

Correlated Equilibria & Learning

Omar Boufous

Supervised by

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PhD Thesis Defense

Presentation Outline

1. Background & Preliminaries

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Related Work
- 1.3 Notations & Model

2. Learning Correlated Equilibria

- 2.1 Online Learning with Regret
- 2.2 Algorithm Description
- 2.3 Stochastic Model
- 2.4 Simulation Results
- 2.5 Time-varying Game
- 2.6 Application to a Congestion Game

3. Constrained Correlated Equilibria

- 3.1 Definition & Example
- 3.2 Properties of Constrained Correlated Equilibrium Strategies
- 3.3 Canonical Representation and Existence of Constrained Correlated Equilibria
- 3.4 Computation of Constrained Correlated Equilibria
- 3.5 Simulation Results

4. Conclusions & Possible Directions of Research

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- ▶ A generalization of Nash equilibria with strong connections to Bayesian rationality introduced by Aumann
- ▶ A solution concept with appealing computational properties
- ▶ Basic learning dynamics naturally lead to correlated equilibria
- ▶ Canonical form characterizing the set of correlated equilibrium distributions
- ▶ Simple implementation using a correlation device
- ▶ Many applications in engineering, economics, etc.

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- ▶ A proof of existence and a generalization to infinite games in (Hart & Schmeidler, 1989)
- ▶ Extensive form correlated equilibrium defined in (Von Stengel & Forges, 2008)
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- ▶ Convergence to the social welfare maximizing correlated equilibrium (Borowski et al., 2015)
- ▶ Learning algorithms for specific applications e.g., resource allocation game (Cigler & Faltings, 2011)

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- ▶ (Debreu, 1952) defines the concept of generalized equilibrium
- ▶ (Arrow & Debreu, 1954) shows a proof of existence
- ▶ (Rosen, 1965) shows existence and uniqueness of equilibria in concave games with coupled constraints
- ▶ (Bernaconi et al., 23) introduces the concept of constrained Phi-equilibrium

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- ▶ Regret-matching (Hart & Mas-Colell, 2000) implying the convergence to the set of correlated equilibria
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- ▶ (Debreu, 1952) defines the concept of generalized equilibrium
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Many Other Theoretical and Applied Contributions

- ▶ Applications in energy systems and smart grids (Kulkarni, 2017), resource allocation problems (Pang et al., 2008) (Nowak et al., 2018)

Related Work

Correlated Equilibria

- ▶ Defined in (Aumann, 1974) and (Aumann, 1987)
- ▶ A proof of existence and a generalization to infinite games in (Hart & Schmeidler, 1989)
- ▶ Extensive form correlated equilibrium defined in (Von Stengel & Forges, 2008)
- ▶ Other extensions in (Forges, 2020), (Brandenburger & Dekel, 1992) and (Grant & Stauber, 2022)

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Finite non-cooperative game $G = (\mathcal{N}, (\mathcal{A}_i)_{i \in \mathcal{N}}, (u_i)_{i \in \mathcal{N}})$

- ▶ Set of players \mathcal{N}
- ▶ Action set \mathcal{A}_i for each $i \in \mathcal{N}$
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Correlation device $d = (\Omega, (\mathcal{P}_i)_{i \in \mathcal{N}}, q)$

- ▶ A sample space Ω
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Player i 's set of strategies is $\mathcal{S}_{i,d} = \{f_i : \Omega \rightarrow \mathcal{A}_i \text{ s.t. } f_i \text{ is } \mathcal{P}_i\text{-measurable}\}$ and the set of strategy profiles is $\mathcal{S}_d = \mathcal{S}_{1,d} \times \dots \times \mathcal{S}_{n,d}$.

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$$\forall i \in \mathcal{N}, \forall \alpha'_i \in \mathcal{S}_{i,d} \quad \sum_{\omega \in \Omega} \mathbf{q}(\omega) u_i(\alpha_i^*(\omega), \alpha_{-i}^*(\omega)) \geq \sum_{\omega \in \Omega} \mathbf{q}(\omega) u_i(\alpha'_i(\omega), \alpha_{-i}^*(\omega)) \quad (1)$$

A correlated equilibrium distribution of G (Forges, 2020) is a probability distribution $p \in \Delta(\mathcal{A})$ such that,

$$\forall i \in \mathcal{N}, \forall \beta_i : \mathcal{A}_i \rightarrow \mathcal{A}_i \quad \sum_{\mathbf{a} \in \mathcal{A}} p(\mathbf{a}) u_i(a_i, \mathbf{a}_{-i}) \geq \sum_{\mathbf{a} \in \mathcal{A}} p(\mathbf{a}) u_i(\beta_i(a_i), \mathbf{a}_{-i}) \quad (2)$$

Part 1 : Learning Correlated Equilibria

Online Learning with Regret

The game G is played repeatedly through time $t = 1, 2, 3, \dots$. Each step t , action profile $a^t = (a_1^t, \dots, a_n^t)$ is played

Definition 3 – Regret (Hart & Mas-Colell, 2000)

The regret player i experiences at time t for any pair of actions $j, k \in \mathcal{A}_i$ is

$$R_i^t(j, k) = \max \left(0, \frac{1}{t} \sum_{\tau \leq t: a_i^\tau = j} [u_i(k, a_{-i}^\tau) - u_i(a^\tau)] \right) = \max \left(0, D_i^t(j, k) \right) \quad (3)$$

Regret-Matching algorithm (Hart & Mas-Colell, 2000)

$$\begin{cases} p_i^{t+1}(k) = \frac{1}{\mu} R_i^t(j, k), \\ p_i^{t+1}(j) = 1 - \sum_{k \in \mathcal{A}_i: k \neq j} p_i^{t+1}(k). \end{cases}$$

Proposition 1 (Hart & Mas-Colell, 2000)

Let $(a^t)_{t=1,2,\dots}$ be a sequence of plays (i.e., $a^t \in \mathcal{A}$ for all t) and let $\varepsilon \geq 0$. Then: $\limsup_{t \rightarrow \infty} R_i^t(j, k) \leq \varepsilon$ for every $i \in \mathcal{N}$ and every $j, k \in \mathcal{A}_i$ with $j \neq k$, if and only if the sequence of empirical distributions q^t converges to the set of correlated ε -equilibria.

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Regret-Matching algorithm applied to a 3-by-2 game

	D	E
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B	(4, 7)	(6, 13)
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Table 1: Utility matrix.

- ▶ The empirical distribution does not seem to converge towards a correlated equilibrium point
- ▶ We propose a new dynamic called Correlated Perturbed Regret Minimization (CPRM)

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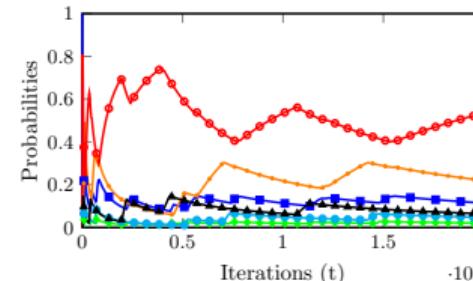


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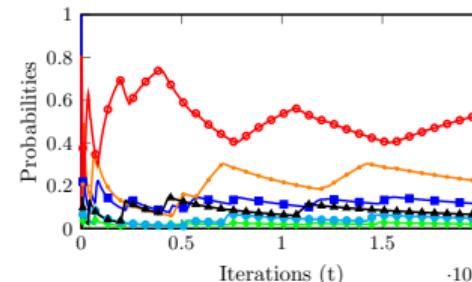


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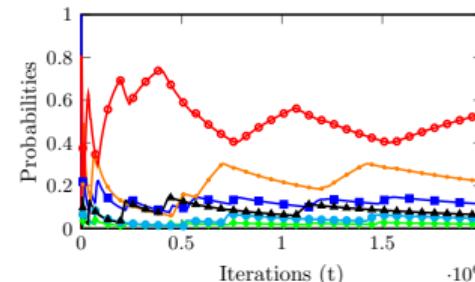


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Inspired from the learning algorithm introduced in (Young, H. P., 2009) for learning pure Nash equilibria.

At time t , each player i is characterized by a mood $m_i^t \in \{syn, asyn\}$



*asynchronous
player*



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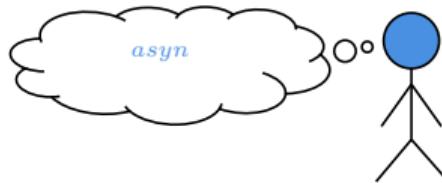


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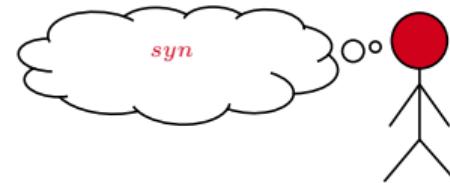
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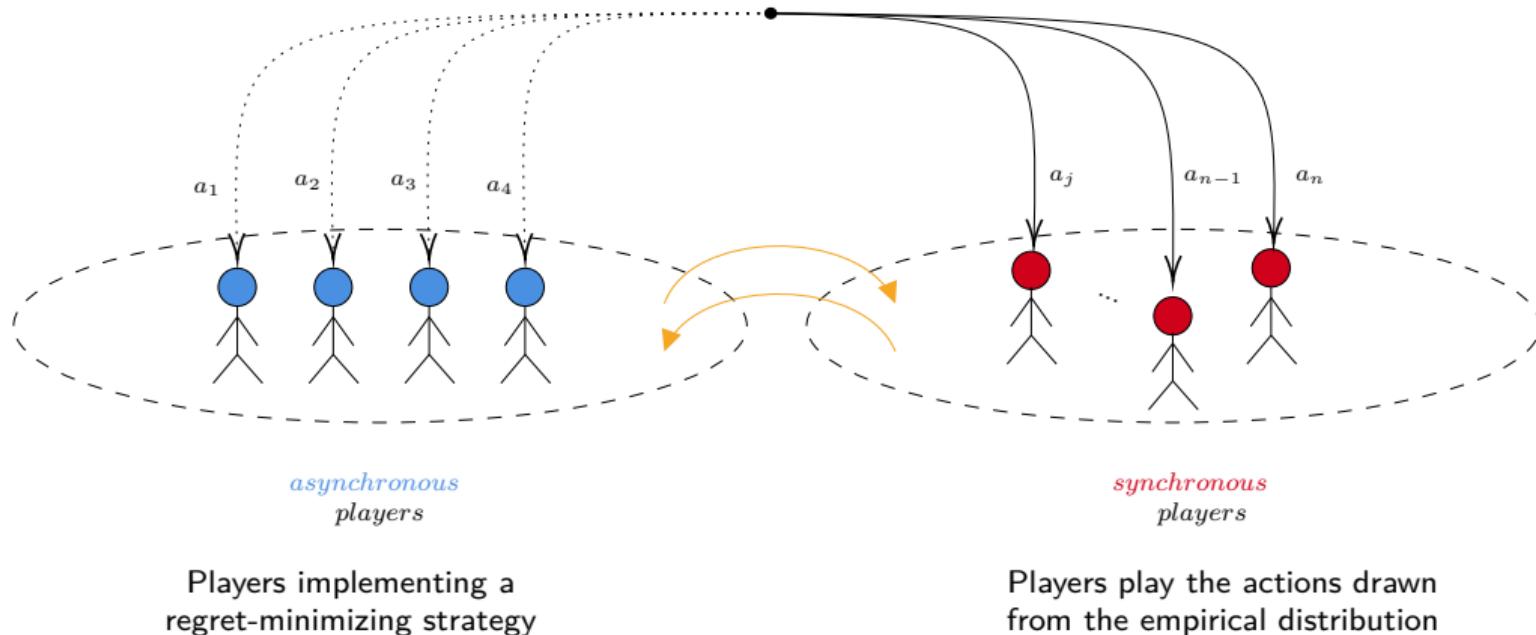
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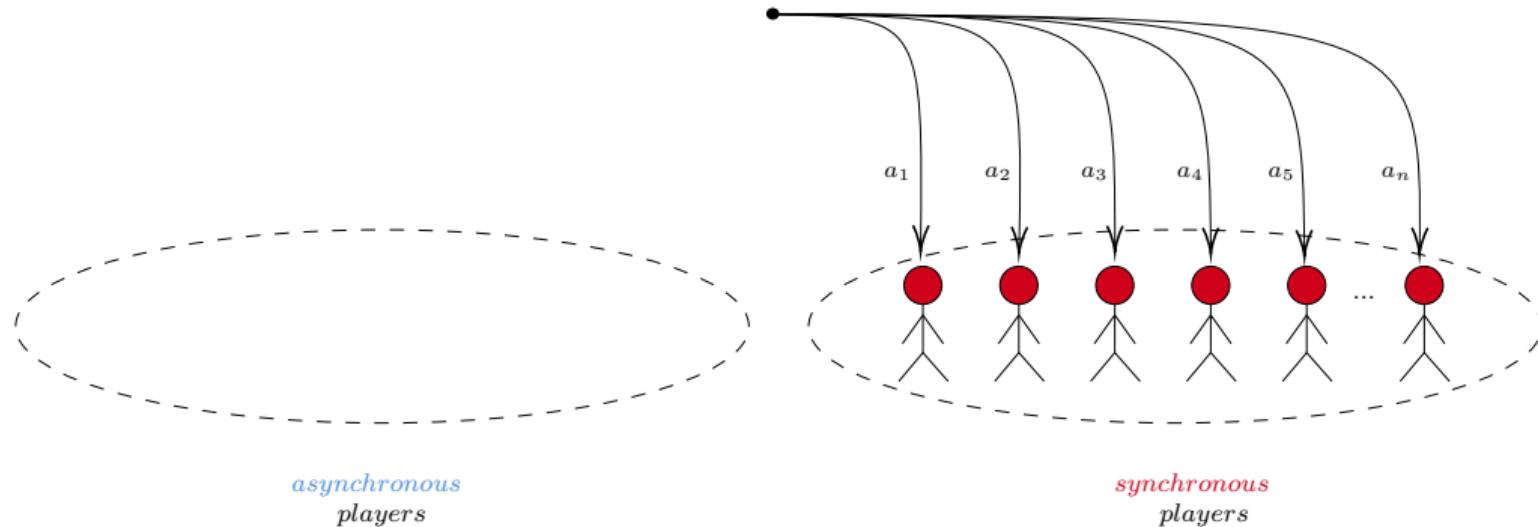
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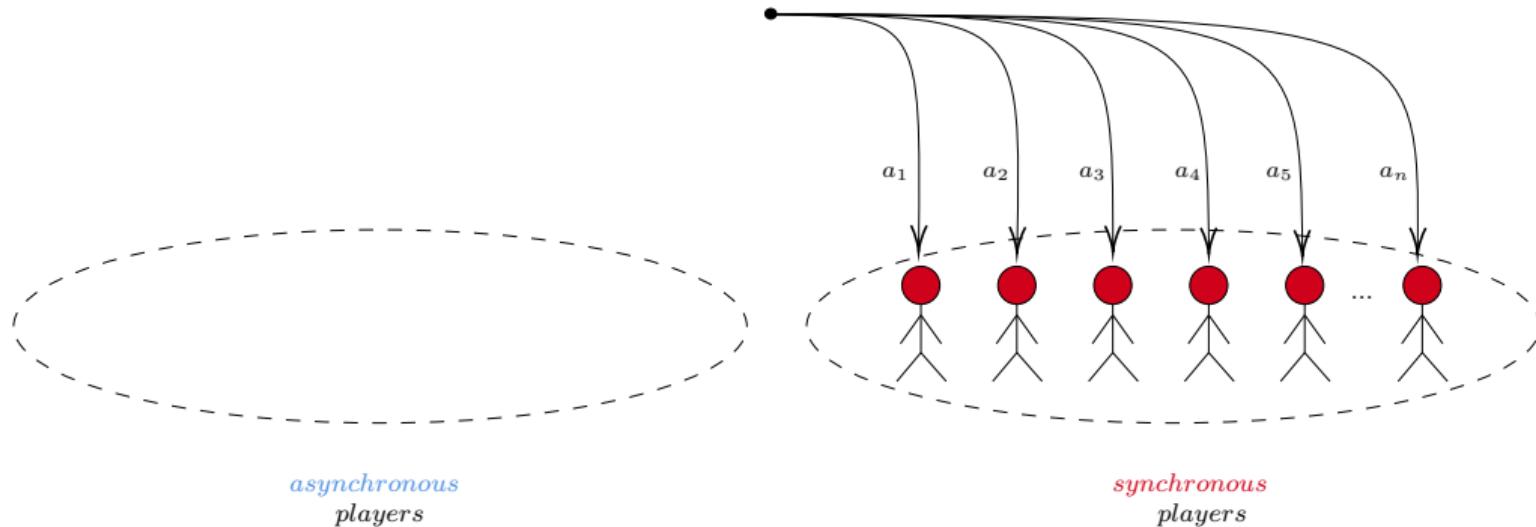


In the long run

→ We expect players to play the action profiles drawn from the current empirical distributions to stabilize the play at an equilibrium point.

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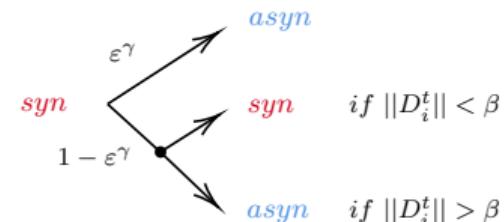
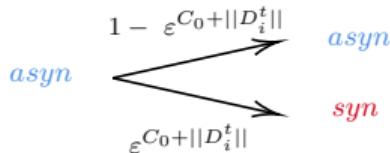


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Algorithm Analysis

Mood dynamics

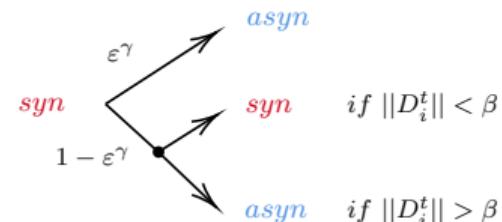
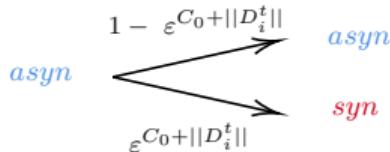


Characteristics of the stochastic process

- ▶ Transition probabilities depend on the regrets and a perturbation parameter $\varepsilon > 0$
- ▶ The stochastic process $\mathbf{X}^t = (X_1^t, \dots, X_n^t)$ describing players' states is a perturbed non-homogeneous Markov chain
- ▶ The Markov chain is defined over a infinitely countable state spaces
- ▶ For a regularly perturbed homogenous Markov chain, the process spends almost all time in the stochastically stable states when $\varepsilon \rightarrow 0$

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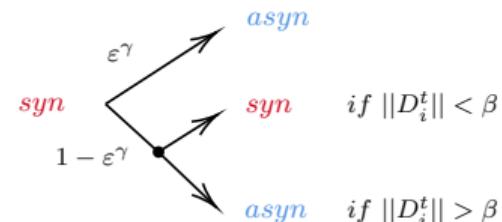
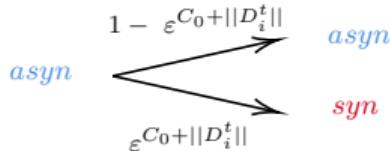


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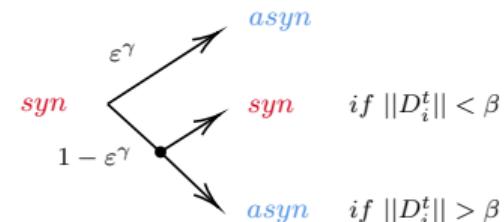
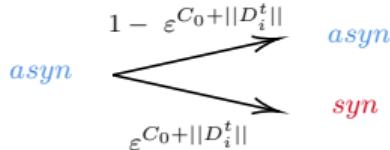


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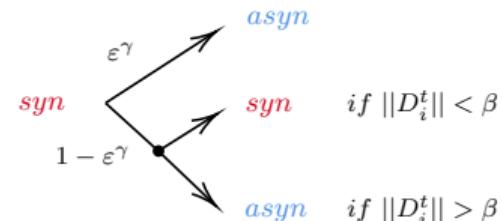
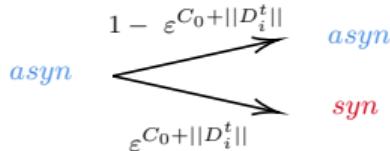


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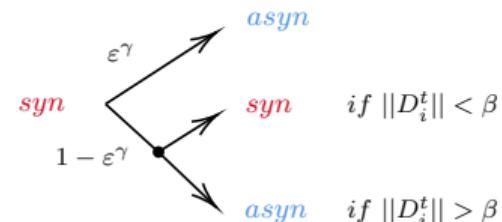
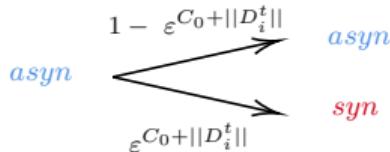


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Simulation Results

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Table 2: Utility matrix.

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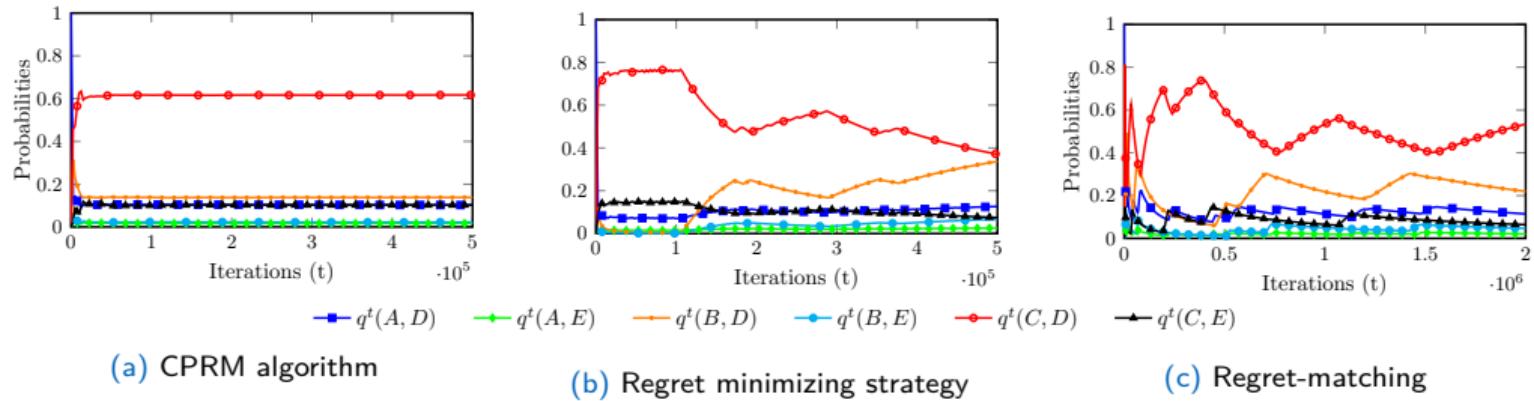
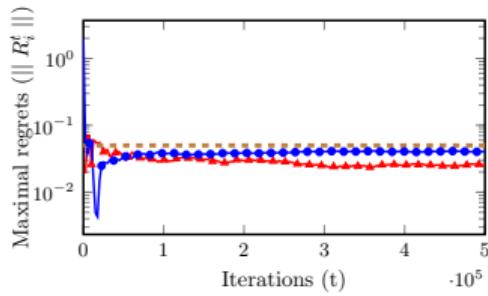
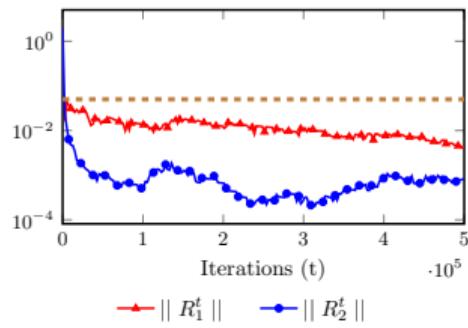


Figure 3: Evolution of the empirical distribution over action profiles.

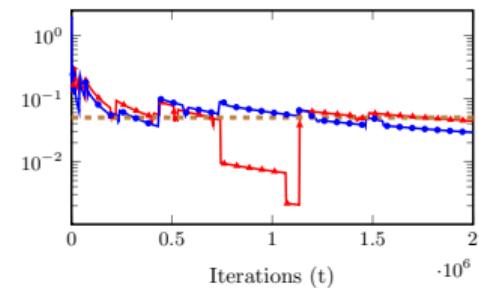
Simulation Results



(a) CPRM algorithm.



(b) Regret minimizing strategy.



(c) Regret-matching.

Figure 4: Evolution of players' regrets for the three algorithms.

Time-varying Game

	D	E	
A	(2, 29)	(16, 7)	
B	(4, 7)	(6, 13)	
C	(4, 4)	(6, 6)	

	D	E	
A	(2, 29, 2)	(16, 7, 8)	
B	(4, 7, 2)	(6, 13, 0)	
C	(4, 4, 1)	(6, 6, 5)	

X

	D	E	
A	(9, 4, 0)	(4, 1, 4)	
B	(8, 0, 1)	(6, 7, 2)	
C	(11, 9, 3)	(2, 0, 4)	

Y

	D	E	
A	(2, 29)	(16, 7)	
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X

Figure 5: Sequence of stage games in the dynamic case.

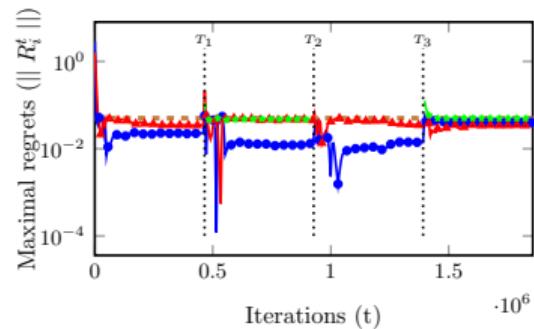


Figure 6: Evolution of maximal regrets

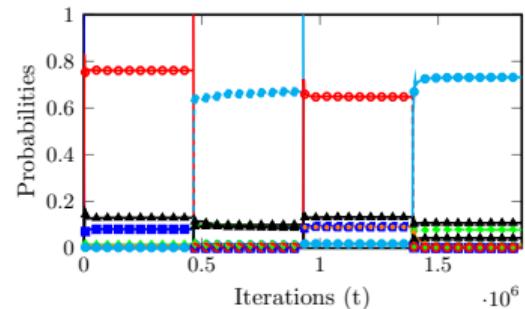


Figure 7: Evolution of the empirical distribution

Application to a Congestion Game

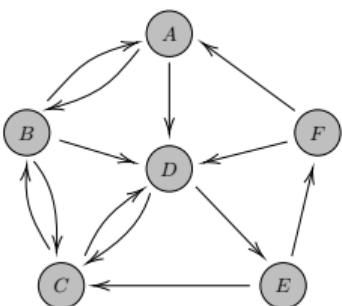


Figure 8: Network graph

Player	Source node	Destination node
1	B	F
2	B	E
3	D	B
4	F	E

Figure 9: Source-destination nodes for each player

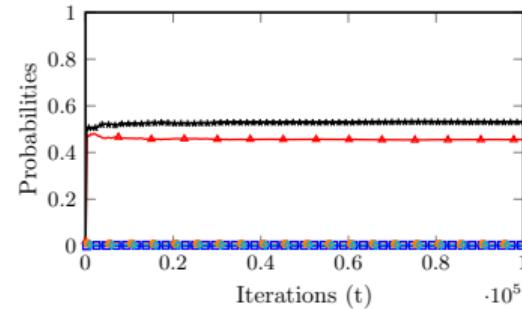


Figure 10: Evolution of the empirical distribution

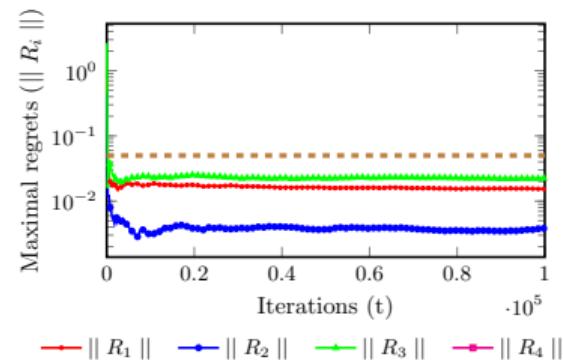


Figure 11: Evolution of maximal regrets

Part 2 : Constrained Correlated Equilibria

Constrained Correlated Equilibrium Strategies

Definition 1 – Correlated equilibrium (Aumann, 1974)

A correlated equilibrium of G is a pair (d, α^*) where $\alpha^* : \Omega \rightarrow \mathcal{A}$ is a correlated strategy profile such that

$$\forall i \in \mathcal{N}, \forall \alpha'_i \in \mathcal{S}_{i,d} \quad \sum_{\omega \in \Omega} q(\omega) u_i(\alpha_i^*(\omega), \alpha_{-i}^*(\omega)) \geq \sum_{\omega \in \Omega} q(\omega) u_i(\alpha'_i(\omega), \alpha_{-i}^*(\omega)) \quad (4)$$

	P	A
P	8, 8	3, 10
A	10, 3	0, 0

Table 3: Utility matrix of the game of Chicken.

- ▶ $\Omega = \{H, M, L\}$
- ▶ $\mathcal{P}_1 = \{\{H\}, \{M, L\}\}$ and $\mathcal{P}_2 = \{\{H, M\}, \{L\}\}$
- ▶ $q(H) = q(M) = q(L) = 1/3$

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Constrained Correlated Equilibrium Strategies

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	<i>L</i> $\mapsto P$ <i>L</i> ^c $\mapsto P$	<i>L</i> $\mapsto A$ <i>L</i> ^c $\mapsto A$	<i>L</i> $\mapsto A$ <i>L</i> ^c $\mapsto P$	<i>L</i> $\mapsto P$ <i>L</i> ^c $\mapsto A$
<i>H</i> $\mapsto P$ <i>H</i> ^c $\mapsto P$	8, 8	3, 10	6.33, 8.67	4.67, 9.33
<i>H</i> $\mapsto A$ <i>H</i> ^c $\mapsto A$	10, 3	0, 0	6.67, 2	3.33, 1
<i>H</i> $\mapsto A$ <i>H</i> ^c $\mapsto P$	8.67, 6.33	2, 6.67	7, 7	3.67, 6
<i>H</i> $\mapsto P$ <i>H</i> ^c $\mapsto A$	9.33, 4.67	1, 3.33	6, 3.67	4.33, 4.33

Figure 12: Extension of the game of Chicken.

	<i>L</i> $\mapsto P$ <i>L</i> ^c $\mapsto P$	<i>L</i> $\mapsto A$ <i>L</i> ^c $\mapsto A$	<i>L</i> $\mapsto A$ <i>L</i> ^c $\mapsto P$	<i>L</i> $\mapsto P$ <i>L</i> ^c $\mapsto A$
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Constrained Correlated Equilibrium Strategies

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Constrained Correlated Equilibrium Strategies

	$L \mapsto P$ $L^c \mapsto P$	$L \mapsto A$ $L^c \mapsto A$	$L \mapsto A$ $L^c \mapsto P$	$L \mapsto P$ $L^c \mapsto A$
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Figure 13: Extension of the game of Chicken.

	$L \mapsto P$ $L^c \mapsto P$	$L \mapsto A$ $L^c \mapsto A$	$L \mapsto A$ $L^c \mapsto P$	$L \mapsto P$ $L^c \mapsto A$
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Figure 14: Constrained extension of the game of Chicken.

Definition 4 – Constrained Correlated equilibrium (Boufous et al., 2024)

A constrained correlated equilibrium of G is a triplet $(d, \mathcal{R}_d, \alpha^*)$ where d is a correlation device, \mathcal{R}_d is a coupled constraint set in G_d and α^* a correlated strategy profile such that, $\alpha^* \in \mathcal{R}_d$ and for any $i \in \mathcal{N}$, for any $\alpha'_i \in \mathcal{S}_{i,d}$ such that $(\alpha'_i, \alpha_{-i}^*) \in \mathcal{R}_d$,

$$\sum_{\omega \in \Omega} q(\omega) [u_i(\alpha_i^*(\omega), \alpha_{-i}^*(\omega)) - u_i(\alpha'_i(\omega), \alpha_{-i}^*(\omega))] \geq 0 \quad (5)$$

Constrained Correlated Equilibrium Strategies

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Properties of Constrained Correlated Equilibrium Strategies

Consider a finite non-cooperative game $G = (\mathcal{N}, (\mathcal{A}_i)_{i \in \mathcal{N}}, (u_i)_{i \in \mathcal{N}})$, a correlation device $d = (\Omega, (\mathcal{P}_i)_{i \in \mathcal{N}}, q)$ and a constraint set $\mathcal{R}_d \subset \mathcal{S}_d$.

Proposition 1 : If (d, α^*) is a correlated equilibrium and $\alpha^* \in \mathcal{R}_d$, then $(d, \mathcal{R}_d, \alpha^*)$ is a constrained correlated equilibrium.

Proposition 2 : If $\alpha^* \in \mathcal{R}_d$ and for any $i \in \mathcal{N}$, for any α'_i s.t. $(\alpha'_i, \alpha_{-i}) \in \mathcal{R}_d$, for any $\omega \in \Omega$

$$\sum_{\omega' \in P_i(\omega)} q(\omega') [u_i(\alpha_i^*(\omega), \alpha_{-i}^*(\omega)) - u_i(\alpha'_i(\omega'), \alpha_{-i}^*(\omega'))] \geq 0 \quad (6)$$

then $(d, \mathcal{R}_d, \alpha^*)$ is a constrained correlated equilibrium.

Proposition 3 : The triplet $(d, \mathcal{R}_d, \alpha^*)$ is a constrained correlated equilibrium if and only if $\alpha^* \in \mathcal{R}_d$ and for any $i \in \mathcal{N}$, for any $\alpha'_i \in \mathcal{S}_{i,d}$,

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Constraints induced by a set of feasible probability distributions

- Let $\mathcal{C} \subseteq \Delta(\mathcal{A})$ be a set of probability distributions. For each correlation device d ,

$$\mathcal{R}_d = \{\alpha \in \mathcal{S}_d \mid p_\alpha \in \mathcal{C}\} \quad (8)$$

- Performance measures in many applications can be expressed in terms of probability distribution over action profiles. Examples include applications in smart grids, wireless networks, etc.

- Constraints on the social welfare : $\sum_{i \in \mathcal{N}} \sum_{a \in \mathcal{A}} p(a) u_i(a) \geq D_1$

- Constraints on the Nash product : $\prod_{i \in \mathcal{N}} \left(\sum_{a \in \mathcal{A}} p(a) u_i(a) \right) \geq D_2$

Theorem 1 – Characterization of the Set of Constrained Correlated Equilibrium Distributions

Let G be a finite non-cooperative game and \mathcal{C} a set of feasible probability distributions. The distribution $p \in \Delta(\mathcal{A})$ is a constrained correlated equilibrium distribution if and only if for any player $i \in \mathcal{N}$, for any strategy $\beta_i : \mathcal{A}_i \rightarrow \mathcal{A}_i$, if $z_{\beta_i, p} \in \mathcal{C}$, then

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Let G be a finite non-cooperative game and \mathcal{C} a set of feasible probability distributions. The distribution $p \in \Delta(\mathcal{A})$ is a constrained correlated equilibrium distribution if and only if for any player $i \in \mathcal{N}$, for any strategy $\beta_i : \mathcal{A}_i \rightarrow \mathcal{A}_i$, if $z_{\beta_i, p} \in \mathcal{C}$, then

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Existence of Constrained Correlated Equilibria

Consider the following two-player game:

	<i>L</i>	<i>R</i>
<i>U</i>	(2, 2)	(1, 1)
<i>D</i>	(3, 0)	(0, 5)

Figure 13: Two-player game in matrix form.

Let $\mathcal{C} \subset \Delta(\mathcal{A})$ be a feasible set of probability distributions such that,

$$\mathcal{C} = \{p \in \Delta(\mathcal{A}) \mid p(U, L) = 1 \text{ or } p(U, R) = 1 \text{ or } p(D, L) = 1 \text{ or } p(D, R) = 1\} \quad (10)$$

- ▶ The set of feasible strategies is the set of pure action profiles
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Constrained Correlated Equilibria of the Mixed Extension

Define the mixed extension of G by the game $\Delta G = (\mathcal{N}, (\Delta(\mathcal{A}_i))_{i \in \mathcal{N}}, (u_i)_{i \in \mathcal{N}})$ where

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Let d be a correlation device and ΔG_d be the extension of ΔG by d . The set of strategies of player i in ΔG_d is

$$\tilde{\mathcal{S}}_{i,d} = \{\gamma_i : \Omega \rightarrow \Delta(\mathcal{A}_i) \mid \gamma_i \text{ is } \mathcal{P}_i\text{-measurable}\} \quad (11)$$

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Computation of Constrained Correlated Equilibria

maximize 0

$$\text{s.t. } p(a) \geq 0 \quad \forall a \in \mathcal{A}, \quad \sum_{a \in \mathcal{A}} p(a) = 1 \quad (13)$$

$$\forall i \in \mathcal{N}, \forall \beta_i : \mathcal{A}_i \rightarrow \mathcal{A}_i$$

$$\sum_{a \in \mathcal{A}} p(a) [u_i(a) - u_i(\beta_i(a_i), a_{-i})] \geq 0. \quad (14)$$

maximize 0

$$\text{s.t. } p(a) \geq 0 \quad \forall a \in \mathcal{A}, \quad \sum_{a \in \mathcal{A}} p(a) = 1 \quad (15)$$

$$\forall i \in \mathcal{N}, \forall \beta_i : \mathcal{A}_i \rightarrow \mathcal{A}_i \text{ s.t. } z_{\beta_i, p} \in \mathcal{C}$$

$$\sum_{a \in \mathcal{A}} p(a) [u_i(a) - u_i(\beta_i(a_i), a_{-i})] \geq 0, \quad (16)$$

$$p \in \mathcal{C} \quad (17)$$

Assuming linear constraints e.g., $\mathcal{C} = \{p \in \Delta(\mathcal{A}) \mid Fp \leq 0\}$, we show that the problem of computing a constrained correlated equilibrium distribution can be formulated as a Mixed-Integer Linear Program.

Computation of Constrained Correlated Equilibria

maximize 0

$$\text{s.t. } p(a) \geq 0 \quad \forall a \in \mathcal{A}, \quad \sum_{a \in \mathcal{A}} p(a) = 1 \quad (13)$$

$$\forall i \in \mathcal{N}, \forall \beta_i : \mathcal{A}_i \rightarrow \mathcal{A}_i$$

$$\sum_{a \in \mathcal{A}} p(a) [u_i(a) - u_i(\beta_i(a_i), a_{-i})] \geq 0. \quad (14)$$

maximize 0

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Assuming linear constraints e.g., $\mathcal{C} = \{p \in \Delta(\mathcal{A}) \mid Fp \leq 0\}$, we show that the problem of computing a constrained correlated equilibrium distribution **can be formulated as a Mixed-Integer Linear Program**.

Simulation Example

	P	A
P	8, 8	3, 10
A	10, 3	0, 0

Table 3: Game of Chicken

$$SW(q) = \sum_{i \in \mathcal{N}} u_i(q) \quad (18)$$

where $u_i(q) = \sum_{a \in \mathcal{A}} q(a) u_i(a)$

- ▶ Feasible utilities in green
- ▶ CE utilities in yellow
- ▶ CCE utilities in red

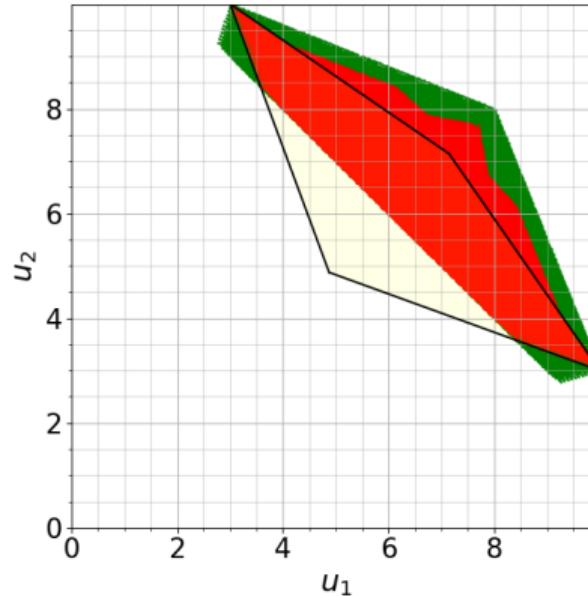


Figure 14: Sets of Utilities of the two players with $SW \geq 12$

Simulation Results

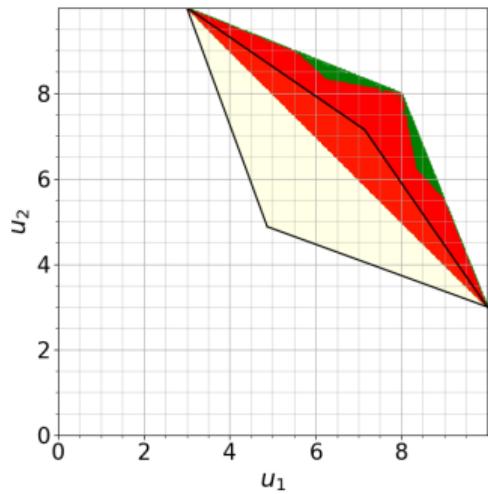


Figure 15: Sets of Utilities of the two players with $SW \geq 13$

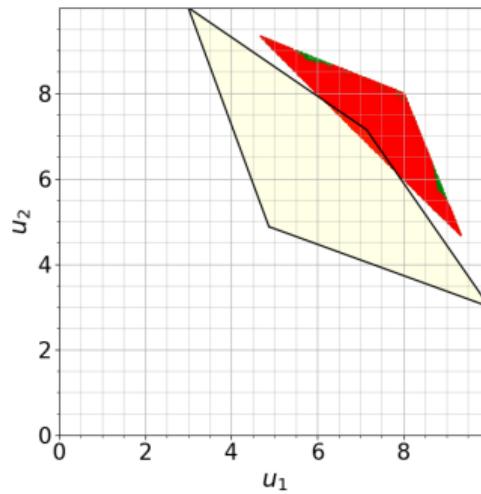


Figure 16: Sets of Utilities of the two players with $SW \geq 14$

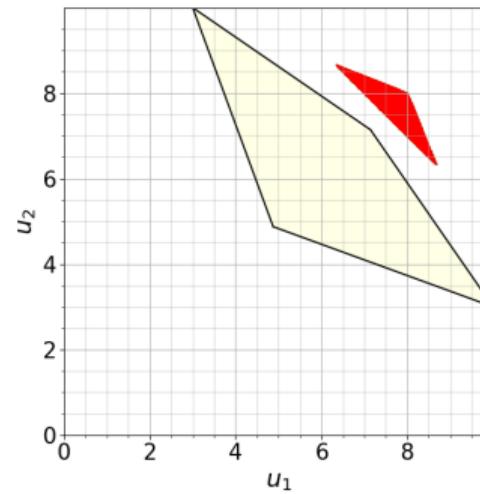


Figure 17: Sets of Utilities of the two players with $SW \geq 15$

- ▶ The set may not be convex
- ▶ There are constrained correlated equilibria outside the set of correlated equilibrium distributions

Simulation Results

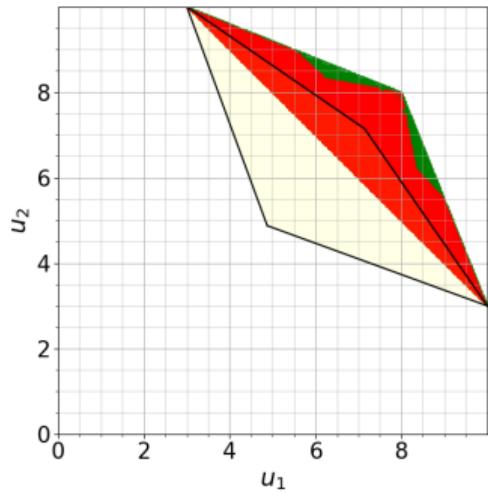


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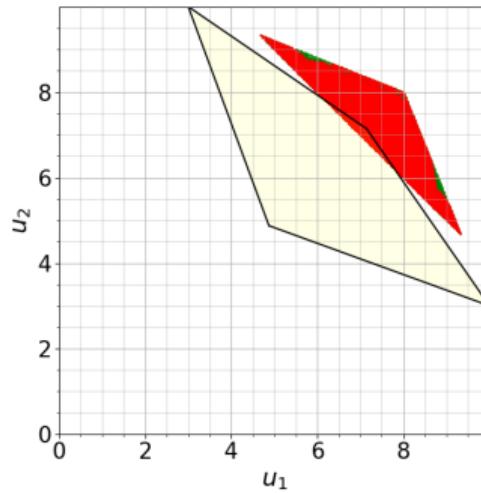


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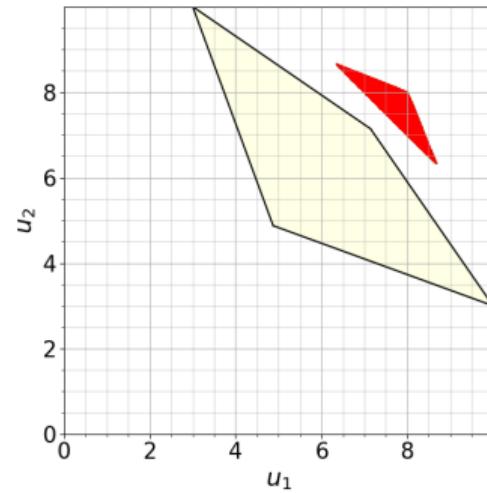


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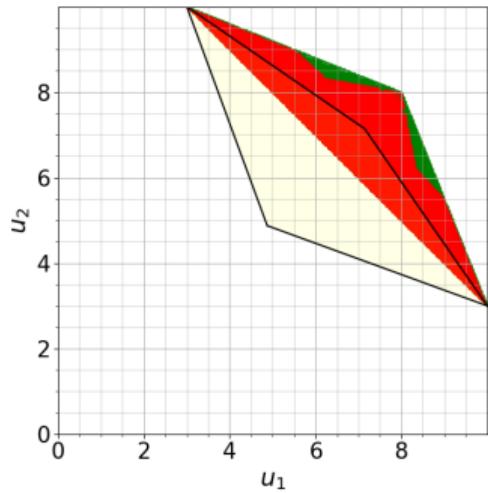


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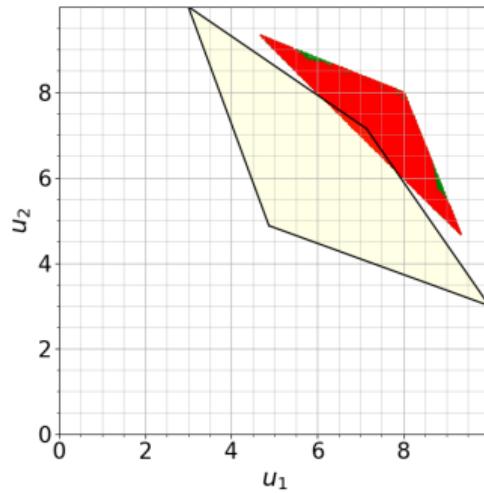


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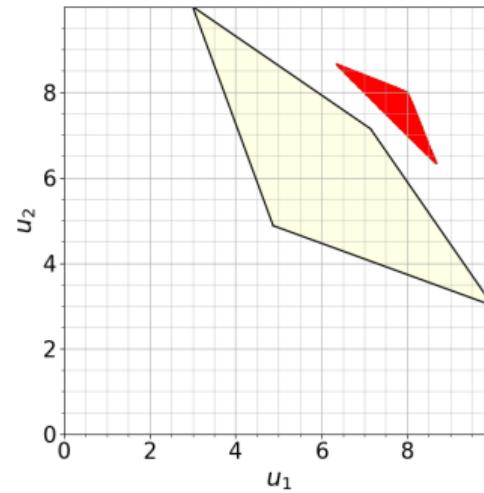


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Conclusion & Highlight of Contributions

► A learning rule to converge towards a correlated equilibrium distribution

- ▶ Empirical evidence of convergence of the distribution to a constrained correlated equilibrium
- ▶ A Markov chain models the learning algorithm
- ▶ The algorithm is adaptive to changes in games e.g., payoff functions or number of players

► Arbitrary constraints and arbitrary correlation device

- ▶ Characterizations of Equilibrium Strategies
 - ▶ Definition through generalized Nash equilibrium and correlated equilibrium with alternative characterizations
- ▶ Properties and relationship to (unconstrained) Correlated Equilibria
 - ▶ A feasible correlated equilibrium is a constrained correlated equilibrium
 - ▶ The set of constrained correlated equilibrium distributions may not be convex
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► Constraints on probability distributions

- ▶ Characterization of constrained correlated equilibrium distributions
 - ▶ Closed-form expression of the set of constrained correlated equilibrium distribution
- ▶ Conditions of Existence
 - ▶ There does not always exist a constrained correlated equilibrium in finite games
- ▶ Constrained correlated equilibrium distributions of the mixed extension of a game
 - ▶ Every constrained correlated equilibrium distribution of ΔG is a constrained correlated equilibrium distribution of G
- ▶ Computation of linearly constrained correlated equilibria

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Open Perspectives

► Research Questions

- ▶ Are there any theoretical guarantees of convergence to the a correlated equilibrium distribution?
- ▶ Connection to Bayesian rationality still holds in the presence of constraints ?
- ▶ What happens in the case of infinite games ?
- ▶ Existence problem should be studied for weaker or alternative assumptions
- ▶ Study of the problem of computing constrained correlated equilibria (complexity, feasibility)

► Some Unexplored Topics

- ▶ Learning rule leading to a specific correlated equilibrium (e.g., social welfare maximizing)
 - ▶ Learning with constraints
 - ▶ Subjective correlated equilibrium
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- ▶ Potential applications of constrained correlated equilibria and learning correlated equilibria in various fields
 - ▶ Mobile Edge Computing Systems
 - ▶ Wireless Networks with constraints
 - ▶ Engineering and beyond

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Thank you!



Questions?

For more information:

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Computation of Constrained Correlated Equilibria

Mixed-Integer Linear Program

$$\mathbf{p} \geq 0, \Sigma_{\mathbf{a} \in \mathcal{A}} \mathbf{p}(\mathbf{a}) = 1, F\mathbf{p} \leq 0 \quad (19)$$

$$\left[U_i - U_i B_{\beta_i} \right] \mathbf{p} \leq M_i \times \mathbf{y}_{\beta_i} \quad \forall i \in \mathcal{N}, \quad \forall \beta_i \quad (20)$$

$$FB_{\beta_i} \mathbf{p} \geq -K \left(1 - \mathbf{y}_{\beta_i} \right) + \delta \quad \forall i \in \mathcal{N}, \quad \forall \beta_i \quad (21)$$

$$FB_{\beta_i} \mathbf{p} \leq K \mathbf{y}_{\beta_i} \quad \forall i \in \mathcal{N}, \quad \forall \beta_i \quad (22)$$

$$\mathbf{y}_{\beta_i} \in \{0, 1\} \quad \forall i \in \mathcal{N}, \quad \forall \beta_i \quad (23)$$