

# Alaitz AYARZA- ASTIGARRAGA

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## FIELDS OF INTEREST

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Primary: Applied Microeconomics: Labor, Migration, Education, Gender and Behavioral Economics  
Secondary: Survey Design, Elicitation of beliefs, perceptions and attitudes

## JOB MARKET PAPER ([Paper](#))

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### Determinants of migration choices: The role of beliefs about pecuniary and nonpecuniary outcomes

Why do young adults migrate? This paper studies the reasons behind migration choices of young, highly educated individuals from lagging-behind regions. I collect a rich dataset on subjective expectations right at the time when respondents are making their choice of whether to migrate out of Andalusia, one of the poorest regions of Spain. I then use the data to estimate a life-cycle model of migration choice, taking migration duration into account. Crucially, the collected data allow me to separate preferences from beliefs. Regarding pecuniary factors, I find that migration decisions are more sensitive to earnings, followed by the prospects of full-time employment and a better match between studies and job. Moreover, results from counterfactual exercises show that nonpecuniary factors, such as being close to family and quality of social life, play a larger role than pecuniary factors on choosing whether to migrate. Given the large expected likelihood of short-term migration, I study the reasons for planning to migrate temporarily. Counterfactual exercises show that a human capital acquisition strategy plays a small role on the plan to migrate short-term. Instead, expected short-term migration is largely motivated by preferences for nonpecuniary outcomes.

## REFERENCES

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## WORK IN PROGRESS

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### Self-selection into internal and international migration of young individuals: Evidence using novel survey data

This paper studies the self-selection intentions into internal and international migration of young individuals in their school-to-work transition from the South of Spain -one of the areas with highest youth unemployment rates in the EU. I use a rich dataset that includes personal, academic and family background characteristics, as well as individuals' beliefs about labor market outcomes in their home region and migration destination. Results indicate that having a higher GPA and being from a high socioeconomic status significantly predict individuals' intention to migrate internationally, but not internally. Despite being positively selected, students who plan to migrate internationally have the most pessimistic views about their career prospects in their home region. With their migration plans, they expect higher labor market returns to migration than internal

migrants. International migrants are more likely than internal migrants to plan a long-term migration as opposed to a temporary migration. If individuals follow their plans, my results suggest a future brain drain from the region as well as from the country.

### Geographic job search differences by socioeconomic status

High socioeconomic status (SES) university graduates are more likely to migrate internationally than their lower SES counterparts. In countries with high youth unemployment rates, high SES individuals having access to broader and better labor markets at the start of their careers reduces the role of university education as a tool for social mobility. This paper studies the mechanisms behind the different geographic location choices by socioeconomic status among university graduates. It uses an information experiment to investigate the role of information frictions, and studies credit constraints and other costs (e.g., knowledge of language) as alternative mechanisms.

## WORKING PAPERS

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**E-learning Engagement Gap during School Closures: Differences by Academic Performance**, joint with Josep Amer and Marta C. Lopes - [R&R Applied Economics](#) ([Paper](#))

We study the impact of COVID-19 school closures on differences in online learning usage by regional academic performance. Using data from Google Trends in Italy, we find that during the first lockdown, regions with a previously lower academic performance increased their searches for e-learning tools more than higher-performing regions. Analysing school administrative and survey data before the pandemic, we find that both teachers and students in lower performing regions were using no less e-learning tools than higher performing ones. These two findings suggest that the COVID-19 shock widened the e-learning usage gap between academically lower and higher-performing regions. Exploiting the regional variation in school closure mandates during the 2020/2021 academic year, we report that the patterns detected after the first lockdown were no longer present. Regions with different previous academic performance had the same response in terms of online learning usage when faced with stricter school closures.

## EDUCATION

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PhD Candidate in Economics, European University Institute (EUI)	2018-present
M.Res in Economics, EUI	2018
Research Master in Economics, Université Catholique de Louvain	2017
Master Program in Economics, Barcelona Graduate School of Economics	2016
- Degree awarded by the University of Pompeu Fabra	
Bachelor's Degree in Economics, University of the Basque Country	2015
- With one semester academic exchange at KULeuven University	

## TEACHING ASSISTANT EXPERIENCE

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Panel Data for Banking and Finance (Florence School of Banking and Finance, FBF-EUI)	Fall 2021
- Instructor: Jeffrey Wooldridge	
Topics in Microeconometrics, (PhD course, EUI)	Spring 2021
- Instructor: Thomas Crossley	
Panel Data for Banking and Finance (FBF-EUI)	Spring 2021
- Instructor: Jeffrey Wooldridge	

## RESEARCH ASSISTANT POSITIONS

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Research Assistant of Marta C. Lopes, University Carlos III of Madrid	2020
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## EXTERNAL PRESENTATIONS

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SAEe Valencia (scheduled)	2022
EUI Alumni Workshop	2022

## **RESEARCH GRANTS AND SCHOLARSHIPS**

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Contrato de Personal Investigador (upv-ehu)	02-05/2022
Early Stage Research Fund, Competitive EUI Grant	2021
- Research grant for project: Determinants of migration choices	
PhD Scholarship, EUI	2021
Early Stage Research Fund, Competitive EUI Grant	2020
- Research grant for project: Determinants of migration choices	
PhD Scholarship, Salvador de Madariaga	2017-2020
- Grant by the Spanish Ministry of Education for EUI researchers	

## **TRAINING SESSIONS AND SUMMER SCHOOLS**

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Teacher Training in Higher Education, Certificate awarded by the EUI	2019
- Instructors: Dr. Annika Zorn (EUI) and Prof. Lesley Gourlay (UCL, London)	
Gender Economics- Labor Economics Summer School, Barcelona GSE	2018
- Instructor: Libertad González	

## **LANGUAGE & COMPUTER SKILLS**

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LANGUAGES: English (fluent), Spanish (native), Basque (native), French (basic)  
COMPUTER: Stata, Matlab, Python (Selenium WebDriver for web Scrapping), Qualtrics Survey Software, Latex, Microsoft Office.

Last updated: November 3, 2022