

Devis Decet

Contact Information	LEAP Bocconi University Via Röntgen n. 1 Milan 20136 (ITALY)	devis.decet@unibocconi.it https://devisdecet.com Citizenship: Italian
Fields	Primary: Development Economics, Environmental Economics Secondary: Political Economy, Public Economics	
Employment	Bocconi University, Postdoctoral Researcher Laboratory for Effective Anti-poverty Policies (LEAP)	2025-
Education	Ph.D. Economics, Northwestern University - M.A. Economics, 2020 M.A. Economics, University of Bologna - Visiting student (BESAP program), UC Berkeley, 2018 B.A. Economics and Management, University of Trento - Visiting student (Erasmus program), University of León, 2014	2025 2018 2016
Working papers	"Organizing Fiscal Capacity" <i>World Bank 1st Conference on Public Institutions Best Paper Award</i> This paper investigates how the spatial organization of a tax authority shapes fiscal capacity. I study a reform of the Brazilian tax authority that closed one-fourth of its local offices tasked with tax enforcement, and consolidated tax agents and decision-making power in fewer, larger offices. Leveraging regional variation in the reform and geographically disaggregated data on tax collection and local office organization, I find that consolidation increased tax revenues by 3.3%. The increase was largest where the reform allowed for more efficient utilization of enforcement and managerial resources. However, the reform led to a divergence in tax revenues within consolidated regions, particularly in peripheral areas farther from their new office and with weaker third-party reporting. My findings suggest that consolidation can lead to efficiency gains but also to amplified geographic inequality in tax enforcement.	
	"Water Wars" with Andrea Marcucci This paper studies the relationship between access to water resources and local violence in Africa. Due to limited irrigation, rural communities rely on water from rainfall and rivers for their economic needs. When rainfall is scarcer, river water becomes more valuable, potentially fueling violence in areas with greater control over its flow. We test this hypothesis by combining high-resolution data on hydrography, river network structure, rainfall, and conflict in Africa from 1997 to 2021. Low rainfall in a location increases conflict in neighboring areas that are water-rich and located upstream along the river network. The effects are stronger where water distribution among ethnic groups is more unequal and weaker in countries with better governance. The increase in conflict is more pronounced in regions facing a long-term decline in river water availability. These findings suggest that water access can drive local violence, a risk that may grow as climate change increases the frequency of droughts and reshapes river water distribution.	

"Child Labour, Human Capital and Beliefs" with Kaman Lyu
Public Policy Research Network 4th Graduate Workshop Best Paper Award

In contexts where child labour is pervasive, household decisions about allocating children's time between school and work involve a trade-off: current returns from child labour versus future returns from education. This paper tests for the existence of a third factor: future returns from child labour, as parents view farm work as an investment in agricultural skills. We provide evidence on each component of this trade-off in the context of rural Ghana by leveraging four waves of survey data on 5,000 households, exogenous shocks to agricultural productivity, and a vignette survey design to elicit parental beliefs.

Selected Work in Progress

"State Capacity and Environmental Protection" with Marie-Louise Décamps

"Conflict and Environmental Degradation in the Congo Basin" with Marie-Louise Décamps and Ameet Morjaria

Fellowships, Grants & Awards	Dissertation Fellowship, Northwestern University	2024-2025
	University Fellowship, Northwestern University	2023-2024
	GPRL Travel Grant, Northwestern University	2022
	Marco Fanno Scholarship, Unicredit Foundation	2018
	BESAP scholarship, University of Bologna	2017
	Erasmus Scholarship, European Union	2014, 2017
	Merit Award, University of Trento	2016

Presentations	2025: World Bank Public Institutions Conference, Bocconi LEAP, Analysis Group, UC Berkeley Goldman, Cornerstone Research, PACDEV Los Angeles, Marco Fanno Alumni Conference Torino, Workshop Public Administration Hohenheim, NEUDC Tufts
	2024 and before: Novafrica Lisbon, Northwestern Development Seminar, DEVPEC Stanford, EGI Bari

Relevant Past Position	Research Assistant, Ameet Morjaria, Northwestern University, USA	2023
	Research Assistant, GPRL, Northwestern University, Winneba, Ghana	2022
	Research Assistant, Seema Jayachandran, Northwestern University, USA	2021-2022
	Research Fellow, University of Bologna, Italy	2018-2019
	Research Assistant, Matteo Cervellati and Paolo Masella, University of Bologna, Italy	2018

Teaching Experience	Teaching Assistant, Northwestern University	2020-2024
	Statistical Decision Analysis, Executive MBA (6X)	
	Global Initiatives in Management: China-Africa, MBA	
	Economic Development in Africa, U	
	Introduction to Econometrics, U	
	Teaching Assistant, University of Bologna	2018-2019
	Statistics, MA	
	Applied Econometrics, MA	
	Economic Growth, MA	

Professional Activities	CEGA Fellow PhD Peer Mentor, Northwestern University	2023
	Applied Microeconomics Lunch seminar organizer, Northwestern University	2021-2022
	Northwestern Graduate Mentorship Program Mentor	2020-2023

Languages	English (fluent), Italian (native), Spanish (fluent)	
Programming	R (advanced), Stata (advanced), Python (intermediate)	
References	<p>Professor Christopher Udry Department of Economics Northwestern University 2211 Campus Drive Evanston, IL 60208 christopher.udry@northwestern.edu</p> <p>Professor Nancy Qian Kellogg School of Management Northwestern University 2211 Campus Drive Evanston, IL 60208 nancy.qian@kellogg.northwestern.edu</p> <p>Professor Silvia Vannutelli Department of Economics Northwestern University 2211 Campus Drive Evanston, IL 60208 silvia.vannutelli@northwestern.edu</p>	<p>Professor Seema Jayachandran Department of Economics Princeton University 126 Julis Romo Rabinowitz Building Princeton, NJ 08544 jayachandran@princeton.edu</p> <p>Professor Edoardo Teso Kellogg School of Management Northwestern University 2211 Campus Drive Evanston, IL 60208 edoardo.teso@kellogg.northwestern.edu</p>
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