

Carlo Medici

CONTACT INFORMATION

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EDUCATION

Ph.D., Managerial Economics and Strategy, Northwestern University	(anticipated) 2024
M.Sc., Managerial Economics and Strategy, Northwestern University	2019
M.Sc., Economic and Social Sciences (summa cum laude), Bocconi University	2016
B.A., Economic and Social Sciences (summa cum laude), Bocconi University	2014

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Labor Economics, Political Economy, Economic History

WORKING PAPERS

“Closing Ranks: Organized Labor and Immigration” [\[PDF\]](#)

This paper shows that immigration positively affected the emergence of organized labor in the United States. I digitize archival data to construct the first county-level dataset on historical union membership in the U.S. and use a shift-share instrument to isolate a plausibly exogenous shock to the labor supply induced by immigration, between 1900 and 1920. Counties that received more immigration experienced an increase in the probability of having any labor union, the share of unionized workers, the number of local union branches, and the average branch size. The increase occurred more prominently in counties more exposed to the immigrants’ labor competition and harboring less favorable attitudes towards immigration. Taken together, these results indicate that existing workers formed and joined labor unions due to economic and social motivations. The findings shed light on a novel driver of unionization in the early 20th-century United States: in the absence of immigration, the average union density of this period would have been 17% lower. They also identify an unexplored consequence of immigration: the development of institutions that aim to protect workers’ status in the labor market.

“The Impact of the Chinese Exclusion Act on the U.S. Economy” with Joe Long, Nancy Qian, and Marco Tabellini [\[PDF\]](#)

This paper examines the economic effects of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, which banned Chinese immigration to the United States, across U.S. counties between 1860 and 1940. The Act reduced the size of the Chinese population and employment in all major economic sectors, and lowered the quality of jobs among the Chinese who remained. Contrary to the expectations of its proponents, the Act also reduced the employment and income of white workers, both native and foreign born ones, and had sharp negative effects on manufacturing and agriculture. The negative impact of the Act was concentrated in the western United States, where the majority of Chinese immigrants lived in 1880, and persisted until at least 1940.

“Patronage, Careers, and Performance in the Civil Service: Evidence from U.S. Federal Judges” with Massimo Pulejo

This paper analyzes the consequences of patronage in the federal civil service of the United States. Focusing on the federal judiciary system, where such a selection method is still used today, and leveraging individual-level data on the careers of judges and members of Congress

from 1789 to the present, we use a difference-in-differences design to compare the career and performance of judges before and after the senator who recommended their nomination leaves Congress. We show that the probability of a judge being promoted from a district court to a court of appeal decreases by up to 68% after losing the connection to their recommender. Such impact emerges in years in which judges share partisanship with the incumbent president, hence when they could benefit from the lobbying efforts of their senatorial patron. This large effect is likely to have first-order consequences for the composition of U.S. courts of appeal and for the career incentives of U.S. district judges. In ongoing work, we are exploring whether and how this event influences judges' productivity and sentencing decisions.

WORK IN PROGRESS

“Political Cycles in Black Union Membership”

A broad strand of literature in economics has studied political cycles, especially focusing on how politicians manipulate budgets to increase their chances of re-election. Much less attention has been given to how the political cycle affects the incentives and behavior of organizations. In this paper, I study how elections affect public sector labor unions, a type of organization with well-acknowledged ties to politics, and the Democratic party in particular. I find that, in presidential election years, unionization rates increase for Black workers. The effect is larger in the occurrence of open seat elections; in Blue states; and, among constituencies where other institutions that mobilize Black voters, such as the NAACP or the Black church, are less present. This evidence is consistent with a mechanism in which labor unions increase their membership to more effectively lobby politicians ahead of a general election, by targeting and mobilizing workers who are otherwise less likely to turn out to vote, and more likely to lean Democratic.

“The Economic Effects of Public Hiring Constraints” with Maria Carreri, Edoardo Di Porto, Edoardo Teso, and Silvia Vannutelli

How do public administrations cope with tight limits on external hiring? What is the effect of these limits on public sector performance? How does the size of public employment affect local labor markets and private sector growth? In this paper, we aim to address these questions by: (i) leveraging rich administrative data on the universe of both public and private sector employees in the Italian labor market; and, (ii) exploiting plausibly exogenous variation in hiring constraints across different Italian public administrations induced by a 2008 reform that limited public sector hiring. With the findings of this paper, we aim to contribute to a long-standing debate on the public employment effects on the labor market, by exploiting exogenous variation in the size of local public employment; and, to the literature on internal labor markets, by focusing on a unique setting that allows us to document how the internal labor market of public sector organizations responds to shocks in external hiring ability.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Northwestern, Statistical Decision Analysis (EMBA), Teaching Assistant	2020–23
Northwestern, Making Business Decisions with Big Data (MBA), Teaching Assistant	2020–21
Northwestern, Business Analytics I (MBA), Teaching Assistant	2019–21

PRESENTATIONS

2024 (*incl. scheduled*): ASSA Annual Meeting (San Antonio), University of Nottingham, CREI, Universitat Pompeu Fabra, USC Marshall, Tilburg (Development Economics and Economic History Research Group)

2023: EHA Annual Meeting (Pittsburgh) [poster session], Northwestern Economic History Seminar

FELLOWSHIPS, GRANTS & AWARDS	Global Impacts Graduate Fellowship, Northwestern Buffett Institute for Global Affairs	2023–24
	PhD Research Grant, Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University	2023
	Doctoral Fellowship, Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University	2018–23
	IGIER Visiting Student Initiative, Bocconi University	2014–16
REFEREING	American Economic Journal: Economic Policy, Explorations in Economic History	
RELEVANT PAST POSITIONS	Research Assistant, Prof. Nancy Qian, Northwestern University	2020–22
	Research Assistant, Prof. Edoardo Teso, Northwestern University	2020
	Research Assistant, Prof. Guido Tabellini, Bocconi University	2017–18
	Trainee, Research Department, European Central Bank (Frankfurt, Germany)	2016–17
	Research Assistant, Prof. Tommaso Nannicini, Bocconi University	2015–16
	Summer Analyst, Fitch Ratings (London, UK)	2015
LANGUAGES	English (fluent), Italian (native), French (intermediate), Spanish (basic)	
REFERENCES	Prof. Joel Mokyr	Prof. Matthew Notowidigdo
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