

Álvaro Zúñiga-Cordero

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RESEARCH INTERESTS

Economic inequality; political economy; trade; migration; applied econometrics.

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

University of Namur (UNamur) Postdoctoral Researcher, Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions COFUND C2W	2024–present
World Inequality Lab (WIL), Paris School of Economics (PSE) Coordinator of Studies for Central America and the Caribbean	2023–present
Centre d'Économie de la Sorbonne (CES), Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne Teaching and Research Fellow (ATER)	2022–2023
Paris School of Economics (PSE) & Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne PhD Candidate in Economics	2018–2024

EDUCATION

Ph.D. in Economics Paris School of Economics (PSE) & Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne Thesis: <i>Three essays on income inequality in Costa Rica</i> . Defence date: June 25, 2024. Supervisor: Ariell Reshef. Thesis committee: David Margolis and Thomas Piketty. Referees: Matilde Bombardini and Noam Yuchtman. Jury members: Olle Folke and Sergei Guriev.	2024
European Doctoral Program in Quantitative Economics (EDP) London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE)	2021–2022
Master of Economics: Analysis and Policy in Economics (APE) Paris School of Economics (PSE) & School for Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences (EHESS) Thesis: <i>Income Inequality in Costa Rica: An Inquiry Towards Distributional National Accounts</i> Supervisor: Facundo Alvaredo; referee: Thomas Piketty	2018
Bachelor of Economics & Bachelor of Sociology University of Costa Rica (UCR)	
Bilingual International Baccalaureate (IB) Li Po Chun United World College of Hong Kong	

PUBLICATIONS, BOOK CHAPTERS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

- Chancel, L., Piketty, T., Saez, E., Zucman, G. et al. (2022). [World Inequality Report 2022](#). World Inequality Lab. Contributor.
- Barrera, O., Leiva, A., Martínez-Toledano, C. & Zúñiga Cordero, Á. (2021). “Social Inequalities, Identity, and the Structure of Political Cleavages in Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico, and Peru, 1952–2019”. In A. Gethin, C. Martínez-Toledano & T. Piketty (eds.), [Political Cleavages and Social Inequalities: A Study of Fifty Democracies, 1948–2020](#). Harvard University Press.

WORKING PAPERS

Distributional National Accounts Costa Rica: Inequality Measures from the National to the Local Level, 2000–2022

Solo-authored paper, ready to be submitted. 8 citations ([Google Scholar](#)) ([Link](#)).

Income Shocks, Economic Inequality, and Political Realignment: Voter Turnout and the Shift to a Multi-Party System in Costa Rica

Co-authored with [Ronald Alfaro-Redondo](#), job-market paper. 1 citation ([Google Scholar](#)) ([Link](#)).

Climate Change and Electoral Behaviour: Evidence from Extreme Weather Events in Costa Rica

Co-authored with [Lorenzo Trimarchi](#) and [Juan Robalino](#).

Social Inequalities, Identity, and the Structure of Political Cleavages in Argentina, Chile, Costa Rica, Colombia, Mexico, and Peru, 1952–2019

With [Oscar Barrera](#), [Ana Leiva](#) and [Clara Martínez-Toledano](#). WID.world Working Paper No. 2021/11 ([HAL](#)). 5 citations ([Google Scholar](#)). Media coverage by [El País](#) (Spain) regarding the political situation in Colombia and [El País](#) (Spain) regarding the political situation in Chile.

SELECTED WORK IN PROGRESS

Airbnb Penetration, Housing Prices, and Distributional Impacts: Evidence from Italy since 2016

With [Lorenzo Trimarchi](#) and Giorgio Ferroni.

Changes in the Offer of Higher Education and Labour Market Outcomes

The effect of regional university campuses on the location choices of multinational companies in Costa Rica (2000–2022).

Wealth and Income Inequality of Central America and the Caribbean

With [Ignacio Flores](#) and [Yajna Govind](#).

Survey Evidence on Redistributive Preferences in the Americas: From Taxing the Rich to Support for International Transfers

RESEARCH GRANTS

Mini-Grant (x2), World Inequality Lab (WIL), France, 10,000 EUR	2025
Mobility and Congress funding, Fund for Scientific Research (FNRS), Belgium, 5,900 EUR	2025
APSA Travel Grant, APSA, United States, 400 USD	2025
Mobility and Congress funding, Fund for Scientific Research (FNRS), Belgium, 1,500 EUR	2024
ADRES Grant Program, ADRES, 400 EUR	2024
Research Grant EUR PGSE, PSE & French National Research Agency (ANR), 2,360 EUR	2022
International Mobility Grant, PSE, 5,500 EUR	2021
Research Grant EUR PGSE, PSE & French National Research Agency (ANR), 2,400 EUR	2021
Aid for the International Mobility of Doctoral Students, Université Paris 1, 3,000 EUR	2020
Research Grant EUR PGSE, PSE & French National Research Agency (ANR), 1,500 EUR	2019
Ph.D. Grant, Doctoral School 465 Économie Panthéon-Sorbonne, 100,000 EUR	2018–2022

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Paris School of Economics (PSE)

International Trade (graduate, in English), with T. Verdier & M. Parenti	2023–2025
International Trade (graduate, in English), with T. Verdier	2022–2023

Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne

Introduction to Econometrics (undergraduate, in French), with C. Doz & T. Broer	2022–2023
International Trade (undergraduate, in English), with L. Marchal	2022–2023
Introduction to Econometrics (undergraduate, in French), with C. Doz & T. Broer	2019–2020
International Trade (undergraduate, in French), with L. Fontagné & M. Bas	2018–2020
Introduction to Economics (undergraduate, in French), with N. Canry, O. Havrylchyk & A. Greulich	2018–2019

SERVICE AND PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Refereeing

Journal of Law, Economics and Organization (JLEO)
European Association of Young Economists (EAYE)

Academic and Professional Service

Steering Committee member, Virtual Inequality Brownbag Seminar (VIB), CID (Michigan), PSE, LSE, WZB, UvA, EUI	2020–2021
Ph.D. Students' Representative, Paris School of Economics	2019–2021
APE Master's Students' Representative, Paris School of Economics	2017–2018

Volunteer Activities

Board Member (President), Costa Rican National Committee, United World Colleges	2003–2013
Facilitation Team Member, Regional Programme "Agentes de Cambio", Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES)	2009–2011

PRESENTATIONS AT SEMINARS, CONFERENCES AND SUMMER SCHOOLS

2026: Department of Political Science (KU) (*invited*); ASSA–AEA Annual Meeting 2026.

2025: Graduate Students in International Political Economy (GSIPE Online) ([Link](#)); Environmental Politics and Governance Online Seminar (EPG Online) ([Link](#)); American Political Science Association (APSA); GSIPE APSA Pre-Conference Workshop; Regional Economic Inequalities Conference (IfW–Kiel); Business and Democracy Seminar (CBS); Society for the Study of Economic Inequality (ECINEQ); European Political Science Association (EPSA); Lofoten International Symposium on Inequality and Taxation (LISIT); Department of Economics Seminar (UNamur); Economics and Finance Workshop for PhD & Post-doctoral Students (QMUL); AYEW – Applied Young Economists Workshop (Monash–Warwick) ([Link](#)); La Strada Seminar (Bocconi); Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna (*invited*); APSA Comparative Labour Workshop (Online); Trade Tea Seminar (Bocconi); III/LIS Comparative Economic Inequality Conference (LIS); ASSA–AEA Annual Meeting 2025.

2024: Programa Estado de la Nación (PEN); EEA–ESEM (Erasmus School of Economics); PhD Economics Virtual Seminar (EVS) ([Link](#)); European Public Choice Society (EPCS); Department of Economics Seminar (UNamur); Applied Economics Seminar (PSE); WIL Internal Seminar (PSE); ADRES Job Market Conference (ENS–Saclay); PjSE–CNRS Retreat.

2023: Conferencia de Economistas CR (BCCR-UCR); ECINEQ (AMSE); Central Bank of Costa Rica (BCCR); Applied Economics Seminar (PSE); European Doctoral Program Jamboree (PSE); GPET Day (PSE); Research Institute in Economic Sciences (IIICE–UCR); Doctorissimes (Paris 1).

2022: Student Labour Seminar (LSE); PSPE Work in Progress Seminar (LSE); International Inequalities Institute PhD Seminar (LSE); London Inequality Workshop (KCL); LACIR Workshop (IDB–LACIR); GSIE Seminar (Paris 1 & PSE).

2021: Virtual Inequality Brownbag Seminar (VIB) (Online); GSIE Seminar (Paris 1 & PSE); Institutional Economics Seminar (UNA); Interdisciplinary Dialogues in Sociology and Economics (UCR); World Inequality Conference (PSE & WIL).

2020: Social Research Institute (IIS–UCR); Programa Estado de la Nación (PEN).

2019: Research Methods for Sustainable Development Summer School (Columbia University); Inequality by the Numbers (CUNY); Migration Economics (PSE Summer School).

EXTRA-CURRICULAR STUDIES

Arabic Initiation Diploma,	
Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales (INALCO)	2018–2020
Stockbroker preparation course, Fundeval, Bolsa Nacional de Valores	2012
Stock market analysis; Accountancy and financial analysis; Statistics for Economics with SPSS, Department of Economics, UCR	2010

OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), United Nations
Short-term Consultant, Social Statistics Unit, Statistics Division 2023

Paris School of Economics (PSE) 2019–2020
Research Assistant to Professors Hillel Rapoport and Ariell Reshef

World Bank, Development Research Group (DECRG) 2017–2018
Short-term Consultant (Task Team Lead: Pierre Bachas)

Harvard Kennedy School (HKS) 2017
Research Assistant to Pierre Bachas, Anders Jensen and Gabriel Zucman

Paris School of Economics (PSE) 2016–2017
Research Assistant to Professor Karen Macours

Central Bank of Costa Rica, Economic Research Department 2013–2015
Junior Researcher, Doctoral Training Programme in Economics

HSBC Costa Rica / Banco Davivienda Costa Rica 2011–2013
Balance Sheet Management Trader (BSM), Global Markets Rotational Programme, GBM

Central Bank of Costa Rica, Department of Macroeconomic Statistics 2010–2011
Paid Internship

OTHER PUBLICATIONS, BOOK CHAPTERS AND WORKING PAPERS IN SPANISH

Chapters in National Reports

Capítulo 5: Educación superior. In *Noveno Informe Estado de la Educación* (2023).

Capítulo 2: Balance: Equidad e integración social. In *Informe Estado de la Nación 29* (2023).

Capítulo 5: Balance: Fortalecimiento de la democracia. In *Informe Estado de la Nación 29* (2023).

Capítulo 5: Balance: Fortalecimiento de la democracia. In *Informe Estado de la Nación 28* (2022).

Capítulo 5: Balance: Fortalecimiento de la democracia. In *Informe Estado de la Nación 27* (2021).

Capítulo 5: Balance: Fortalecimiento de la democracia. In *Informe Estado de la Nación 26* (2020).

Working papers

Perfiles y trayectorias laborales de las personas graduadas, with Román Forastelli, M., Pérez, E. & Jiménez, B. (2025).

Trayectoria laboral de las personas graduadas universitarias en Costa Rica 2001–2021. (2023).

Desigualdad y participación política, elecciones presidenciales: Costa Rica 2002–2018. (2021).

Desigualdad y participación política elecciones presidenciales y municipales: Costa Rica 2002–2020. (2020).

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Languages: Spanish (native); English & French (fluent); Arabic, German & Mandarin (basic).

Computer Skills: EViews, SPSS, Stata, Matlab, R, SAS, Visual Basic, QGIS, Python.

Honours and Awards:

Ph.D. Grant of the Doctoral School 465 Économie Panthéon-Sorbonne (2018–2022).

Scholarship of the International University City of Paris (CIUP) (2016–2017 and 2017–2018).

Social Security Scholarship to pursue master's studies in France (2015–2017), Campus France.

17th Ship for World Youth (SWY, 2005), Government of Japan & United Nations University.

Li Po Chun United World College of Hong Kong (2000–2002), full scholarship.

REFERENCES

Thomas Piketty

Paris School of Economics & School for Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences (EHESS)

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Ariell Reshef

Paris School of Economics & Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne

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Noam Yuchtman

London School of Economics & University of Oxford

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Distributional National Accounts Costa Rica: Inequality Measures from the National to the Local Level, 2000–2022

This paper constructs Distributional National Accounts (DINA) for Costa Rica, providing consistent income distribution series that integrate household surveys, macroeconomic accounts, and administrative records. The first objective is to correct official inequality estimates, which traditionally rely solely on household surveys. Leveraging the high quality of available data, this study combines two complementary administrative datasets: (1) social security microdata to adjust the incomes of wage earners and pensioners, and (2) tax microdata to refine estimates for self-employed workers and capital income. The resulting series show higher inequality than reflected in official figures for 2000–2022, with a marked deterioration in 2020, likely linked to the COVID-19 pandemic. The second objective is to generate revised inequality measures at the local level (county and district). By integrating household surveys, census data, social security records, and electoral data, I produce subnational inequality estimates that enable the analysis of spatial disparities and the impact of structural shocks, such as the 2009 financial crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic. The findings uncover substantial local-level variation that is otherwise obscured in national averages.

Income Shocks, Economic Inequality, and Political Realignment: Voter Turnout and the Shift to a Multi-Party System in Costa Rica

This study uses Costa Rica to examine how income shocks and inequality affect declining voter turnout and the rise of multi-party systems. Since 1998, Costa Rica has experienced a significant decrease in electoral participation, providing a unique perspective to investigate socio-economic factors influencing voter behaviour. By combining electoral registries with social security employer–employee records at the individual level, this research delivers novel evidence from a developing democracy with a robust electoral tradition. The findings indicate a positive relationship between income and voter turnout, significantly moderated by inequality. High inequality increases electoral mobilisation among voters at income extremes, while lower inequality enhances participation among middle-income groups. Individuals experiencing downward income mobility exhibit higher electoral engagement, suggesting economic hardship motivates voter turnout in the short term. These conclusions are validated through three identification strategies: random assignment of voters to polling stations within polling centres, income loss from unexpected mass layoffs, and income variations linked to changes in international agricultural prices. Income shocks have also reshaped electoral dynamics, especially affecting the historical PLN party, which shifted its support from middle-income voters to the poorest and wealthiest segments.

Climate Change and Electoral Behaviour: Evidence from Extreme Weather Events in Costa Rica

This paper examines the political implications of climate change by analysing how extreme weather events affect electoral outcomes in Costa Rica. Leveraging rich administrative data—including electoral results, individual-level turnout records, employer–employee information, disaster inventories, and geo-localised weather registries—the study integrates high-resolution environmental and electoral data to address a central question: How do extreme weather events affect voting behaviour? The analysis compares regions exposed to climate shocks over time using a difference-in-differences framework with staggered treatment and event-study designs. Preliminary findings suggest that direct experiences with climate change shape voter attitudes and participation, with responses varying by socioeconomic status and political predispositions. In progressive-voting areas, extreme weather increases support for environmental policies, while in conservative regions such events boost backing for evangelical populist alternatives. To explain this divergence, the study examines the timing and spatial distribution of evangelical churches, showing that extreme weather strengthens existing evangelical networks and mobilises electoral support for evangelical populist

candidates.