



The Competence Centre on Microeconomic Evaluation 2023 Yearbook



This document is a publication by the Joint Research Centre (JRC), the European Commission's science and knowledge service. It aims to provide evidence-based scientific support to the European policymaking process. The scientific output expressed does not imply a policy position of the European Commission. Neither the European Commission nor any person acting on its behalf is responsible for the use that might be made of this publication. For information on the methodology and quality underlying the data used in this publication for which the source is neither Eurostat nor other Commission services, users should contact the referenced source. The designations employed and the presentation of material on the maps do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the European Union concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

JRC137045

PDF ISBN 978-92-68-12871-8 ISSN 2600-5077 doi:10.2760/7336 KJ-BX-24-001-EN-N

Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2024

© European Union, 2024



The reuse policy of European Commission documents is implemented by the Commission Decision 2011/833/EU of 12 December 2011 on the reuse of Commission documents (OJ L 330, 14.12.2011, p. 39). Unless otherwise noted, the reuse of this document is authorised under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) licence (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>). This means that reuse is allowed provided appropriate credit is given and any changes are indicated.

For any use or reproduction of photos or other material that are not owned by the EU, permission must be sought directly from the copyright holders.

How to cite this report: European Commission, Joint Research Centre, Amer Mestre, J., Aquaro, M., Ardito, C., Berton, F., Brutti, Z., Canzian, G., Crivellaro, E., Di Novi, C., Freo, M., Granato, S., Guimaraes Dumangane, M.B., Haepp, T., Martinez Santos, F., Meroni E.C., Sasso, A., Schnepf, S. V., Serlenga, L., Serrano Alarcon, M., Verzillo, S., Vollbracht, I., *The Competence Centre on Microeconomic Evaluation – 2023 Yearbook*, Flisi, S., Paruolo, P., editors, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2024, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2760/7336>, JRC137045.

The Competence Centre on
Microeconomic Evaluation

2023 Yearbook



1. INTRODUCTION



People@CC-ME



*Josep
Amer Mestre*



*Michele
Aquaro*



*Chiara
Ardito*



*Eros
Belfiore*



*Fabio
Berton*



*Zelda
Brutti*



*Giulia
Canzian*



*Elena
Crivellaro*



*Cinzia
Di Novi*



*Montezuma
Dumangane*



*Sara
Flisi*



*Marzia
Freo*



*Silvia
Granato*



*Tobias
Haepf*



*Fernando
Martinez Santos*



*Elena
Meroni*



*Paolo Paruolo
Head of CC-ME*



*Irina
Prodan*



*Michaela Saisana
Head of Unit*



*Alessandro
Sasso*



*Sylke V.
Schnepf*



*Laura
Serlengo*



*Manuel
Serrano-Alarcon*



*Stefano
Verzillo*



*Ian Vallbracht
Deputy Head of Unit*



Foreword

The European Commission's Competence Centre on Microeconomic Evaluation (CC-ME) was founded on 19 May 2016 to support the Commission's role in evaluation. CC-ME is part of Unit JRC.S.3 'Science for Modelling, Monitoring and Evaluation'.

CC-ME builds on the experience of the Centre for Research on Impact Evaluation (CRIE), which started as a joint project of the Joint Research Centre (JRC) and the Commission's Directorate-General (DG) for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion in 2013. CRIE is now an integral part of CC-ME.

This brochure presents the highlights of CC-ME's activities in 2023.

Visit us

https://knowledge4policy.ec.europa.eu/microeconomic-evaluation_en

https://knowledge4policy.ec.europa.eu/microeconomic-evaluation/cc-me-tools_en (tools)

<https://eceuropaeu.sharepoint.com/sites/ORG-JrcCcMe> (for European Commission services only)

Email: ec-cc-me@ec.europa.eu (functional mailbox)

CC-ME open days

European Commission services can book a consultation with CC-ME by sending an email to the functional mailbox or visiting https://knowledge4policy.ec.europa.eu/microeconomic-evaluation/cc-me-open-days_en



Why and what

Mission

To enhance EU policies through data-driven micro-econometric analysis and to provide causal evidence of what works.

Activities

- Counterfactual impact evaluations (CIEs) and microeconomic analysis.
- Methodological support and quality review for impact evaluation.
- Capacity building on data collection, evaluation design and evaluation methodology.

Focus

Quantitative evaluation of EU policies contributing to the 'Better regulation' agenda, the European semester and EU spending programmes, in collaboration with all EU institutions and Member States.

Counterfactuals

What is counterfactual impact evaluation?

CIE compares the outcomes of individuals participating in a programme or firms/regions subject to a specific regulation (the treated group) with the outcomes of another group, similar in all respects to the treated one but for participation in the programme (the comparison or control group).

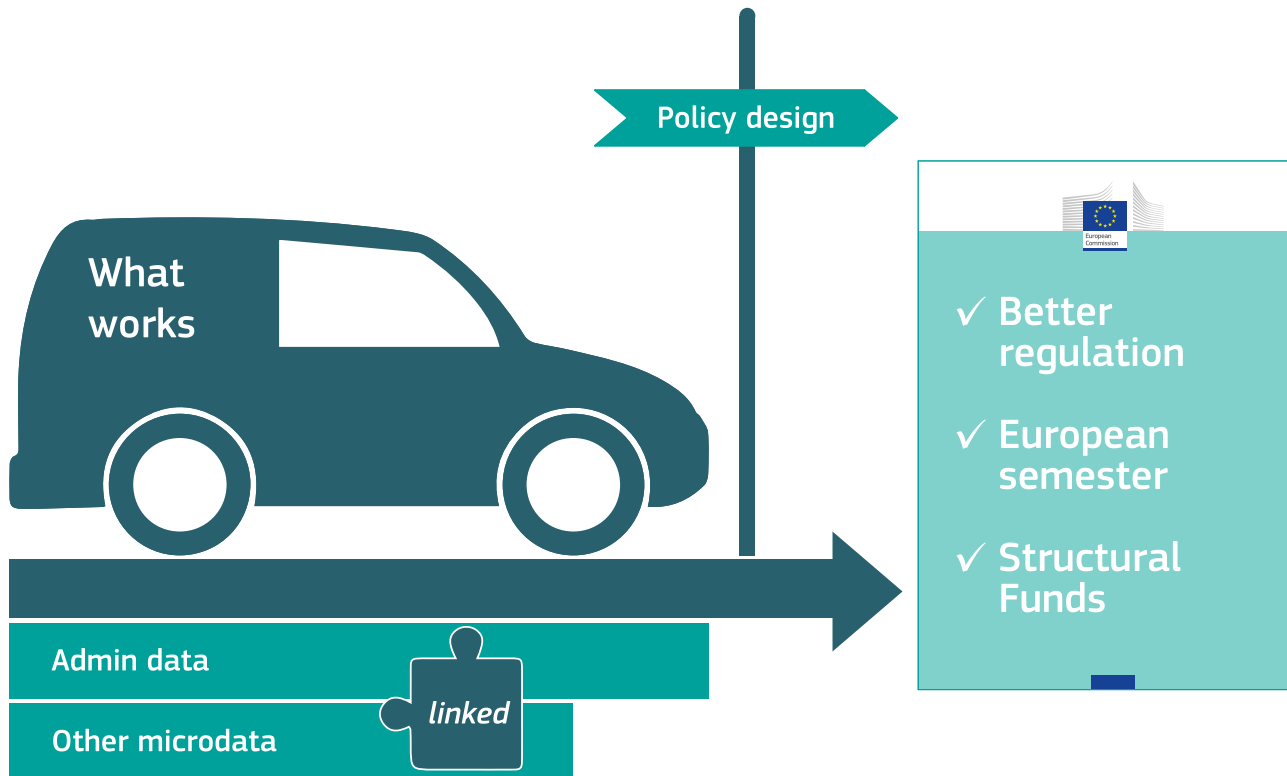
The comparison group helps to address the following question: what would have happened to the treated individuals (or firms/regions) had they not participated in the programme? This is known as the counterfactual case.

Why do we need counterfactual impact evaluation?

One basic goal of an evaluation is to learn to what degree the policy objectives were achieved.

CIE is the best tool for establishing a causal link between policies and their effects, by relying on data available for both the treated and control groups.







2. PROJECTS



Methodological support to Commission services for evaluation plans

Why

The Regulatory Scrutiny Board (RSB) invites the JRC, and in particular CC-ME, to provide comments in all upstream meetings with Commission services for the proposal of new initiatives or for the evaluation of current ones. A proper plan for how monitoring and evaluation data could be accessed is a key ingredient for improving evaluations in the future.

When

2023.

With

The Secretariat-General, the RSB and policy directorates-general (DGs) (in 2023: DG Agriculture and Rural Development; DG Climate Action; DG Defence Industry and Space; DG Economic and Financial Affairs; DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion; DG Environment; DG Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs; DG International Partnerships; DG Justice and Consumers; DG Migration and Home Affairs; and DG Research and Innovation). See https://commission.europa.eu/about-european-commission/departments-and-executive-agencies_en for the list of all European Commission departments and their abbreviations.

Activities

Support for upstream meetings for impact assessments and evaluations with the RSB.



© European Commission

Reference: Haepf, T. and Paruolo, P. (eds), Report on 2023 activities of the Competence Centre on Microeconomic Evaluation undertaken in relation to upstream meetings of the Regulatory Scrutiny Board with Commission services, European Commission, 2024, JRC136310 (European Commission internal).

Quality control of State aid: Counterfactual impact evaluations

Why

Quality review of evaluation plans and reports in the area of State aid performed by Member States.

When

January 2021–December 2023.

With

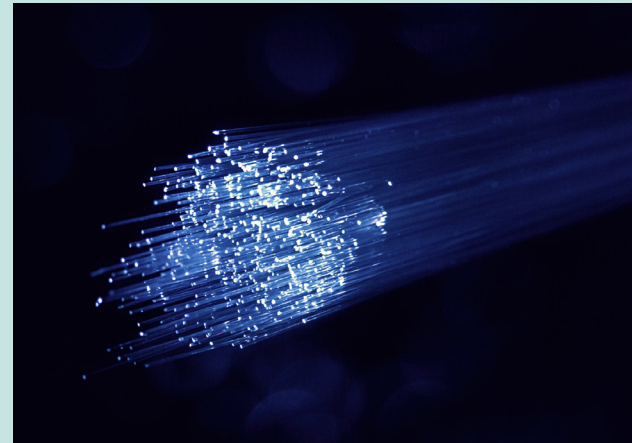
DG Competition.

Activities

The objective is to assist DG Competition in quality control, analysis and providing feedback on evaluation reports from Member States. In particular, activities include:

- creation and maintenance of a repository of reports;
- analysis of interim reports and final reports, and assessment of evaluation plans;
- providing training on counterfactual methods targeted at case handlers and case assistants involved in the evaluation of State aid schemes;
- providing a toolbox to support Member States in the design of evaluations of State aid in specific areas of intervention;

- transparency compliance checks to verify the completeness and accuracy of the information published under the transparency requirements by Member States.



© Danny Müller / Unsplash

Reference: Ardito, C., Di Novi, C., Granato, S., Martinez Santos, F. and Sasso, A., *Quality assessment of evaluation plans and reports in the area of State aid (EVALSA): The 2023 activity report*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2024, JRC136402.

Evaluation of the effectiveness of COVID-19 State aid in providing support to firms in the EU

Why

The European Commission promptly reacted to the threats posed by the COVID-19 pandemic by adopting a State aid Temporary Framework to support undertakings in the EU. The project aims to evaluate the effectiveness of COVID-19 State aid in tackling the crisis and sustaining firms in the European Union.

When

November 2022–November 2023.

With

DG Competition.

Activities

- The first part of the analysis offers an overview of the use of COVID-19 State aid by Member States in 2020, and characterises recipients' firms.
- In the second part, a CIE is performed to assess whether receiving COVID-19 State aid significantly improved firms' financial situation.



The **State aid Temporary Framework** to support the economy in the context of the coronavirus outbreak

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Adopted on 19 March 2020 ▶ Amended six times ▶ Expired 30 June 2022 ▶ Investment support until 31 December 2022 ▶ Solvency support until 31 December 2023 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Used by all 27 Member States ▶ 1 350+ decisions adopted ▶ 980+ national measures approved ▶ Estimated total State aid approved EUR 3.2 trillion
<p>The State aid Temporary Framework enabled Member States to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ use the full flexibility foreseen under State aid rules; ▶ support their economies; ▶ respond to the crisis in a timely, targeted and proportionate way. 	<p>The State aid Temporary Framework enabled the Commission to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ set horizontal rules applicable to all Member States; ▶ protect the level playing field in the single market; ▶ assist Member States in mitigating the effects of the pandemic.

Competition

Technical support to improve the capacity for assessing the effectiveness of State aid schemes in Slovenia

Why

In response to a request from the Slovenian Ministry of Finance, a structural reform support programme of DG Structural Reform Support was set up in 2020. In particular, the Slovenian Ministry of Finance requested technical support to improve its capacity to assess the effectiveness of State interventions. CC-ME offered its expertise.

When

April 2021–July 2023.

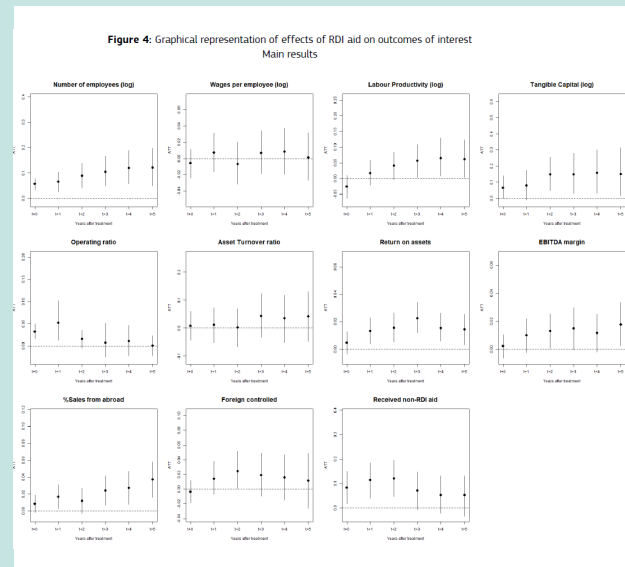
With

DG Structural Reform Support and DG Competition.

Activities

- The project assessed the effectiveness of existing Slovenian State aid schemes in the area of research, development and innovation through the review and transfer of available data, the construction of an integrated database and the conduction of a CIE study.
- It built capacity by providing practical training and guidance to the Slovenian authorities for replicating the evaluation in the future.
- Using administrative data on the universe of Slovenian firms including information on State aid received, the CIE study implements a matching difference-in-differences approach.

- Results show that the policy led to economically and statistically significant increases in employment, labour productivity and tangible assets.



Source: Crivellaro, E. and Granato, S., *An evaluation of the impact of RDI State aid in Slovenia on firms' performance*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2023, [JRC133399](#).

Indicators to measure education and health outcomes in European Social Fund-funded interventions

Why

Managing authorities of the European Social Fund (ESF) need to evaluate some of the funded interventions. ESF is increasingly funding policies in areas such as education and health. The Centre for Research on Impact Evaluation, a collaboration between CC-ME and DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, supports Managing Authorities in evaluating ESF-funded policies, in particular in the use of CIE. Within this initiative CRIE has published two guidance documents on how to select and build indicators to measure the effectiveness of education and health interventions.

When

January 2023–January 2024.

With

DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion.

Activities

The documents provide a list of outcomes that can be utilised to measure the effectiveness of interventions in the fields of education and health.



Sources: Amer Mestre, J. and Meroni, E., *Indicators to measure education and training outcomes in the context of the European Social Fund funded interventions*, Publications Office of the European Union, 2024, [JRC134564](#); Serrano Alarcon, M., *Indicators for measuring health outcomes in the context of the European Social Fund funded interventions*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2024, [JRC134555](#)

The roaming regulation

Why

The European Commission's proposal to review the 'roam-like-at-home' regulation (Regulation (EU) 2017/920) is primarily designed to guarantee that roaming like at home is sustainable for operators while ensuring customers' confidence to stay connected when travelling within the EU.

When

June 2021–October 2023.

With

DG Communications Networks, Content and Technology.

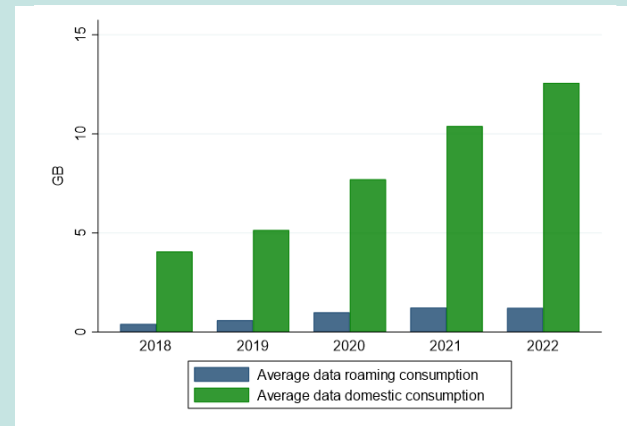
Activities

The project provided analytical support to the DG in the preparation of the review report on the implementation of fair use policies, and in the negotiation phase for the revision of the roaming regulation.

Among other aspects, CC-ME's most relevant contributions were:

- the collection of data on fair use policies, including through the implementation of ad hoc surveys of operators and national regulatory authorities;
- the impact evaluation analysis of fair use policies on market dynamics and sustainability under different scenarios;

- monitoring the development of mobile telephone prices across European countries;
- the analysis of the functioning of online trading platforms along with an examination of the most recent developments in the machine-to-machine and Internet of Things markets.



Source: Canzian, G. and Martínez-Santos, F., *Final report on the work performed by JRC in the framework of the administrative agreement SMART 2021/0469 with DG CNECT*, European Commission, 2024, JRC135472 (European Commission internal). Reported in Commission Staff Working Document on the findings of the 2023 periodic review of the rules on roaming fair use policy and the sustainability derogation laid down in the Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2016/2286 of 15 December 2016 (SWD(2024) 8 final).

Analysis of the impact of the pandemic on young people in the EU

Why

As part of its collaboration with DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, CC-ME is supporting the Commission in analysing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on young people in the EU.

When

April 2022–April 2024.

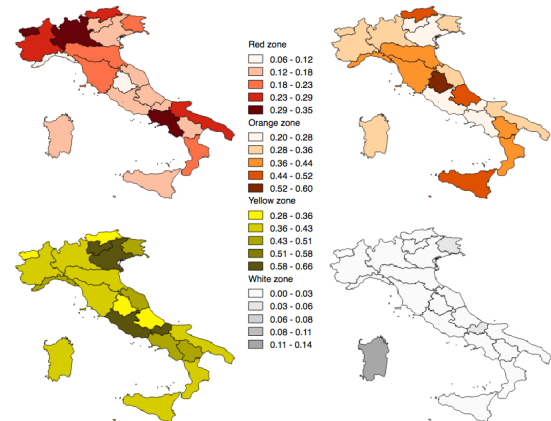
With

DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion.

Activities

- CC-ME contributed to the DG's annual Employment and Social Developments in Europe (ESDE) review, with analyses of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on youth in education and the labour market.
- CC-ME is carrying out a counterfactual impact evaluation of the impact of online learning mandates during the COVID-19 pandemic on students' academic performance in Italy.

Figure 1: Intensity of colour zone mandates in Italian regions



Notes: Share of days that each colour zone was mandated in each Italian region in the period from 6 November 2020 to 8 June 2021.

Promoting education policy evaluation – Learning Lab on Investing in Quality Education and Training

Why

In her political guidelines, Commission President von der Leyen committed to making the European Education Area a reality by 2025 and, as part of that commitment, the Commission has engaged in intensifying work on investment in education and training.

At the end of 2022, former Commissioner Gabriel announced the creation of a Learning Lab on Investing in Quality Education and Training. The main purpose of the Learning Lab is to promote the use of education policy evaluation practices in the EU to improve evidence and analysis of the effective and efficient use of public resources to boost student learning outcomes and ensure equity.

CC-ME provides scientific expertise and methodological support to relevant authorities in the Member States and the Commission for the evaluation of the impact of interventions in education and training.

When

January 2023–December 2024.

With

DG Education, Youth, Sport and Culture.

Activities

- Training courses and exchange of best practices on education policy evaluation.
- Customised technical support on education policy impact evaluation for local, regional and national authorities.
- Evaluations of education interventions: CIE studies of education policies in EU countries.
- The Community of Practice on Counterfactual Impact Evaluation of Education Policies (CoP-EP), which aims to foster collaboration between its members by sharing good practices, discussing common issues and learning from each other. Its focus is causal impact evaluation of education policies.



Support for the evaluation of development projects

Why

DG International Partnerships recently launched (i) a pilot exercise on CIEs of selected projects financed through the EU Emergency Trust Fund (EUTF) for stability and addressing the root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa, and (ii) the impact evaluation of the EU–International Organization for Migration (EU–IOM) Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration.

CC–ME provides scientific expertise and methodological support for the CIE of measures aimed at increasing the employability of the beneficiaries, supporting enterprises through market systems facilitation or job creation, and promoting sustainable reintegration for returning migrants.

When

July 2020–July 2025.

With

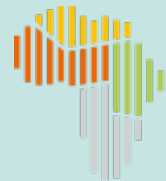
DG International Partnerships.

Activities

- Leadership, together with the EUTF team, of the coordination committee of the research governance body. The committee consists of all implementing partners involved in the CIE of EUTF projects (the Belgian Development Agency, Deutsche Gesellschaft

für Internationale Zusammenarbeit, Mercy Corps, the International Labour Organization, the International Trade Centre, Stichting Nederlandse Vrijwilligers – SNV and the United Nations Capital Development Fund).

- Participation in the Technical Advisory Committee of the impact study on the EU–IOM Joint Initiative.



EU Emergency
Trust Fund
for Africa



Analysing the feasibility of counterfactual methods for estimating environmental effects of the common agricultural policy

Why

Since 2014 the common agricultural policy (CAP) has devoted ever-increasing efforts to environmental objectives.

CC-ME collaborates with DG Agriculture and Rural Development to analyse the feasibility of causal evaluation of the impact of CAP measures on environmental outcomes. Farm Accountancy Data Network (FADN) data are used as the main currently available data source. Further investigation is dedicated to additional data sources that will be included in future research.

When

January 2023–December 2023.

With

DG Agriculture and Rural Development (Units A.3 and A.2). JRC (Units D.5 and D.4).

Activities

- Assessing availability, associated obstacles and deficiencies of data on environmental outcomes (greenhouse gas emissions, soil, biodiversity, water quality and management).
- Exploring the environmental content of FADN data, and the potential of incorporating environmental data from additional sources.

- Preparing summary fiches on CIE strategies that are feasible to use on FADN survey data at the European level.

Analysis proposal 2				
What is the local impact (close to the 30 ha threshold) of the Crop Diversification obligation on promoting agricultural practices beneficial for the environment in the eligible population at time t ?				
Data sources FADN all variables are expressed at the farm level				
Data set Pooled				
Outcomes Number of crops, Percentage of arable land allocated to the main crop; Nutrients, Pesticides, Energy, Animal welfare, Biodiversity, Water management see Tables 3, 4				
Control variables to be defined later				
Treatment Large AL farms under CD obligation				
Identification strategy RDD				
Feasibility				
	Interval (25, 35] ha	NUTS2	MS	EU*
data year 2014	0	4	63	
data year 2016	0	3	44	
data Pooled	0	4	74	
Notes *:=% of MS, among the ones implementing the policy, with at least 20 farms of the specified type below and above the threshold.				

Source: Brutti, Z., Freo, M., Guimaraes Dumangane, M. B. and Serlenga, L., *Analysing the feasibility of counterfactual methods for estimating environmental effects of the CAP*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2023, JRC135190.

Evaluation of the scientific impacts of research and innovation initiatives for researchers

Why

Horizon Europe includes a new approach to capture and communicate impacts of the programme: the Key Impact Pathways. The objective is to move from counting programme outputs and results to measuring the effective impact of the programme. CIE methodologies fit this purpose.

This project contains an impact evaluation study on the scientific effects for researchers under the seventh framework programme, as a pilot for the design of the future monitoring and evaluation framework under the key impact pathways of Horizon Europe.

When

March 2020–March 2023.

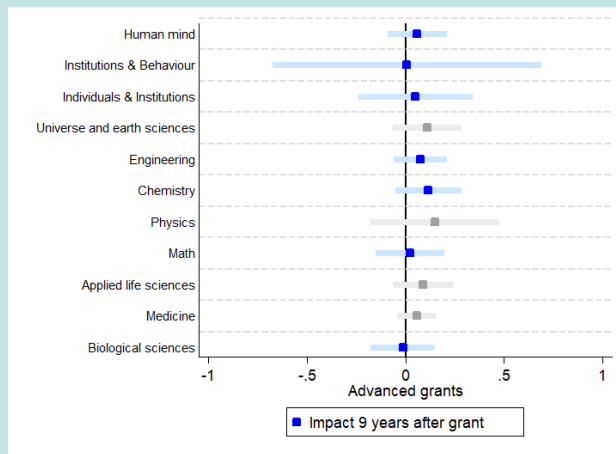
With

DG Research and Innovation (Unit G.2).

Activities

- Linking programme data on applicants to European Research Council grants in the seventh framework programme and scientific publications in the Scopus database.

- Evaluation study of the impact of European Research Council grants for individual researchers on a range of scientific outcomes such as publications and citations.



Source: Ghirelli, C., Havari, E., Meroni, E. and Verzillo, S., 'The long-term causal effects of winning an ERC grant', IZA Discussion Papers, No 16108, JRC133001, and Banco de España – Documentos de Trabajo, No 2313, 2023.

Navigating COVID-19: evaluating challenges and research insights

Why

The recent COVID-19 pandemic has introduced additional challenges in evaluation, increasing both the number of interventions requiring assessment and the need to access the related relevant data.

Since 2020, CC-ME has addressed these challenges through research activities dedicated to COVID-19.

When

March 2020–present.

With

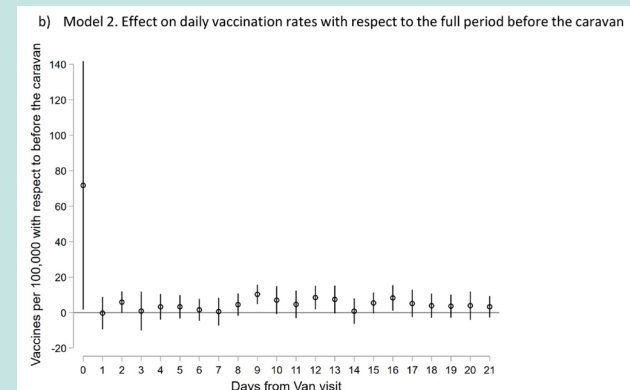
Colleagues from the JRC and partners from various academic institutions across Member States.

Activities

Research topics studied include:

- impact of online learning on students' academic performance;
- learning loss during the pandemic across European countries;
- effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on changed grade distributions in higher education;
- impact of COVID-19 on labour market dynamics using microsimulation;
- impact of job disruptions on individuals' well being;
- impact of disruptions to informal and formal care on older adults' psychological distress;

- impact of online health information-seeking behaviour on healthcare access and anxiety levels during the COVID-19 pandemic;
- effects of the COVID-19 lockdown's easing on alcohol consumption trends;
- assessment of excess mortality disparities across regional borders during the COVID-19 crisis;
- impact of a vaccine mobile caravan programme on COVID-19 vaccination uptake.



Source: Serrano-Alarcón, M., Mckee, M., Palumbo, L., Salvi, C., Johansen, A. and Stuckler, D., 'How to increase COVID-19 vaccination among a population with persistently suboptimal vaccine uptake? Evidence from the North Macedonia mobile vaccination and public health advice caravan', *Health Policy*, Vol. 139, 2024, 104966.

Projects with administrative data from Statistics Netherlands

Why

To study how inequality of opportunity and socioeconomic outcomes are affected by lack of interaction between members of different social groups.

When

April 2018–present.

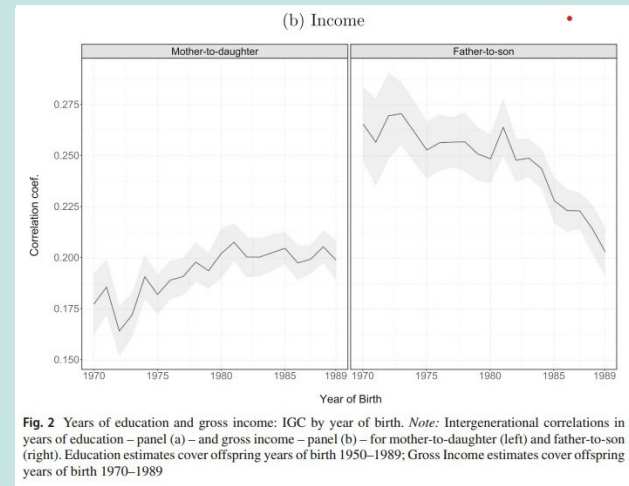
With

Statistics Netherlands (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, CBS).

Activities

Administrative data from Statistics Netherlands are used to answer a number of research questions on the following:

- intergenerational transmission of advantages;
- changes in inequality of opportunities;
- family background and socioeconomic status across migrant generations: evidence using vertical and horizontal correlations in earnings;
- intergenerational income persistence across wealth distributions: evidence using extended family linkages;
- effect of graduating during the pandemic – how it influences higher-education enrolment;
- assortative matching and income inequality.



Source: Colagrossi, M., Geraci, A. and Mazzarella, G., 'Intergenerational mobility in the Netherlands: Models, outcomes and trends', *Journal of Economic Inequality*, Vol. 21, 2023, pp. 775–788.



3. EVENTS



Event: 2023 NetCIEx Workshop



Network on Counterfactual Impact Evaluation 2023 Workshop, 16 November 2023.

2023 workshop of the Network on Counterfactual Impact Evaluation (NetCIEx Workshop 2023)

Hybrid, online and at JRC Ispra (VA), Italy, 16–17 November 2023. Including the fourth annual NetCIEx meeting.

Objectives

The Network on Counterfactual Impact Evaluation (NetCIEx) promotes collaborations of CC-ME with universities and other research institutions with an interest in CIE. The purpose of the network is to promote causal policy evaluation in Europe. The NetCIEx workshop aims to assemble practitioners and academics to explore the latest developments in the theory and applications of CIE methods.

The workshop hosted 16 presentations and a total of 50 participants, including 19 online. The programme is available at https://knowledge4policy.ec.europa.eu/event/netciex-workshop-2023_en.

Link to the NetCIEx workshop series

https://knowledge4policy.ec.europa.eu/microeconomic-evaluation/netciex_en



Event: Best Formulas for Quality Investment in Education and Training. First Conference of the Learning Lab on Investing in Quality Education and Training



Best Formulas for Quality Investment in Education and Training: First Conference of the Learning Lab on Investing in Quality Education and Training

Hybrid conference in Brussels, 11 May 2023.

The first ever event of the Learning Lab on Investing in Quality Education and Training was jointly organised by DG Education, Youth, Sport and Culture and CC-ME.

Objectives

A passionate community of experts gathered to share knowledge, tools, methods and resources on how to better invest in quality education and training. In addition to the 70 participants present in the room, the event was followed by more than 1 500 online viewers, through both web streaming and social media channels.

Link to the conference programme and recordings

<https://education.ec.europa.eu/event/Learning-Lab-May2023>

Link to the conference report

<https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/bd1680ad-1ae7-11ee-806b-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>

Workshops and communities of practice

Community of Practice on Counterfactual Impact Evaluation for the European Social Fund (CoP-CIE-ESF)

This community of practice has been active since 2016, working in collaboration with DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion to foster the use of CIE methods to evaluate the impact of the interventions funded through the ESF, and to create an environment for sharing experience about CIEs. It includes all Member State ESF Managing Authorities.

The 2023 meeting of the community of practice took place in Dubrovnik, Croatia, on 25 May 2023, with 31 participants from ESF Managing Authorities of 17 Member States, namely Belgium, Bulgaria, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Ireland, Spain, Croatia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania and Sweden.

The meeting consisted of one keynote speech, two discussions in small groups and presentations from ESF Managing Authorities:

- keynote speech by Martina Pezer, research associate at the Institute of Public Finance of Zagreb:
 - ‘Assessment of in-kind benefits with microsimulation models’,
- first group discussion:
 - ‘Evaluation plans and how to include counterfactual impact evaluation in them’,
- second group discussion:
 - ‘Counterfactual impact evaluation in the field of education, health, social integration and policies. How to conduct rigorous evaluations in this field? What are the main challenges?’,
- presentations by Managing Authorities on relevant experiences:
 - Croatia: ‘Evaluation of the WISH intervention’,
 - Portugal: ‘Engaging the academia in the evaluation process in Portugal’,
 - Bulgaria: ‘Challenges with the REACT-EU evaluation from the perspective of data availability and possibilities for counterfactual analysis’.

More information on this community of practice can be found at https://knowledge4policy.ec.europa.eu/microeconomic-evaluation/cop-cie-esf_en.



Community of Practice on Counterfactual Impact Evaluation of Education Policies (CoP-EP)

The Community of Practice on Counterfactual Impact Evaluation of Education Policies aims to foster collaboration between its members by sharing good practices, discussing common issues and learning from each other. Its focus is causal impact evaluation of education policies.

The community meets twice a year in Brussels or in another participating country interested in hosting one of the meetings.

The first meeting of CoP-EP took place online on 17 October 2023, with more than 30 participants representing at least 10 Member States. While the meeting had been planned to take place in Brussels in person, an attack by a gunman in central Brussels the night before the meeting led to precautionary measures, so the meeting was shifted online.

The meeting was structured as follows:

1. introduction by the Director of the Policy Strategy and Evaluation Directorate of DG Education, Youth, Sport and Culture,
2. presentation on what to expect from a community of practice on education impact evaluation,
3. keynote speech 'From correlations to causality. Exploiting the laboratory in education systems' by Professor Kristof de Witte, KU Leuven, Belgium,
4. panel discussion of the state of art in impact evaluation of education policies,
5. concluding remarks by the head of the Strategy and Investment Unit of DG Education, Youth, Sport and Culture.

Case Studies in Microeconomic Evaluation: Data and methods for learning what works

The aim of the training was to share good practices in the evaluation of impacts of EU policies. The focus is on how to use causal methodologies to inform the evaluation process, from the design and the choice of data to the analysis and the interpretation of results.

The training was held in Brussels on 10–11 October 2023. Each part of the training provided a brief introduction to a CIE method, a case study on an evaluation carried out by CC-ME and a discussion with the partner DGs involved in the evaluations.

Programme

Opening: Regulatory Scrutiny Board

Introduction: Causality and impact evaluation

Method 1: Propensity score matching and difference-in-differences

- Case study: The impact of research, development and innovation State aid on firms' performance in Slovenia.
Partner: DG Structural Reform Support
- Case study: The impact of COVID State aid on firms' performance.
Partner: DG Competition

Method 2: Non-linear difference-in-differences

- Case study: The effect of the end of hiring incentives on job separations.
Partner: DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

Method 3: Instrumental variables

- Case study: The effect of long-term care benefits on healthcare utilisation.
A policy evaluation linking health and social care administrative data from Spain.
Partner: DG Health and Food Safety

More information on the case studies series can be found at https://knowledge4policy.ec.europa.eu/microeconomic-evaluation/case-studies-microeconomic-evaluation-data-methods-learning-what-works_en.



Organisation of conference sessions

Organised session at the 38th Conference of the Italian Association of Labour Economics (AIEL)

Department of Economics and Business Studies, University of Genoa, 8–9 September 2023

Fabio Berton, Zeldà Brutti, Sylke V. Schnepf, Josep Amer Mestre, Elena Claudia Meroni

Invited session at the eighth Leuven Economics of Education Research Conference on Education Economics 'Promoting education policy impact evaluation in Europe: The Learning Lab of the European Commission'

Faculty of Economics and Business, Leuven, 30–31 March 2023

Sylke V. Schnepf, Marco Montanari (DG EAC), Rossella Cravetto (DG EAC), Silvia Granato, Elena Meroni, Kristof De Witte (KU Leuven)

Organised session at the third biannual workshop of the LABORatorio R. Revelli on 'Health, Retirement, Mismatch and Data for Policy Evaluation'

Collegio Carlo Alberto, Turin, 30 November to 1 December 2023

Josep Amer-Mestre, Chiara Ardito, Fabio Berton, Paolo Paruolo

Organised session at the 2023 annual conference of the Associazione Italiana di Economia Sanitaria (AIES)

University of Rome La Sapienza, Rome, 5–6 December 2023

Manuel Serrano-Alarcón, Chiara Ardito, Alessandro Sasso, Cinzia Di Novi

Selected invited presentations

University of Bergamo – Department of Economics Seminar Series

Bergamo, 2 March 2023 (Cinzia Di Novi)

Invited presentation on 'Does labour protection influence mental-health responses to employment shocks? Evidence on older workers in Europe'

Data Science and AI for Public Good webinar series, Federal Statistical Office, Data Science Competence Center (DSCC)

Webinar, 9 June 2023 (Paolo Paruolo)

Invited presentation on 'Data access and trust in the public sector: Learning what works'

2023 Research Infrastructure for Science and Innovation Policy Studies (RISIS) Research Seminar Series

Online, 14 September 2023 (Sylke V. Schnepf)

Invited presentation on 'What can explain the socioeconomic gap in international student mobility uptake?'

European Commission–OECD Technical Workshop on 'Evaluating labour market policies through the use of linked administrative data'

Paris, 9 October 2023 (Sara Flisi)

Panellist in the final panel discussion on 'Where do we go from here? Priorities in further enhancing evidence-informed policymaking'

University of Genoa – Department of Economics

Genoa, 13 October 2023 (Cinzia Di Novi)

Invited lecture on 'I driver dei consumi sanitari tra diseguaglianza e invecchiamento della popolazione' (Drivers of healthcare consumption: Socioeconomic inequality and population ageing)



2023 workshop on 'Health needs and resources: Allocation and measurement issues', University of Urbino

Urbino, 9–10 November 2023 (Cinzia Di Novi)

Invited presentation on 'Online health information seeking behaviour, healthcare access, and health status during exceptional times'

University of Rome La Sapienza, PhD programme in Statistics – Department of Statistical Sciences statistics seminar

Rome, 13 November 2023 (Paolo Paruolo)

'Specification tools for time fixed effects in country panels'

Third biannual workshop on 'Health, Retirement, Mismatch and Data for Policy Evaluation', Collegio Carlo Alberto

Turin, 1 December 2023 (Paolo Paruolo)

'Data access and trust in the public sector: Learning what works'



CC-ME seminar series

In 2023, the seminar series was held mostly in person.

11 January, Fabio Berton, University of Turin: 'Combined and distributional effects of EPL reduction and hiring incentives: An assessment using non-linear DiD'

17 January, Michela Tincani, University College London: 'The effect of preferential admissions on the college participation of disadvantaged students: The role of pre-college choices'

24 January, Clement de Chaisemartin, Sciences Po: 'Two-way fixed effects and differences-in-differences with heterogeneous treatment effects: A survey'

31 January, Federico Tagliati, Banco de España: 'Can subsidized employment tackle long-term unemployment? Experimental evidence from North Macedonia'

7 March, Liran Einav, Stanford University: 'Targeting precision medicine: Evidence from prenatal screening'

21 March, Blanka Imre, Deutsches Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung (DIW) Berlin: 'Marital property regimes and investments'

28 March, Christian Stetter, Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule (ETH) Zurich: 'Identifying heterogeneous impacts of agri-environmental schemes using generalized random forests'

11 April, Michal Kolesár, Princeton University: 'The fragility of sparsity'

18 April, Pedro de Souza, Queen Mary University of London: 'Econometrics of networks with limited access to network data'

26 April, Sauro Mocetti, Banca d'Italia: 'Tax evasion and competition: Evidence from Italy'

2 May, Judit Vall Castelló, Universitat de Barcelona: 'Hit where it hurts: Healthcare access and intimate partner violence' 10 May, Catia Nicodemo, University of Verona: 'School starting age and ADHD'

16 May, Massimo Anelli, Università Bocconi: 'Robots replacing trade unions: Novel data and evidence from western Europe'

23 May, Eleonora Patacchini, Università Bocconi: 'Information, mobile communication, and referral effects'

30 May, Enrico Vanino, University of Sheffield: 'Catapulting into the innovation system: Direct and indirect effects of sectoral public support for private innovation'

20 June, Francesca Zantomio, University of Venezia: 'Disability insurance targeting and behavioural responses to benefit generosity: Evidence from Italian administrative records on CVD shocks'

6 July, Francesca Borgonovi, University College London: 'Inequalities in educational achievement: Lessons from the pandemic to build system-level resilience'

12 September, Dalit Contini, University of Torino: 'Children left behind. New evidence on the impact of grade retention in Italian high school'

19 September, Natalia Fabra, Universidad Carlos III de Madrid: 'Renewable energy and storage: Friends or foes?'

14 November, Lorenzo Neri, University of St Andrews: 'Knocking it down and mixing it up: The impact of public housing regenerations'

21 November, Valentino Dardanoni, University of Palermo: 'On the anatomy of production function'

12 December, Daniela Sonedda, University of Insubria: 'The heterogeneous costs of job loss when employment protection is eroded'

19 December, Enrico Rettore, University of Padova: 'Using complementary sources of data to estimate the causal effect of temp contracts on subsequent labor market outcomes'

Read our blog posts with a short interview with presenters at

https://knowledge4policy.ec.europa.eu/microeconomic-evaluation/cc-me-seminar-series_en.





4. PUBLICATIONS



Publications with contributions from members of the CC-ME team

The electronic version of this document includes hyperlinks to digital object identifiers, when available.

Abadir K., Luati, A. and Paruolo, P., 'GARCH density and functional forecasts', *Journal of Econometrics*, Vol. 235, No 2, 2023, pp. 470–483, JRC108189 (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeconom.2022.04.010>).

Amer Mestre, J., Ayarza-Astigarraga, A. and Lopes, M. C., 'E-learning engagement gap during school closures: Differences by academic performance', *Applied Economics*, Vol. 56, No 3, 2023, pp. 337–359, JRC132488 (<https://doi.org/10.1080/00036846.2023.2167924>).

Amer Mestre, J., Flisi, S., Haepf, T., Meroni, E. C. and Serrano Alarcon, M., *Flash report on the 2023 meeting of the Community of Practice on Counterfactual Impact Evaluation of ESF interventions (CoP-CIE-ESF)*, European Commission, 2023, JRC134153 (European Commission internal).

Amer Mestre, J., Granato, S., Schnepf, S. V. and Serrano Alarcon, M., *Promoting education policy evaluation (Learning Lab, JRC Nr 36364) Progress Report for the period 1 January 2023–31 December 2023*, European Commission, 2024, JRC136733 (European Commission internal).

Amer Mestre, J., Haepf, T., Meroni, E., Serrano Alarcon, M. and Flisi, S., *Centre for Research on Impact Evaluation (CRIE) Progress Report for the period 1 January 2023–31 July 2023*, European Commission, 2023, JRC135982 (European Commission internal).

Aquaro, M., Cannas, G., Crivellaro, E., Ferraro, S. and Granato, S., *Transparency in State aid reporting: Results of the 2022 compliance check exercise*, European Commission, 2023, JRC132963 (European Commission internal).



Ardito, C., d'Errico, A., Leombruni, R., Zengarini, N. and Costa, G., *Increasing Inequalities in Longevity among Italian Workers*, Istituto Nazionale Previdenza Sociale, 2023, JRC134101.

Ardito, C., Di Novi, C., Granato, S., Martinez Santos, F. and Sasso, A., *Quality assessment of evaluation plans and reports in the area of State aid (EVALSA): The 2023 activity report*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2024, JRC136402 (<https://doi.org/10.2760/6057>).

Brutti, Z., Freo, M., Guimaraes Dumangane, M. B. and Serlenga, L., *Analysing the feasibility of counterfactual methods for estimating environmental effects of the CAP*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2023, JRC135190 (<https://doi.org/10.2760/375537>).

Calegari, E., Ferrara, A. R., Freo, M. and Reggiani, A., *'The heterogeneous effect of European Union Cohesion Policy on regional well-being'*, *European Urban and Regional Studies*, Vol. 30, No 4, 2023, pp. 311–318 (<https://doi.org/10.1177/09697764231188304>).

Canzian, G., Meroni, E. C. and Santangelo, G., *'Evaluation of a Flemish active labour market policy in the framework of the European Social Fund. Results and challenges'*, *Socio-Economic Planning Sciences*, Vol. 88, 2023, 101622, JRC131331 (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.seps.2023.101622>).

Cerruti, G., Mazzarella, G. and Migliavacca, M., *'Employment protection legislation and household formation: Evidence from Italy'*, *Review of Economics of the Household*, Vol. 21, No 3, 2023, pp. 913–939, JRC125574 (<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11150-022-09626-6>).

Coco, G., Di Simone, D., Serlenga, L. and Molinaro, S., 'Risk awareness and complexity in students' gambling', *Economia Politica*, Vol. 40, No 3, 2023, pp. 971–994, JRC134765 (<https://doi.org/10.1007/s40888-023-00312-z>).

Crivellaro, E. and Granato, S., *An evaluation of the impact of RDI State aid in Slovenia on firms' performance – Technical support to improve the capacity for assessing the effectiveness of State aid schemes in Slovenia*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2023, JRC133399 (<https://doi.org/10.2760/433592>).

Di Novi, C. and Santos, R., 'Health and aging: The sustainability and equity trade-off', Editorial – *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*, Vol. 205, 2023, pp. A8–A10, JRC131425 (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jebo.2022.11.011>).

Di Novi, C., Flamini, A. and Peracchi, F., 'Soil consumption and organised crime: The case of the Italian region of Apulia', working paper 23, Einaudi Institute for Economics and Finance, 2023, JRC135580.

Di Novi, C., Kovacic, M. and Orso, C. E., 'Online health information seeking behavior, healthcare access, and health status during exceptional times', working paper 26, Department of Economics, University of Venice 'Ca' Foscari', 2023, JRC135605.

Di Novi, C., Martini, G. and Sturaro, C., 'The impact of informal and formal care disruption on older adults' psychological distress during the COVID-19 pandemic in UK', *Economics and Human Biology*, Vol. 49, 2023, 101242, JRC133374 (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ehb.2023.101242>).

Di Novi, C., Paruolo, P. and Verzillo, S., 'Does labour protection influence mental-health responses to employment shocks? Evidence on older workers in Europe', *Economic Modelling*, Vol. 126, 2023, 106406, JRC128353 (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.econmod.2023.106406>).

European Commission, Joint Research Centre, Amer Mestre, J., Aquaro, M., Canzian, G., Crivellaro, E., Di Novi, C., Ferrara, A., Flisi, S., Freo, M., Granato, S., Guimaraes Dumangane, M. B., Haepf, T., Lapatinas, A., Mazzarella, G., Meroni, E. C., Santangelo, G., Sasso, A., Schnepf, S. V., Serlenga, L., Serrano Alarcon, M. and Vollbracht, I., *2022 Activity Report of the Competence Centre on Microeconomic Evaluation (CC-ME)*, Paruolo, P. and Verzillo, S. editor(s), European Commission, 2023, JRC131356 (European Commission internal).

European Commission, Joint Research Centre, Amer Mestre, J., Aquaro, M., Canzian, G., Crivellaro, E., Di Novi, C., Guimaraes Dumangane, M. B., Ferrara, A., Ferraresi, M., Freo, M., Geraci, A., Granato, S., Haepf, T., Lapatinas, A., Mazzarella, G., Meroni, E. C., Santangelo, G., Sasso, A., Schnepf, S. V., Serlenga, L., Serrano Alarcon, M., Verzillo, S. and Vollbracht, I., *The Competence Centre on Microeconomic Evaluation – 2022 Yearbook*, Flisi, S. and Paruolo, P. editor(s), Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2023, JRC132540 (<https://doi.org/10.2760/20696>).

European Commission, Joint Research Centre, Cerqua, A., *Guidance note for the impact evaluation of State aid for R & D in Slovenia*, Ferrara, A. and Granato, S. Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2023, JRC133939 (<https://doi.org/10.2760/688892>).

European Commission, Joint Research Centre, Czarnitzki, D., *Guidebook for conducting counterfactual impact evaluations of State aid schemes for research, development and innovation*, Aquaro, M., Crivellaro, E., Di Novi, C., Granato, S., Sasso, A. and Vidoni, D. editor(s), Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2023, JRC135293 (<https://doi.org/10.2760/814181>).

Franchi, M., Georgiev, I. and Paruolo, P., 'Estimating the number of common trends in large T and N factor models via canonical correlations analysis', *Econometrics and Statistics*, 2023, JRC133825 (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecosta.2023.10.001>).

Freo, M. and Luati, A., 'Lasso-based variable selection methods in text regression: The case of short texts', *ASTa Advances in Statistical Analysis*, 2023, JRC126124 (<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10182-023-00472-0>).

Ghirelli, C., Havari, E., Meroni, E. C. and Verzillo, S., 'The long-term causal effects of winning an ERC grant', *IZA Discussion Paper Series*, No 16108, 2023, JRC133643.

Granato, S., 'Early Influences and the choice of college major: Can policies reduce the gender gap in scientific curricula (STEM)?', *Journal of Policy Modeling*, Vol. 45, No 3, 2023, pp. 494–521, JRC133547 (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpolmod.2023.04.006>).

Granato, S., Havari, E., Schnepf, S. V., 'Learning and human development', in Choi, À. (ed.), *Economic Foundations of Education, Educational Foundations*, Vol. 5, Bloomsbury, London, 2023, pp. 107-134, JRC124752.

Granato, S., Schnepf, S. V., Serrano Alarcon, M., Amer Mestre, J. and Flisi, S., *Flash report on the 1st meeting of the Learning Lab Community of Practice on Counterfactual Impact Evaluation of Education Policies (CoP-EP)*, European Commission, Ispra, 2023, JRC136129.

Hernández Alava, M., Sasso, A., Hnyyn Si, P. E., Gittus, M., Powell, R., Dunn, L., Thokala, P. and Fotheringham, J., 'Relationship between standardized measures of chronic kidney disease-associated pruritus intensity and health-related quality of life measured with the EQ-5D questionnaire: A mapping study', *Acta Dermato-Venereologica*, Vol. 103, 2023, JRC133396 (<https://doi.org/10.2340/actadv.v103.11604>).

Holmes, J., Sasso, A., Hernández Alava, M., Stevely, A. K., Warde, A., Angus, C. and Meier, P. S., 'Change and stability in British drinking practices and culture between 2009 and 2019: A longitudinal latent class analysis of drinking occasions', *SSM – Population Health*, Vol. 24, 2023, 101548, JRC134294 (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssmph.2023.101548>).

Kapetanios, G., Serlenga, L. and Shin, Y., 'Testing for correlation between the regressors and factor loadings in heterogeneous panels with interactive effects', *Empirical Economics*, Vol. 64, No 6, 2023, pp. 2611–2659, JRC132929 (<https://doi.org/10.1007/s00181-023-02390-1>).

Meroni, E. and Verga, F., 'Income-based family typology and child development: Evidence from the UK', *DIW Berlin: Discussion Papers*, 2023, JRC134543.

Rupi, F., Freo, M., Poliziani, C., Postorino, M. N. and Schweizer, J., 'Analysis of gender-specific bicycle route choices using revealed preference surveys based on GPS traces', *Transport Policy*, Vol. 133, 2023, pp. 1–14, JRC128570 (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tranpol.2023.01.001>).

Schnepf, S. V. and Granato, S., 'COVID-19 and the European education performance decline: A focus on primary school children's reading achievement between 2016 and 2021', *IZA Discussion Paper Series*, No 16531, 2023, JRC135223.

Schnepf, S. V., Boldrini, M. and Blaskó, Z., 'Adolescents' loneliness in European schools: A multilevel exploration of school environment and individual factors', *BMC Public Health*, Vol. 23, 2023, 1917 (<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-023-16797-z>).

Serrano Alarcon, M., *Indicators for measuring health outcomes in the context of the European Social Fund funded interventions*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2024, JRC134555 (<https://doi.org/10.2760/763929>).

Serrano Alarcon, M., Ardito, C., Leombruni, R., Kentikelenis, A., d'Errico, A., Odone, A., Costa, G. and Stuckler, D., 'Health and labor market effects of an unanticipated rise in retirement age. Evidence from the 2012 Italian pension reform', *Health Economics*, Vol. 32, No 12, 2023, pp. 2745–2767, JRC131395 (<https://doi.org/10.1002/hec.4749>).

Stevely, A., Mackay, D., Alava, M., Brennan, A., Meier, P., Sasso, A. and Holmes, J., 'Evaluating the effects of minimum unit pricing in Scotland on the prevalence of harmful drinking: A controlled interrupted time series analysis', *Public Health*, Vol. 220, 2023, pp. 43–49, JRC132733 (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.puhe.2023.04.019>).

Science for policy

The Joint Research Centre (JRC) provides independent, evidence-based knowledge and science, supporting EU policies to positively impact society



EU Science Hub

joint-research-centre.ec.europa.eu



Publications Office
of the European Union