

# Honghao Zheng

KU Leuven  
Department of Economics  
Naamsestraat 69  
3000 Leuven, Belgium

Phone: (+32) 487513335  
Email: honghao.zheng@kuleuven.be  
Homepage: <https://honghao-zheng.github.io/>  
Placement Officer: Laurens Cherchye

## Education

Ph.D. Candidate in Economics, KU Leuven, Belgium, 2019-2025 (expected)

*Advisors:* Johannes Van Biesebroeck (**chair**), Jan De Loecker, Frank Verboven

Visiting Scholar, Duke University, U.S., 2024 Spring

*Advisor:* Allan Collard-Wexler

M.A. Economics, Zhejiang University of Finance & Economics, China, 2016-2019.

B.S. Economics, Zhejiang University of Finance & Economics, China, 2012-2016.

## Research Fields

Industrial Organization, Environmental Economics, Development Economics

## References

**Johannes Van Biesebroeck**  
Department of Economics  
KU Leuven  
+32 (0)16 32 6793  
[jo.vanbiesebroeck@kuleuven.be](mailto:jo.vanbiesebroeck@kuleuven.be)

**Jan De Loecker**  
Department of Economics  
KU Leuven  
+32 (0)16 37 4583  
[jan.deloecker@kuleuven.be](mailto:jan.deloecker@kuleuven.be)

**Frank Verboven**  
Department of Economics  
KU Leuven  
+32 (0)16 32 6944  
[frank.verboven@kuleuven.be](mailto:frank.verboven@kuleuven.be)

**Allan Collard-Wexler**  
Department of Economics  
Duke University  
+1 (347) 948 4707  
[allan.collard.wexler@duke.edu](mailto:allan.collard.wexler@duke.edu)

## Working Papers

### **Death by Market Power: The Production-Safety Tradeoff in the Coal Mining Industry**

(Job Market Paper)

I examine the effects of downstream buyer power from coal-fired power plants on the organization of production in the upstream coal mining industry in China. I estimate a structural model of coal mines featuring (i) joint production of coal and worker safety and (ii) endogenous safety choices and factor-augmenting productivity. To identify the causal effects of buyer power on coal mining outcomes, I employ a shift-share instrumental variable, leveraging exogenous variations stemming from a restructuring of the electricity sector. I find an unintended but life-and-death consequence associated

with market power: buyer power exposure leads to higher provincial death rates, also corroborated by lower safety-coal output ratios at the mine level. The underlying mechanism is that exposure to buyer power prompts coal mines to shift toward less capital-intensive, more traditional, and less safe mining technologies, leading to higher death rates. Finally, back-of-the-envelope calculations suggest that the decline in buyer power due to the electricity sector restructuring explains 53% of the improvement in coal mining death rates. The findings provide a new perspective on understanding the shared experience of high mining death rates in developed and developing countries over different historical periods.

### **Imperfect (Re)allocation in Imperfect Markets: Evidence from China's Pilot Carbon ETS**

with Johannes Van Biesebroeck

We study how economies with distinct development phases can preferably curtail emissions. We exploit unique variations of heterogeneous regulations—absolute- and intensity-type emission regulations in the context of carbon emission trading schemes (ETS) in China. Using an extensive array of rich data, we employ a difference-in-differences empirical strategy to examine the behaviors of all primary margins of adjustment to ETS from the demand to the supply side of energy. We find that, under imperfect markets and incomplete regulation, both types of ETS can induce carbon mitigation but with distinct tradeoffs. Aggregate impacts suggest overall annual reductions in energy consumption by 23% and 9% of yearly energy consumption in ETS with absolute- and intensity-type emission regulations, respectively.

## Work in Progress

### **Concrete Collusion**

with Julian Hidalgo and Ruozi Song

### **Demand (Un)certainity and Productivity: Evidence from German Coal Mining Industry**

with Kai Fischer

### **Local Knowledge or Misallocation: Efficiency Costs of Discretion in Regulatory Enforcement**

with Yunyu Shu, Ruozi Song, and Bing Zhang

### **Financial Frictions, Skill Complementarity, and Labor Market Power**

with Jin Cao and Tong Zhao

### **Trade Dynamics in the Ownership Network**

with Jiewei Fang and Philipp Ludwig

## Pre-Doctoral Publications

### **Estimation of Lorenz Curves Based on Dummy Variable Regression, 2019, *Economics Letters*.**

with Zhengxin Wang and Hailun Zhang

### **Measurement and Comparison of Export Sophistication of the New Energy Industry in 30 Countries During 2000-2015, 2019, *Renewable and Sustainable Energy Reviews*.**

with Zhengxin Wang

### **Decomposition of the Factors Influencing Export Fluctuation in China's New Energy Industry Based on a Constant Market Share Model, 2017, *Energy Policy*.**

with Tong Jin, Lingling Pei, and Zhengxin Wang

## Seminars and Conferences (\*scheduled)

2024: NUS Applied Economics Student Workshop\* (Singapore), CEPR-IO Gathering (Online), Public/IO Lunch Seminar (Duke), IO Group Seminar (Leuven)

2023: APIOC (Hong Kong), EARIE (Rome), IIOC (Washington D.C., Rising Star Session), IO Group Seminar (Leuven)

2017: 40th International Association for Energy Economics (IAEE) Conference (Singapore)

## Teaching Experience

T.A. for *Global Value Chain*, KU Leuven, 2021-2024  
for Johannes Van Biesebroeck and Liza Archanskaia

T.A. for *Economic Development of China*, KU Leuven, 2023  
for Johannes Van Biesebroeck

Master Thesis Supervision, KU Leuven, 2020-2024  
for Johannes Van Biesebroeck and Jan De Loecker

## Personal Skills

**Programming:** R, Stata, Mata, Matlab,  $\text{\LaTeX}$

**Languages:** Chinese (native), Wenzhounese (native), English (fluent)