

Research Statement

I am a research scientist at the Department of Economics and Management at the University of Luxembourg and a research affiliate at IZA. I am also the principal investigator of the research project “Digitalization, Change in Skills and Firms’ Hiring Difficulties” funded by the Luxembourg National Research Fund. I am an applied economist focusing on Labor Economics and the Economics of Migration. In most of my work, I combine new sources of data collected online with administrative data to implement causal analyses.

The core of my research agenda explores different dimensions of one of the most important controversies of the immigration public debate. For more than one century, opponents of immigration have claimed that foreign workers threaten natives’ labor market outcomes. In contrast, proponents of immigration have highlighted the economic benefits brought by these newcomers and argued that many jobs would stay vacant without the labor supply of foreign workers. Noiriel (2007)¹ documents an early version of this debate in the French Parliament in the late 19th century while Teitelbaum (2014)² shows that this represents the core of the US debate on high-skilled immigration since the 1950s. In most of my research, I revisit the different dimensions of this controversy for the 21st century.

I. The contribution of high-skilled immigration to their host economy

In the first strand of my research, I study the economic benefits brought by high-skilled immigrants to the economy of their host country. My job market paper titled “Recruitment Competition and Labor Demand for High-Skilled Foreign Workers” is the first research to directly test the causal impact of recruitment competition on firms’ labor demand for foreign workers in the US. Despite the importance of this argument in the immigration debate for decades, there was a lack of empirical evidence in the academic literature due to data constraints. I combine administrative data on Labor Condition Applications (LCAs) submitted as a first step to obtaining work visas with the near universe of job postings collected online to address this issue. I use a new instrumental variable strategy exploiting quasi-random variations in Venture Capital Investments in startups to predict variation in recruitment competition at the local labor market level. I find that a one standard deviation increase in the number of job postings advertised by local startups increases by 8% the number of LCAs submitted by employers on the market and increases by 3% the wages advertised in these LCAs.

In the paper titled “International College Students’ Impact on the US Skilled Labor Supply” joint with Michel Beine and Giovanni Peri, we have also studied the contribution of international graduates to the local skilled labor supply in the US. We combined administrative data US universities with the universe of employment authorizations delivered to international students who graduated from these universities to enter the labor market. We took advantage of this unique database to develop a new instrumental variable strategy and quantify the transition of international students from universities to the local labor market that was previously unknown. The results show that only a minority of international graduates enter the US labor market. They suggest significant human capital leakages and highlight the role of immigration policies. This paper is published in the Journal of Public Economics.

¹ Noiriel, G. (2007). *Immigration, antisémitisme et racisme en France (XIXe-XXe siècle): Discours publics, humiliations privées*. Fayard.

² Teitelbaum, M. S. (2014). *Falling behind? Boom, bust, and the global race for scientific talent*. Princeton University Press.

Michel Beine, Giovanni Peri, and I also have an ongoing project on “The Contribution of International College Students to Start-Ups in the US”. In this paper, we construct a unique database combining administrative data on US universities with online data on start-up founders who graduated from these universities. Using a similar IV approach, we estimate the causal impact of international enrolment in US colleges on start-up entrepreneurship. We also use a machine learning algorithm predicting the founders' origins from their first and last names to disentangle the direct effect on start-ups created by foreign graduates from the spillover effect on US founders. This research highlights the contribution of international students to US innovation and economic growth.

I also explore different barriers preventing immigrant workers from fully contributing to the economy of their destination country. In my “Cultural Differences and Immigrants’ Wages” paper, I have documented the association between cultural differences and immigrants’ lower economic integration. This paper is published in *Labour Economics*. In another ongoing project with Michel Beine, Giovanni Peri, and Sarah Schneider-Strawczynski, we study the impacts of “Hate Violence in US Colleges” on the enrolment and retention of international students as well as its consequences for universities' finances and attractivity. In future research, I would like to investigate the economic and political implications of hate violence more extensively.

II. The determinants of hiring difficulties

Over the past decades in several countries, employers have highlighted the existence of hiring difficulties to support the recruitment of immigrant workers. In another strand of my research, I explore the determinants of firms’ hiring difficulties. In an ongoing project titled “Digitalization, Change in Skill Distance Between Occupations and Workers Mobility: A Gravity Model Approach”, Arnaud Dupuy, Sara Signorelli, and I study how the digitalization of the economies has changed the skills required across occupations and enhanced imbalances between the labor demand and the labor supply for digital intensive occupations.

III. Collecting new data to document relevant issues for the Economics Profession

Finally, I also use my skills in online primary data collection to document various issues of interest for the Economics profession. In a paper titled “The Environmental Cost of the International Job Market for Economists”, Olivier Chanel, Alberto Prati and I have collected new data from the EconJobMarket platform. This enabled us to observe all the candidates and recruiters participating in the first stage of the international job market and compute the carbon footprint of this event. We proposed alternative scenarios and quantified their environmental impact to stimulate debate on the organization of this event. This paper is published in *Ecological Economics*.

In another paper titled “Scrambled Question Penalty in Multiple-choice Tests: New Evidence from French Undergraduate Students”, Marc Sangnier, Tanguy van Ypersele, and I have studied one policy designed to prevent students from cheating during exams and documented a heterogeneous adverse effect of this policy along the distribution of students’ test scores. This paper is published in *Economics Bulletin*.

In a final yet preliminary project, Olivier Chanel, Alberto Prati, and I are collecting a new database covering the universe of peer-reviewed Economics papers to document the evolution of interdisciplinary in the field. By comparing citations and references associated with each paper across different sources, we intend to quantify the degree of interdisciplinary, describe its evolution, and explore the barriers to its development. Therefore, we intend to inform funding agencies, research programs, and research institutions that promote this approach despite a lack of empirical evidence on the degree of interdisciplinary in the profession.