length of sampling units $(m)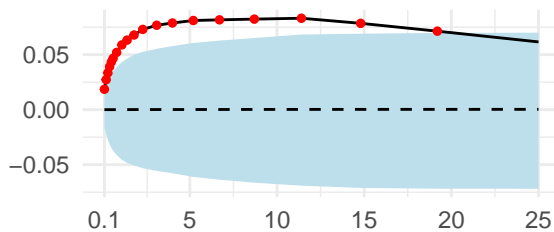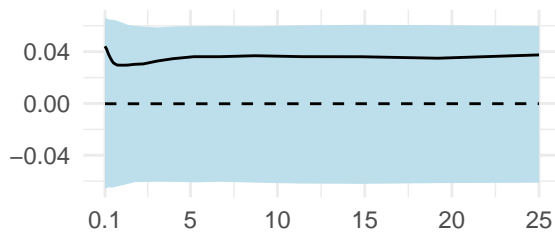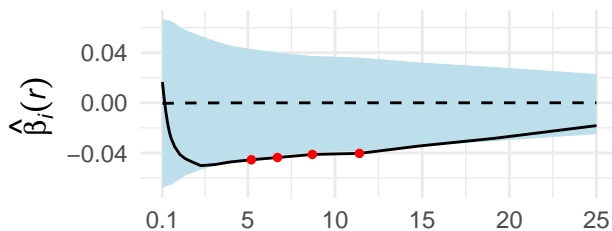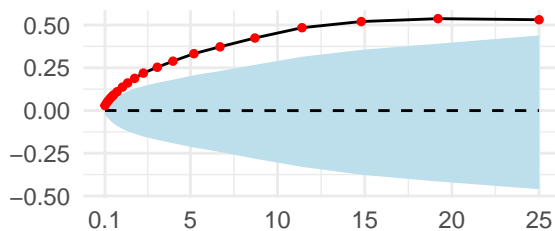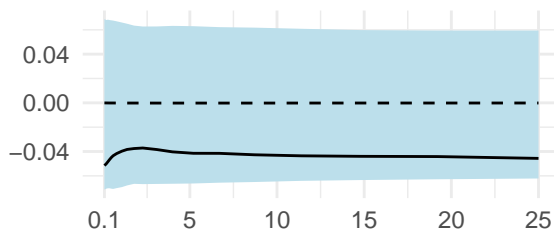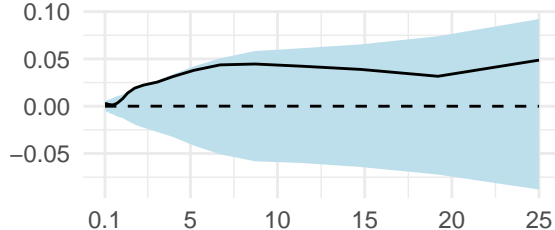$