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ITALY

Research Interests

PRIMARY	Political economy, applied microeconomics.
SECONDARY	Development economics and conflict studies.

References

Prof. David Levine European University Institute Via delle Fontanelle 18 50014 San Domenico di Fiesole, Italy david.levine@eui.eu	Prof. Thomas Crossley European University Institute Via delle Fontanelle 18 50014 San Domenico di Fiesole, Italy thomas.crossley@eui.eu
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Education

2017 - 2022	<i>Ph.D. in Economics</i> European University Institute, Italy Advisors: David Levine and Thomas Crossley
2022	<i>Visiting scholar</i> Stanford University, USA
2021	<i>Visiting scholar</i> University of Lausanne, Switzerland
2017 - 2018	<i>M.Res. in Economics</i> European University Institute, Italy
2015 - 2016	<i>M.Sc. in Economics</i> VU University, Netherlands Specialization: International and macroeconomic policy
2009 - 2012	<i>B.Sc. in Communication Science</i> University of Amsterdam, Netherlands

Teaching, research and professional experience

TEACHING POSITIONS

2019 - 2020	<i>New York University</i> International Economics, Teaching Assistant for Giampiero Gallo
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RESEARCH

2020	<i>Robert Schuman Center for Advanced Studies</i> Academic Assistant for David Levine
2017	<i>Dutch Central Bank</i> Research Assistant for Iman van Lelyveld
2016 - 2017	<i>VU University</i> Junior Researcher, Sociology department
2016	<i>VU University</i> Research Assistant for Steven Poelhekke, Economics department

OTHER EMPLOYMENT

2012-2015	<i>LeasePlan Corporation</i> Various corporate communication roles
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Professional activities

CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS

2022	Annual Midwest Political Science Association Conference
2021	University of Lausanne Public Economics and Policy Seminar Workshop of the Households in Conflict Network on Conflict, Migration, and Displacement 3rd International Conference on Globalization and Development XXIII Applied Economics Meeting (ALdE) Canadian Economic Association Conference 69th Annual Meeting of the French Economic Association 91st International Atlantic Economic Conference
2020	EUI Microeconometrics Working Group
2019	Political Economy Conference

WORKSHOPS AND SUMMER SCHOOLS

2021	<i>Summer School on the Political Economy of Conflict and Redistribution 2021</i> . Max Planck Institute.
2019	<i>Introduction to Teaching in Higher Education</i> . European University Institute.
2016 - 2017	<i>Mathematics and Statistics</i> . Leidse Onderwijs Instellingen (LOI).
2014	<i>Intensive program, International Management</i> . Stanford University.

Other

SCHOLARSHIPS

2020 - 2021	PhD Completion Grant, European University Institute
2017 - 2020	Ph.D. Scholarship, NUFFIC

LANGUAGES Dutch (native), English (fluent), German (advanced), Italian (basic), French (basic)

SOFTWARE R, Stata, MATLAB, QGIS, L^AT_EX.

Publications

"ESTIMATING THE ALLIANCE EFFECT: A SYNTHETIC CONTROL APPROACH". *Defence Studies*, 2022.

In a time of rising threat, recurring discussions about burden sharing within NATO and almost twenty years after the start of the 'war on terrorism', I explore a novel idea in the field of alliance and defense spending: the effect of alliance-membership on defense spending in response to a threat. Instead of estimating the determinants of defense spending or burden sharing among members, this paper focuses on two types of states (small and large) and how alliance membership shapes their response to threat. Using the synthetic control method, I create a comparison unit for each type consisting of a weighted average of non-NATO, European countries. 2001 is considered as the starting year of widespread threat, caused by a sudden increase in transnational terrorism. This way, I can estimate the 'alliance effect'. I find that both types of states have stronger (positive) response to threat as NATO members, compared to if they would not have been part of the alliance.

Work in progress

"LIVING IN THE CALIPHATE: THE IMPACT OF BOKO HARAM'S OCCUPATION ON EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES"

This paper estimates the effect of living in occupied territory during an insurgency and being exposed to insurgents' rule on educational outcomes. Focusing on the case of the Boko Haram insurgency in North East Nigeria, I can estimate the effect of occupation on schooling using a difference-in-differences approach. The results indicate that children who experienced Boko Haram's occupation have 1.24 years less education than those who experienced the insurgency but did not live in the caliphate, and additionally are 22 percent less likely to attend school in the years after the occupation. Various explanations for the decrease in schooling such as child labor, marriage, health, school supply, labor market trends and returns to education are explored, but these do not seem to explain the results. However, there is evidence that having a shared social identity with Boko Haram and peer or network effects, intimidation and fear drive the effects.

"CULTIVATION AND COMPETITION IN COLOMBIA: DISENTANGLING THE EFFECTS OF COCA PRICE CHANGES ON VIOLENCE"

Though there is evidence indicating that the presence of coca increases violence, changes to the price of coca products can have both negative and positive effects on conflict. Focusing on farmers and armed groups, this paper identifies their exposure to price changes, and estimates the effect of price changes on violence. The results show the presence of the opportunity cost effect: an increase in income of coca products for farmers leads to a reduction the total number of violent events, fatalities, paramilitary and guerilla attacks with a one to two year lag. This reduction in violence comes with an increase in school attendance and higher educational outcomes for rural households. An increase in the objective prize for armed groups leads to more violent events and guerilla attacks two years later. Moreover, armed groups flock to the area that witnesses an such an increase, resulting in higher levels of competition which coincides with the timing of the increase in violence.

"RE-ESTIMATING THE OLYMPIC EFFECT: A SYNTHETIC CONTROL APPROACH" (with Mustafa Kaba)

Hosting the Olympic games involves tremendous initial costs, yet countries still bid for it in the hopes of being awarded the games. A prominent explanation put forward in the previous literature for this seemingly puzzling interest is that hosting the Olympic games boosts exports and growth. In this paper, we outline potential pitfalls and problems with the various econometric methods used in this literature. We then address these issues by using the synthetic control method (SCM). Estimating the Olympic effect in a case-by-case manner using the SCM, we document that the Olympic effect is not a universal phenomenon but rather an idiosyncratic effect.

REPUTATION SIGNALLING AND CONTRACT-INTENSIVE INDUSTRIES (with Mustafa Kaba)

Work in progress.

"RELIGIOUS VIOLENCE AND THE SPREAD OF IDEOLOGY"

Work in progress.

"CONFLICT AS A MULTIPLIER: THE EFFECT OF FOOD INSECURITY ON EDUCATION, HEALTH AND EMPLOYMENT"

Work in progress.