting the path to a greater awareness of woman condition and social role. These findings could be explained by the fact that Malawi is mostly a rural country, characterized by a rigid patriarchal society, thus very resilient to concrete social and cultural changes.

All for one, one for all: Inter-municipal cooperation and public good provision

Do agglomeration or congestion effects dominate when municipalities merge government functions? I exploit an Italian policy reform, which forced municipalities below 5,000 residents to join inter-municipal communities (IMCs), to estimate the effects on local real estate prices and government services. Affected areas see a 12% increase in industrial property prices and rents but no change for residential properties. These changes arise because new IMCs were able to lower property taxes without reducing public service quality, suggesting that small municipalities were operating below an efficient scale before the reform.

Work in progress:

