

Matteo Gamalerio

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Current position

2018 - Barcelona Institute of Economics (IEB, Universitat de Barcelona), Postdoctoral Research Fellow

Education

- 2017 PhD in Economics
University of Warwick
Advisors: Ben Lockwood, Mirko Draca
Thesis: "Rules, discretion and quality of government: evidence from Italian municipalities"
Committee: James Fenske, Andrea Tesei
- 2012 MSc in Economics (research)
London School of Economics and Political Science
- 2010 MSc in Economics
Catholic University of Milan, Italy
- 2007 B.Sc. in Economics and Management of Arts and Entertainment
Catholic University of Milan, Italy
- 2006 Erasmus Exchange program
University of Valladolid, Spain

Research Interests

Applied Econometrics, Political Economy, Public Economics, Economics of Migration.

Working papers

- M. Bordignon, M. Gamalerio, E. Slerca, G. Turati (September 2019). "The electoral tipping point"
- M. Gamalerio (September 2019). "Do national political parties matter? Evidence from Italian municipalities"
SUBMITTED
- M. Gamalerio (August 2019). "Fiscal rules and the selection of politicians: evidence from Italian municipalities"
Winner of the EEA Young Economist Award at the 2017 Annual Meeting of the European Economic Association
- M. Bordignon, M. Gamalerio, G. Turati (May 2019). "Manager or professional politician? Local fiscal autonomy and the skills of elected officials" Revision requested, *Regional Science and Urban Economics*

M. Gamalerio (April 2019). “Not welcome anymore: the effect of electoral incentives on the reception of refugees”

M. Gamalerio, M. Luca, M. Viskanic (November 2018). “Finding the Warmth of other Suns? Refugee Reception, Extreme Votes and Hate Crimes”

Teaching Experience

- 2018-2019 Public Finance – Lecturer
 Universitat de Barcelona
- 2017-2018 Econometrics 2 - EC338, micro-econometrics, Lecturer
 University of Warwick, Department of Economics
- 2017-2018 Econometrics - EC9760, Teaching Assistant
 Warwick Business School
- 2017-2018 EC9A3 – Advanced Econometric Theory (PhD)
 University of Warwick, Department of Economics
- 2015-2018 Econometrics 1 - EC226, Senior Tutor
 University of Warwick, Department of Economics
- 2016-2017 Introduction to statistics and Stata, Teaching Assistant
 Warwick Business School
- 2015-2017 Econometrics A - EC902/EC907 (MSc), Teaching Assistant
 University of Warwick, Department of Economics
- 2014-2016 Econometrics, Teaching Assistant
 Warwick Economics Summer School
- 2013-2015 Econometrics 1 - EC226, Teaching Assistant
 University of Warwick, Department of Economics

Research Experience and Other Employment

- 2019 Organizer of the IEB Workshop on Political Economy, Universitat de Barcelona
- 2016-2017 Research Assistant, Fernanda Brollo and Mirko Draca
 University of Warwick, Department of Economics
- 2015 Research Assistant, Fernanda Brollo and Juan Carlos Gozzi
 University of Warwick, Department of Economics
- 2015 Research Assistant, Thiemo Fetzer
 University of Warwick, Department of Economics

- 2014-2015 Research Assistant, Mirko Draca
University of Warwick, Department of Economics
- 2010-2011 Research Assistant, Massimo Bordignon and Gilberto Turati
Catholic University of Milan, Department of Economics

Referee

Journal of Public Economics, American Political Science Review, American Journal of Political Science, Canadian Journal of Economics, European Journal of Political Economy, International Tax and Public Finance, Economics Bulletin

Seminars Presentations and Conferences

- 2019 *The electoral tipping point*
Migration flows: implication for education, health, voting, workshop at Catholic University, Milano
- Finding the Warmth of other Suns? Refugee Reception, Extreme Votes and Hate Crimes*
IEB (Universitat de Barcelona); Forced Displacement, Asylum Seekers and Refugees: Economics Aspects and Policy Issues, workshop at Queen Mary University – London, X IBEO Workshop-Alghero (scheduled)
- Fiscal rules and the selection of politicians: evidence from Italian municipalities*
Midwest Political Science Association - Chicago, ZEW Public Finance Conference, American Political Science Association – Washington DC, Conference of Italian Public Economics Society (SIEP), Torino
- Not welcome anymore: the effect of electoral incentives on the reception of refugees*
Workshop on Populism and the Rise of the Radical Right, Uppsala University
- 2018 *Not welcome anymore: the effect of electoral incentives on the reception of refugees*
IEB (Universitat de Barcelona), Royal Economic Society Conference; ZEW Public Finance Conference, Kiel Institute, 4th Workshop on the Economics of Migration (IAB), Barcelona GSE Summer Forum, IX IBEO Workshop-Alghero;
- Fiscal rules and the selection of politicians: evidence from Italian municipalities*
IEB (Universitat de Barcelona), Joint Research Centre, Ispra (Italy); Universita' della Svizzera Italiana, Lugano (Switzerland);
- 2017 *Not welcome anymore: the effect of electoral incentives on the reception of refugees*
CReAM/RWI Workshop on the economics of migration; Petralia Workshop (Job market boot camp); Advances in Political Economy and Public Economics Workshop, Max Planck Institute (Scheduled); 11th Workshop on Political Economy, Ifo Institute; European Winter Meeting – Econometric Society (Scheduled); 42nd SAEe meeting; RES PhD meeting;
- Fiscal rules and the selection of politicians: evidence from Italian municipalities*
Royal Economic Society Conference; RES Symposium of Junior Researchers; Warwick PhD Conference; Warwick Public Economics/Political Economy workshop; EEA- ESEM;

- 2016 *Do national political parties matter? Evidence from Italian municipalities*
Royal Economic Society Conference; First Marco Fanno Alumni Workshop, Unicredit, Milan;
Evidence-Based Economics Summer Meeting, Universities of Munich, Erlangen-
Nuremberg and Regensburg;
- Manager or politician? The effect of local fiscal autonomy on political selection*
EEA-ESEM;
- 2015 *Do national political parties matter? Evidence from Italian municipalities*
Conference of Italian Public Economics Society (SIEP), Ferrara;
- Manager or politician? The effect of local fiscal autonomy on political selection*
VI Alghero Workshop on “Institutions, Individual Behaviour and Economic Outcomes”;
- 2014 *Manager or politician? The effect of local fiscal autonomy on political selection*
Canadian Public Economics Group; Political Economy Workshop, Catholic University of Milan;

Awards and Extra Curricular Achievements

- 2017 Paper “Fiscal rules and the selection of politicians: evidence from Italian municipalities”
Winner of the EEA Young Economist Award, EEA-ESEM 2017, Lisbon
Awarded by Unicredit & Universities Foundation
- 2012 ESRC DTC scholarship for 3 years of full-time study.
Awarded by the Graduate School of the University of Warwick
- 2010 “Marco Fanno” scholarship for graduate studies in economics, academic year 2011-2012.
Awarded by Unicredit & Universities Foundation
- 2010 Toefl certificate (Internet based test, final mark 101)
- 2010 GRE (Graduate Record Examination): quantitative 780/800
- 2008 Working Experience Abroad, Catholic University of Melbourne (Australia)
- 2007 Dele certificate (Diploma de Español como lengua extranjera, intermediate level, 95/100)

Skills

Languages: Italian (native), English (fluent), Spanish (fluent)
Computer: Stata, Excel, Latex, Scientific Workplace, Word

Personal information

Citizenship: Italian, British
Date and place of birth: 14th of November 1984, Milano (Italia)
Marital status: married

References

[Ben Lockwood](#)

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[Mirko Draca](#)

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Research papers – Abstracts

“The electoral tipping point” (with M. Bordinon, E. Slerca, G. Turati)

Why do anti-immigration parties have success in areas that host low shares of immigrants? Using regression discontinuity design, structural breaks search methods and data from a sample of Italian municipalities, we show that the relationship between the vote shares of anti-immigration parties and the share of immigrants follows a U-shaped curve, which exhibits a tipping-like behavior around a share of immigrants equal to 3.35 %. More specifically, we estimate that the vote share of the main Italian anti-immigration party (Lega Nord) is approximately 6 % points higher for municipalities below the threshold. Then, using data on local labour markets characteristics and on the individual incomes of natives and immigrants, we provide evidence which points at the competition in the local labour market between natives and immigrants as the more plausible explanation for the electoral success of anti-immigration parties in areas with low shares of immigrants. Alternative stories find less support in the data.

“Do national political parties matter? Evidence from Italian municipalities” SUBMITTED

Recently several countries have experienced a drop in popularity of national political parties, accompanied by the success of independent movements (e.g. “Civic Lists” in Italy). I exploit the success of “Civic Lists” in Italian municipalities and use them as a comparison group for party-affiliated politicians, to test whether national parties affect fiscal discipline. In particular, using a Regression Discontinuity Design (RDD), I show that party-affiliated mayors are more fiscally responsible: they run lower deficits, accumulate less debt and reduce expenditures. The effect is significant only for municipalities not constrained by fiscal rules. This suggests that national parties act as a substitute for fiscal rules in constraining politicians. Besides that, I provide evidence that the discipline of party-affiliated politicians is linked to better career prospects: party-affiliated mayors have a higher probability of being re-elected and better chances of being promoted to higher levels of government. Finally, the results are not driven by political orientation, alignment with the central government, the presence of criminal organizations nor by unobserved political ability.

“Fiscal rules and the selection of politicians: evidence from Italian municipalities” *Winner of the EEA Young Economist Award at the 2017 Annual Meeting of the European Economic Association*

Despite the wide adoption, there is little evidence on the consequences of fiscal rules for the quality of government. I use data from Italian municipalities to study how fiscal rules affect the selection of politicians. In 1999, the Italian government applied fiscal rules to all municipalities. In 2001, it removed them for municipalities with less than 5000 inhabitants. Using a Difference-in-Discontinuity design, which enables control for an institutionally mandated increase in the wage paid to politicians at the 5000 threshold, I show that fiscal rules negatively affect the level of education of politicians. The result highlights a trade-off to fiscal rules. Reducing policymaking discretion may alleviate inter-jurisdictional externalities, but it may also lower the quality of the political class.

“Manager or professional politician? Local fiscal autonomy and the skills of elected officials” (with M. Bordignon and G. Turati) Revision requested, *Regional Science and Urban Economics*

We provide a theoretical and empirical assessment of why local fiscal autonomy can affect the skills of elected officials in sub-national governments. We first develop a model of politics with different types of politicians and show that -- following a tax decentralization reform increasing local fiscal autonomy -- politicians with high administrative skills are elected in rich jurisdictions while politicians with high political skills are elected in poor ones. As a result, voter welfare increases only, or mainly, in rich jurisdictions. We then look for empirical support to these predictions by exploiting the decentralization reforms affecting Italian municipalities in the '90s. These reforms introduced both the direct election of the mayor and new autonomous tax tools for municipalities characterized by large differences in their tax bases. Our estimates -- robust to several alternative stories -- emphasize a differential change in elected officials at the municipal level between rich and poor jurisdictions. These findings provide a new explanation for the observed poor performance of local governments largely financed by grants.

“Not welcome anymore: the effect of electoral incentives on the reception of refugees”

Do electoral incentives affect immigration policies? I study this question in the setting of Italian municipalities making decisions about the reception of refugees. The localized control of the reception policy, combined with the exogenous timing of policy decisions and staggered elections, enables me to study the effect of electoral incentives on the reception of refugees. Although municipalities receive fiscal grants for hosting refugees, I find that the probability of opening a reception centre is 24 per cent lower for municipalities in the final year of the electoral term (i.e. just before new elections), compared to municipalities in other years of the term. The results suggest that electoral incentives may induce politicians to make decisions that are potentially detrimental from an economic perspective.

“Finding the Warmth of other Suns? Refugee Reception, Extreme Votes and Hate Crimes”

(with M. Viskanac and M. Luca)

Does refugee reception lead to more hate crimes against foreigners? What is the impact of refugee reception on extreme-right voting and which role does the media play in the transmission? Using data on Italian SPRAR refugee centres we show that the reception of refugees across Italian municipalities leads to a decrease in extreme-right voting and hate crimes against foreigners. We analyze which role media coverage can play in the transmission. Using an instrumental variables approach, we find that for the average assignment of 15 refugees per municipality the growth in vote shares for the extreme-right parties is decreased by 12.5 percentage points, which amounts to 2.25 percentage points looking at differences in vote shares. We also find that the hosting of 50 refugees leads to a reduction of about one hate crime over the period between 2013 and 2017. The effect on extreme voting is mainly driven by municipalities where local newspapers are less biased against migrants, where sport newspapers distribution is lower and where the local population has lower misperceptions of the presence of migrants.