

# ATTILA GÁSPÁR

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## **Current Position**

Postdoctoral Researcher, University of Padua (2019-)

## **Office Contact Information**

Department of Economics and Management  
Via del Santo, 33 – 35123 (Padova, IT)

## **Doctoral Studies:**

Central European University, 2012 to 2019  
Duke University 2017 (Visiting Ph.D. Student)

## **Pre-doctoral studies:**

MA in Economics, Central European University, 2012  
Diploma in Political Science (5 year training, BA+MA equivalent) Eötvös Loránd University, 2011  
Diploma in Economics (5 year training, BA+MA equivalent), Corvinus University of Budapest, 2010

## **Research Fields:**

Political Economy, Applied Microeconomics, Development Economics, Economic History

## **Teaching Experience:**

<b>Primary Instructor</b>	2016	Econometrics, Mathematical methods, UMY (Indonesia)
	2015	Introduction to Economics, ELTE
<b>Teaching Assistant</b>	2014-2016	Data Analysis, Mathematical methods for economists, CEU
	2013	Microeconomics, Econometrics, ELTE

## **Research Experience and Other Employment:**

2013-2019	Research Assistant, CEU Department of Economics and Business For professors Miklós Koren and Adam Szeidl (CEU MicroData)
2008-2010	Junior Consultant (Political Capital - Policy Research and Consulting Institute, Budapest)

## **Language Skills:**

Hungarian (native), English (fluent), Spanish (fluent, but not practiced recently), Italian (basic) Indonesian (basic)

**Honors, Scholarships, and Fellowships, Grants:**

2017	Doctoral Research Support Grant (Central European University)
2016	Review of Economics Studies Student Fellowship
2016	CEU Global Teaching Fellowship
2016	CERGE-EI GDN Regional Research Competition 2016 Grant
2015	INET The History Project Research Grant
2015	CERGE-EI Teaching Fellowship
2013	CERGE-EI Teaching Fellowship
2012	Erős Gyula Award for Best MA Thesis

**Seminars, Conference and Workshop Participation:**

2020	Political Economy of Democracy and Dictatorship, Münster
	EEA Summer Conference (Milan)
	Econometric Society World Congress (Rotterdam)
2019	Augustin Cournot Doctoral Days, Strasbourg
	EEA Summer Meetings, Manchester
	Padova Workshop on Economic Design and Institutions
	Hungarian Society of Economics Annual Conference
2018	HAS Centre for Economic and Regional Studies (Seminar)
	11 <sup>th</sup> RGS Doctoral Conference, Essen
	Bard College (Seminar)
2017	Graduate student Workshop of the Hungarian Society of Economics
	UC Davis (Seminar)
	Duke University (Seminar)
	Hungarian Society of Economics Annual Conference
2016	8 <sup>th</sup> IOS/APB/EACES Summer Academy, Tutzing
	Annual Conference of the Swiss Society for Economics and Statistics
2015	Graduate Student Workshop of the Hungarian Society of Economics
	1 <sup>st</sup> German Economic History Conference, Münster
	8 <sup>th</sup> RGS Doctoral Conference, Essen
	WEast Meeting, Budapest (as organizer; paper presented by coauthor Rita Pető)
2014	Herzl seminar for Doctoral students, Telc (CZ)

## **Research:**

### **Asymmetric Extremism**

[link to newest version]

Campaigning on highly divisive, ideological issues can serve as a cheaper alternative to provision of goods and services, so politicians have an economic incentive to cater to extremists. Policies that are more beneficial to extremists in absolute terms than the extent to which moderates dislike them shift the focus of re-election from incumbent performance to ideology, increasing the scope for shirking or rent-seeking. I formalize and test this hypothesis using Indonesian data. About half of the district governments in Indonesia have been experimenting with divisive and often controversial Sharia-based religious policies since 2000. Using difference-in-differences identification I show that districts that introduce Sharia policies spend less and create less public services: the conservative estimate of the impact is a 10 percent decrease in spending and an 8 percent of a standard deviation decrease in an index of government services. The downstream social effects of cutting service provision and relying on extremists to win elections are that Sharia policies increase various measures of poverty and violence.

### **Social Mobility and Social Regimes: Intergenerational Mobility in Hungary, 1949-2017**

With Pawel Bukowski (LSE), Gregory Clark (UC-Davis), and Rita Pető (CEU)

[link to CEPR Working Paper]

Submitted, under review at the Journal of Population Economics

This paper measures social mobility rates in Hungary 1949-2017, for upper class and underclass families, using surnames to measure social status. In these years there were two very different social regimes. The first was the Hungarian People's Republic, 1949-1989, a Communist regime with an avowed aim of favouring the working class. Then the modern liberal democracy, 1989-2020, a free-market economy. We find four surprising things. First, social mobility rates were low for both upper- and lower-class families 1949-2017, with an underlying intergenerational status correlation of 0.6-0.8. Second, social mobility rates under communism were the same as in the subsequent capitalist regime. Third, the Romani minority throughout both periods showed even lower social mobility rates. And fourth, the descendants of the noble class in Hungary in the eighteenth century were still significantly privileged 1949 and later.

### **“Deny Thy Father and Refuse Thy Name” - Nation Building and the Salary Differential of Name Changers in Hungary**

With Rita Pető (CERS-HAS)

[link to slides]

Draft available upon request

The paper studies how the state in pre-World War I Hungary used labor market discrimination based on family names to encourage assimilation, foster nation building and decrease cultural diversity. Using unique, historical administrative data sets from the late 19th and early 20th centuries we show that workers from minority backgrounds who changed foreign surnames to Hungarian sounding ones earned more than those who did not change. We use pooled OLS and a name frequency based instrumental variable and find a median salary premium of 5.8% for name changers. This result shows that family name, a fundamental part of one's identity (which links the individual to both a family and a cultural community) is endogenous to short-run economic incentives. Next, we build a model of self-selection into assimilation, and use it together with a historical policy shock to quantify the impact of incentivized name changing on the cultural composition of early 20th century Hungary.

### **Corruption and Extremism**

With Tommaso Giommoni (ETH-Zürich), Antonio Nicolò (University of Padova), Massimo Morelli (Bocconi University)

**Corruption and Political Selection**

With Antonio Nicolò (University of Padova)

**Genius Loci – Entrepreneurship after the Hungarian Holocaust**

With Miklós Koren (CEU) and Rita Pető (CERS-HAS)

**Technological Change and Extremism**

With Győző Gyöngyösi (SAFE Institute)