Pricing Technologies and their Economic and Social Consequences

Max Weber Programme Multidisciplinary Research Workshop

March 25-26, 2021
Online, Zoom

Organisers: Arthur Dolgopolov (MWF, ECO); Francesco Ducci (MWF, LAW); Agnieszka Jabłonowska (MWF, LAW); Giacomo Tagiuri (MWF, LAW)

Description: PriTech is a two-day online research workshop that emphasizes technological developments in the way prices are calculated, recorded, and communicated, and the way online services are monetized, as well as the social and economic consequences of such developments that cause concerns from various disciplinary and policy perspectives. It is an interdisciplinary event that is meant to bring together economists, lawyers, sociologists, historians, and industry practitioners. Find more information at this link.

Location: Zoom.us (the link will be disseminated by email to registered participants)

Program

Thursday, 25 March 2021 │ 9:45-18:00 CET

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9.45 – 10.00   *Introduction and welcome*

10.00 – 11.30   *Panel 1: Competition and Regulation* (Moderator: Francesco Ducci)

The first panel covers some of the legal and economic challenges raised by algorithmic pricing for competition policy and regulation, including algorithmic collusion and the use of AI in arbitration disputes.

Rob Nicholls | University of New South Wales

Giacomo Calzolari | European University Institute

Michal Gal | University of Haifa

13.45 – 15.15   *Panel 2: Platform Design and Pricing*

The focus of the panel is on the problems where platforms are explicitly modeled and either the platform's profit, associated market dynamics, the policy response, or the effect on welfare are of crucial importance. (Moderator: Arthur Dolgopolov, MWF, ECO)

Matthijs Wildenbeest | Indiana University

"Agency Pricing and Bargaining: Empirical Evidence from the e-Book Market"

Heinrich Nax | ETH Zurich & University of Zurich

"Information, Feedback and Pricing Rule Effects in the Continuous Double Auction: an Experimental Perspective"

Justin Johnson | Cornell University

"Platform Design when Sellers Use Pricing Algorithms"

15.30 – 16.45   *Panel 3: Algorithmic Pricing*

The panel covers the broad topic of algorithmization of prices without the focus on algorithmic collusion. These include surge pricing in ride-sharing, online shopping, learning algorithms, and outsourcing. (Moderator: Arthur Dolgopolov)

Brendan Lucier | Microsoft Research

Joseph Harrington | University of Pennsylvania

"Outsourcing Pricing Algorithms and Market Competition"

17.00 – 18.00   **Hal Varian** | Google (Moderator: Arthur Dolgopolov)

18.00   *End of first day of workshop*

Friday, 26 March 2021 │ 10:00-18:30 CET
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10.00 – 11.30   *Panel 4: Price Discrimination and Behavioural and Psychographic Targeting*

The panel explores the use of software agents to price discriminate and target consumers with personalised communications – social perceptions of such practices, their impact on markets and society and the applicable legal frameworks. (Moderator: Agnieszka Jabłonowska, MWF, LAW)

Andreas Leibbrandt | Monash University

Frederik Zuiderveen Borgesius | Radboud University

Natali Helberger | University of Amsterdam

14.00 – 15.30   *Panel 5: Pricing and Society: Sociological and Historical Approaches*

The panel brings together researchers studying how pricing and other market technologies contribute to distributive outcomes, the socio-cultural consequences of markets, as well as various processes of social discrimination, in historical perspective. (Moderator: Giacomo Tagiuri, MWF, LAW)

Franck Cochoy | University of Toulouse

"On the Digitalization of Prices: A Century of Price Display Practices and Technologies (1922–present)"

Joseph Turow | University of Pennsylvania

"Profiling Customers to Assess Their Value: Where is the Red Line?"

Tamar Kricheli-Katz | Tel-Aviv University

"The Gender Price Gap"

16.00 – 17.30   *Panel 6: Dynamic Pricing and Learning*

The panel explores all aspects of dynamic price change - from Electronic Shelf Labels and the costs associated with rapid price adjustments to the convergence of reinforcement learning pricing algorithms to collusive outcomes and industrial applications of multidimensional pricing models. (Moderators: Arthur Dolgolopov & Francesco Ducci)

> **Marian Moszoro** | George Mason University & SGH Warsaw School of Economics
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> **Brad Kells** | Cargo Chief, Lead Data Scientist
>
> *"Pricing Algorithms in the Truck Industry with Multi-dimensional but Limited Data"*
>
> **Arnoud den Boer** | University of Amsterdam
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> *"Tacit Collusion by Data-Driven Price Algorithms"*
>
> **Emilio Calvano** | University of Bologna
>
> *"Artificial Intelligence, algorithmic pricing and collusion"*

17.45 – 18.20   **Oren Bar-Gill** | Harvard University (Moderator: Agnieszka Jabłonowska)

> *"Algorithmic Price Discrimination: When Demand is a Function of Both Preferences and (Mis)perceptions"*

18.20 – 18.30   *Closing remarks and end of workshop*

Pre-Recorded talks

> **Christo Wilson** | Northeastern University (Moderator: Arthur Dolgopolov)
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> *"Auditing the Amazon Buy Box"*