



STEFAN APOSTOL

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POLISS RESEARCH THEME

Regional Entrepreneurship Ecosystem and Smart Specialisation

HOST INSTITUTION

University of Pécs

SECONDMENT INSTITUTIONS

Utrecht University
Kontakt-Elektro Kft.

SUPERVISORY TEAM

Main supervisor: Laszlo Szerb
Co-supervisor: Éva Somogyné Komlósi
Mentor: Hirth Markus

CONTACT DETAILS

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BACKGROUND

Stefan has a Master's Degree in Business Economics from the Slovak University of Agriculture in Nitra, was engaged in various traineeships in industry and entrepreneurship fields. Interest in the topic of research, he got while working as an International Relations Officer, Assistant Project Manager within EU projects, and Consultant in Business Development.

RESEARCH PROJECTS

Quantifying the entrepreneurial ecosystem and innovation capacity of EU regions. Connect the current ecosystem frameworks with specialization measurements. Examine firms' capability and question the process of economic catch-up of regions.

CURRENT RESEARCH QUESTION

Is there a distinction between innovative and imitative regions in terms of systemic factors and firm capabilities?

DATA & METHOD

Index calculation; Penalty for bottleneck method; Specialization indicators; Economic complexity

SOCIETAL INTEREST

Why the least bad is not enough for democracy and the importance of competent governance.

Policy hypes, the lack of empirical proof and the real societal use.

Education-between creativity and innovation versus conformity and indoctrination of the young.





PEDRO M. LLANOS

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POLISS RESEARCH THEME

Inclusive Regional Growth

HOST INSTITUTION

London School of Economics and Political Science

SECONDMENT INSTITUTIONS

Academic: University of Pécs

Non-academic: Autonomous Province of Trento

SUPERVISORY TEAM

Main supervisor: Nancy Holman

Co-supervisor: Neil Lee

Mentor: Laura Pedron

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BACKGROUND

Before joining LSE in 2020, Pedro worked as Research Coordinator at Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA). He holds a MSc in the Political Economy of Emerging Markets from King's College London (KCL) and has five years of experience in applied research, collaborating with a wide variety of organisations like USAID, the Ford Foundation and the Natural Resource Governance Institute (NRGI).

RESEARCH PROJECTS

- Effects of Applied Research Institutes on Regional Innovation.
- Effects of Trade Shocks on European labour markets.
- Effects of Green Subsidies on Firm Performance.

CURRENT RESEARCH QUESTION

To what extent the Fraunhofer centres outside of Germany boost patent applications in European regions at a NUTS-3 level.

DATA & METHOD

Difference-in-Differences (DID), Propensity-Score-Matching (PSM), Instrumental Variables (IV)

SOCIETAL INTEREST

- Class, income inequality and political economy.
- Taxation and environmental regulation.
- Randomized controlled trials.





GHINWA MOUJAES

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POLISS RESEARCH THEME

Monitoring Smart Specialisation

HOST INSTITUTION

INGENIO (Spanish National Research Council – UPV)

SECONDMENT INSTITUTIONS

University of Vienna
Valencian Innovation Agency

SUPERVISORY TEAM

Main supervisor: Davide Consoli

Co-supervisor: Pedro Marques

Mentor: Roberto Arnau

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BACKGROUND

Prior to starting her PHD path, Ghinwa worked as a consultant on Foreign Direct Investment Strategies with public and private agencies in Europe, Canada and the Middle East. She has a MSc in Local Economic Development from the London School of Economics and has obtained both a BA in Economics and a minor in Mathematics from the American University of Beirut. Her research interests are about inequality, innovation and public policy implementation.

RESEARCH PROJECTS

- Challenges and Opportunities in Monitoring Smart Specialization
- Relationship between Inequality Complexity and Diversity across the EU

CURRENT RESEARCH QUESTION

- What is the relationship between income inequality and economic complexity in the EU?
- Which type of inequality is impacted?
- Which industry life-cycle mix contributes to inequality?

DATA & METHOD

- Complexity measured through Patent Data & Method of Moments
- Inequality measured through Eurostat & EU SILC Dataset
- Econometrics methodology

SOCIETAL INTEREST

While Smart Specialization stresses the importance of regions entering more complex industries, this research highlights that complexity not only impacts growth but also more equitable type of growth.





DONGMIAO ZHANG

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POLISS RESEARCH THEME

Digitalization and Regional Resilience in the EU

HOST INSTITUTION

Utrecht University

SECONDMENT INSTITUTIONS

Spanish National Research Council (CSIC)
Utrecht Economic Board

SUPERVISORY TEAM

Main supervisor: Ron Boschma

Co-supervisors: Pierre-Alexandre Balland, Andrea Morrison

Mentor: Monique Roso

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BACKGROUND

Dongmiao Zhang is a PhD candidate in economic geography in Utrecht University. She holds a Master in Public Administration degree from London School of Economics and Political Science specialising in Public and Economic Policy. Before joining Utrecht, she worked with academia and international organisations on digitalisation, climate change, and gender equality.

RESEARCH PROJECTS

My project explores the impact of artificial intelligence on the changing nature of jobs, and possible mechanisms through which it may drive inequalities. I also investigate factors that shape labour market resilience in periods of AI transition.

CURRENT RESEARCH QUESTION

- The creative destruction of Artificial Intelligence on occupations: evidence from U.S. Metropolitan Areas (with Ron Boschma and Pierre Alex Balland)
- Regional diversification and intra-regional wage inequality in the Netherlands (with Nicola Cortinovis and Ron Boschma)
- Towards a new perspective on understanding the impact of Artificial Intelligence on labour (with Ron Boschma)

DATA & METHOD

Data: O*NET, American Community Survey, USPTO ; Microdata from CBS in the Netherlands

Method: Quantitative

SOCIETAL INTEREST

- Inform policy makers on the design and implementation of education and labour market policies during AI transition
- Public policies to achieve inclusive and smart growth across EU regions
- Digital resilience





DIMA YANKOVA

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POLISS RESEARCH THEME

Coordination and Local Networks

HOST INSTITUTION

INGENIO (Spanish National Research Council – UPV)

SECONDMENT INSTITUTION

Consellería de Innovación, Universidades, Ciencia y Sociedad Digital de la Comunidad Valenciana

SUPERVISORY TEAM

Mentor: Sonia Tirado González

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BACKGROUND

Dima holds a Master's Degree in Sustainable Development from Cambridge University (UK) and a Bachelor's Degree in Mechanical Engineering with a combined minor in Environmental and Political Science from Union College (USA). Before joining academia, she worked as an Analyst for an international consulting company and as a Project Associate for a public authority with a focus on placemaking projects.

RESEARCH PROJECTS

I analyze the economic specialization of regions by zooming in on the key actors and forces which drive the evolution of local collaborative knowledge networks.

CURRENT RESEARCH QUESTION

What determines tie formation in a regional R&D network? How do exogenous shocks alter the collaborative behavior of local actors?

DATA & METHOD

I employ a combination of Social Network Analysis and econometric models to an original dataset reflecting formal R&D collaboration between firms, universities and research centers in the region of Valencia.

SOCIETAL INTEREST

Mapping the evolution of collaborative networks gives policymakers an insight into how local knowledge is produced and distributed, how it can be recombined with novel advancements and ultimately converted into competitive advantage.





ALESSIO GIUSTOLISI

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POLISS RESEARCH THEME

Place-Specific Factors and the Design and Implementation of Smart Specialisation Strategies

HOST INSTITUTION

University of Vienna

SECONDMENT INSTITUTIONS

- University of Stavanger Business School, University of Stavanger
- Department of Economics, Tourism and Technology, Government of Lower Austria (WST3)

SUPERVISORY TEAM

Main supervisor: Michaela Trippl

Co-supervisor: Maximilian Benner

Secondment Supervisor: Ragnar Tveterås

Mentor: Kerstin Koren

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BACKGROUND

Alessio studied Human Geography at the University of Cologne and University College Dublin and holds a Master's degree in Economic Geography from the University of Amsterdam. He spent several months in Vietnam researching the electronics industry for his master thesis and was later involved in a research project on the determinants of foreign direct investments in Cambodia. Alessio has further gained 2.5 years of research experience at the Institute for Work and Technology (IAT) in Germany, focusing his work on regional structural change and the role of innovation in regional development.

RESEARCH PROJECTS

Developing conceptual and empirical insights about how place-specific factors shape the design and implementation of S3 and S4 in different types of regions, taking non-regional influences into account.

CURRENT RESEARCH QUESTION

What is the role of local and non-local institutional environments and policy actions in shaping the green transition in Lower Austria, and how do linkages to non-local knowledge sources further facilitate these developments?

DATA & METHOD

Case study approach using semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders from firms, policy, and science; An extensive document analysis of past and current policies and strategies will be further conducted.

SOCIETAL INTEREST

How regional policy makers can cope with grand societal challenges on a regional level and from the bottom-up by including a participative governance approach and broad stakeholder involvement.





MARTINA PARDY

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POLISS RESEARCH THEME

Globalisation, FDI and Regional Structural Change

HOST INSTITUTION

London School of Economics and Political Science

SECONDMENT INSTITUTIONS

Utrecht University
Nesta

SUPERVISORY TEAM

Main supervisor: Andrés Rodríguez-Pose
Co-supervisor: Riccardo Crescenzi
Secondment supervisor: Ron Boschma
Mentor: Hasan Bakhsh

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BACKGROUND

Martina holds an MSc in Economics and a BSc in Economics and Social Sciences from the Vienna University of Economics and Business (WU). Before joining POLISS and the LSE in September 2020, she worked as a Teaching and Research Associate at the Department of Economics at WU, where she conducted research in the field of regional inequality, globalisation and migration. Furthermore, Martina has worked as a consultant for sustainable development at the Asian Development Bank and completed a research project on gender inequality for the United Nations Development Programme.

RESEARCH PROJECTS

My research is centred around the distributional impact of economic globalisation and explores how it affects different dimensions of regional labour market, income, and innovation inequality.

CURRENT RESEARCH QUESTION

To what extent does the presence of Multinational Enterprises affect intra-regional innovation concentration within US states?

DATA & METHOD

I will use patent data from the United States Patent and Trademark Office as well as firm data from the Business Dynamics Statistics from the US Census Bureau.

Method: quantitative

SOCIETAL INTEREST

This research will provide suggestions to policy makers how the economic gains of globalisation can be more equally distributed and how the costs for some groups can be mitigated.





CAROLIN NAST

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POLISS RESEARCH THEME

The Role of Universities in Smart Specialisation Strategies

HOST INSTITUTION

University of Stavanger

SECONDMENT INSTITUTIONS

Academic: INGENIO (Spanish National Research Council – UPV)
Non-academic: Rogaland County Council

SUPERVISORY TEAM

Main supervisor: Tom Broekel
Co-supervisor: Rune Dahl Fitjar
Secondment supervisor: Pablo D'Este
Mentor: Hilde Uppstad

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BACKGROUND

Carolin holds a Master's Degree in Urban and Economic Geography from Utrecht University (Utrecht, The Netherlands) and a Bachelor's Degree from Zeppelin University (Friedrichshafen, Germany) in Political Science. At Utrecht University, Carolin was involved in the Algorithmic Studio, a project researching the process of safeguarding public values on (digital) mobility platforms. In her Master's thesis, she studied the ability of EU-funded technologies to contribute to sustainable development, more specifically to achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Within the POLISS project, she focuses on the role of public authorities and government intervention in technological development.

RESEARCH PROJECTS

The project scrutinizes how and to what extent public authorities can contribute to the invention of (complex) technologies, whose development process is characterized by risk and uncertainty.

CURRENT RESEARCH QUESTION

Does additional public support for R&D allow R&D actors to push technological complexity, or do increasing levels of technological complexity induce higher requirements for public research support?

DATA & METHOD

Patent data from the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) between 1980 and 2016, matched with information on government support and technological complexity of 455 technologies to perform econometric analysis (VAR-LINGAM Model).

SOCIETAL INTEREST

The role of new technology is often emphasized in discussing a more sustainable future. How can public authorities allocate their resources efficiently to support (green) technology development to cope with grand societal challenges?





ERISTIAN WIBISONO

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POLISS RESEARCH THEME

The Economic Impact of Smart Specialisation Policy in European Regions

HOST INSTITUTION

University of Pécs

SECONDMENT INSTITUTIONS

London School of Economics and Political Science
Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Pécs-B

SUPERVISORY TEAM

Main supervisor: Attila Varga
Co-supervisor: Tamás Sebestyén
Mentor: Szabolcs Rabb

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BACKGROUND

Eristian holds a Masters degree in Economics from Jambi University (Indonesia). Currently he is working as a civil servant in the Department of Industry and Trade in Jambi Province, Indonesia. He started his teaching experience as a guest lecturer at the Chemistry Program at Jambi University. His research interests are Development Economics, Regional Economics and Industrialization where he has published several related scientific articles.

RESEARCH PROJECTS

Focus on assessing the economic impact of the Smart Specialization policy in less developed regions of Europe using the recently developed GMR-Europe economic impact modeling.

CURRENT RESEARCH QUESTION

The research question concerns the extent to which GMR-Europe can provide an appropriate solution to measure the economic impact of SmartSpec policies after various policy interventions are simulated.

DATA & METHOD

- European data statistics (Eurostat) and regional statistics from 1995-2020.
- Two main analytical dimensions: regional spillover capacity and economic impact modelling.

RESEARCH NOVELTY

A new experience in implementing Smart Specialization by selecting the less developed regions of Europe, offering a method for prioritizing, and assessing the ex-ante and ex-post economic impacts.

FUTURE RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

Future research could be proposed by the stakeholders/researchers to present findings that may differ in these regions. The utilization of GMR-Europe can also be an attraction for the region.





CHARLES ABBOTT

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POLISS RESEARCH THEME

Smart Specialisation strategies between experimentation and governance failure

HOST INSTITUTION

University of Stavanger

SECONDMENT INSTITUTIONS

Rogaland fylkeskommune
London School of Economics

SUPERVISORY TEAM

Main supervisor: Rune Dahl Fitjar

Co-supervisor: Tom Brökel

Mentor: Andrés Rodríguez-Pose

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BACKGROUND

Charles joins the POLISS project following a number of years' experience based in EU public affairs in Brussels; working to foster Scottish economic development interests primarily through European collaborative innovation projects. Originally from the northeast of Scotland, Charles has an MSc in Strategic Studies from the University of Aberdeen, the thesis of which considered the securitisation of water in the context of climate change, and an MA in European Studies from the same university.

RESEARCH PROJECTS

- The role of regional authority as a factor of regional innovation policy adoption
- Comparative cases of smart specialisation and regional innovation policy adoption outwith the EU (Scotland and Norway)

CURRENT RESEARCH QUESTION

Are missions-orientated and challenge-orientated research and innovation policies dichotomous or complementary to the smart specialisation policy approach?

DATA & METHOD

- Quantitative analysis of the relationship between challenge-based approaches and RIS3, using data from Horizon 2020 and Smart Specialisation Strategies.
- Qualitative (interview) analysis investigating innovation policy adoption across Scotland and Norway

SOCIETAL INTEREST

Explaining the differentiated uptake and success of RIS3, considering how useful innovation policies are in fostering the EU's ambitions of acting with greater 'strategic autonomy', and improving future policy design





BENJAMIN CORNEJO COSTAS

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POLISS RESEARCH THEME

Talents and Regional Diversification in the EU

HOST INSTITUTION

Utrecht University

SECONDMENT INSTITUTIONS

Bocconi University
Rabobank Group

SUPERVISORY TEAM

Main supervisor: Andrea Morrison

Co-supervisor: Paula Prenzel

Mentor: Sjoerd Hardeman

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BACKGROUND

Prior to joining POLISS, Benjamin obtained a Master's Degree in Public Policy from Universidad de San Andrés in Buenos Aires, Argentina; and a Master's Degree in Science and Technology Policy from SPRU, University of Sussex (Brighton, UK). Before joining academia, he worked in the public sector designing policies for the knowledge-based services sector.

RESEARCH PROJECTS

My research track is "Talents and regional diversification in the EU". The project addresses the link between migration and innovation and how migrants can contribute to the diversification of regions.

CURRENT RESEARCH QUESTION

I'm working on disentangling how the US immigration Act in 1921 impacted on breakthrough innovations. This is a historical research to explore how migration is linked to breakthrough innovations.

DATA & METHOD

I'm using historical US Patents parsed from PDFs in Google and the IPUMS' censuses, matching both of them to get more information about inventors. I'm using machine learning techniques and text mining to analyse breakthrough innovations in historical patents.

SOCIETAL INTEREST

I try to understand how restricting migration could also have an unintended impact on economic development and technological growth. I want to show how important high skilled migrants were and still are for regions.





YIFAN TIAN

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POLISS RESEARCH THEME

Gender Gap in Innovation: A Regional Perspective

HOST INSTITUTION

Bocconi University

SECONDMENT INSTITUTIONS

University of Stavanger
Autonomous Province of Trento

SUPERVISORY TEAM

Main supervisor: Stefano Breschi
Co-supervisor: Nicoletta Corrocher

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BACKGROUND

Yifan holds a Master's Degree in Business Economics from the University of Amsterdam (Amsterdam, the Netherlands) and Bachelor's Degrees in Economics and History from Nankai University (Tianjin, China). Before enrolling at Bocconi University (Milan, Italy), she worked at ShanghaiTech University (Shanghai, China) as a research assistant for two years.

RESEARCH PROJECTS

The project concentrates on factors that influence entrepreneurial performance of startups and investigates the effect of knowledge accumulated in startups on the development and exit of startups.

CURRENT RESEARCH QUESTION

How are skills in startups combined, and how does the combination impact entrepreneurial performance?

DATA & METHOD

I collect startup-related information from CrunchBase and the skills of entrepreneurs from LinkedIn, and I analyze data with such methods as text analysis, machine learning, and econometrics regressions.

SOCIETAL INTEREST

The research provides suggestions for human capital accumulation in startups and benefits venture capitalists with better investment decisions and more efficient resource allocation.





EDUARDO HERNÁNDEZ RODRÍGUEZ

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POLISS RESEARCH THEME

Applied Methodology and Tools for the Design and Implementation of Smart Specialisation Strategies

HOST INSTITUTION

Utrecht University

SECONDMENT INSTITUTIONS

Bocconi University
World Intellectual Property Organization

SUPERVISORY TEAM

Main supervisor: Ron Boschma
Co-supervisor: Andrea Morrison
Mentor: Julio Raffo

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BACKGROUND

Eduardo holds a Bachelor of Economics and a Bachelor of Laws from the University of Seville (Seville, Spain). During his bachelor's studies he was also Erasmus visiting student at Sciences Po Strasbourg (Strasbourg, France). In addition, he holds a Master of Sciences in European Economic Studies: European Law and Economics Analysis from the College of Europe (Bruges, Belgium).

RESEARCH PROJECTS

The influence of regional engagement in global value chains on structural changes processes. Eduardo studies the role of interregional value-added linkages shaping regional competitive advantages, labour patterns and technological capabilities.

CURRENT RESEARCH QUESTION

Does regions' participation in global value chains influence functional specialisation in trade? Does this participation shape their evolution of technological capabilities? Is the principle of relatedness verified in this evolution?

DATA & METHOD

Labour occupations from the European Labour Force Survey, wages from the European Structure of Earnings Survey, and input-output tables from EUREGIO. Methodology combines input-output analysis, econometrics, and network techniques.

SOCIETAL INTEREST

Recently we witnessed how globalization produced winners and losers. To understand the new international trade on value-added can help EU regions to profit from these processes improving EU regional cohesion.





JAY PRAKASH NAGAR

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POLISS RESEARCH THEME

Government Venture Capital and 'Equity Gaps' Across the Regional Economies.

HOST INSTITUTION

Bocconi University

SECONDMENT INSTITUTIONS

Utrecht University
Intesa Sanpaolo

SUPERVISORY TEAM

Main supervisor: Stefano Breschi

Co-supervisor: Nilanjana Dutt

Mentor: Stefania Trenti

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BACKGROUND

Jay holds a Master's Degree in Economics from Delhi School of Economics (Delhi, India) and a Bachelor of Technology in Electrical Engineering from the Indian Institute of Technology (Delhi, India).

Before enrolling at Bocconi University (Milan, Italy), he worked as an Economist in the Institutional Equity Research team at B&K Securities and Elara Capital (Mumbai, India). Furthermore, he has worked as a research associate for the Centre for Advanced Financial Research and Learning (CAFRAL) at the Reserve Bank of India, Mumbai. He also completed research projects on Urbanisation and Corporate Finance at the Institute of Economic Growth (Delhi, India) and the Indian Institute of Management (Ahmedabad, India).

RESEARCH PROJECTS

Understanding the impact of large-scale grants on scientific research and innovation, especially in the context of European Research Council funding in Europe. Studying the geographical disparity in patenting of innovation grounded upon existing scientific research in EU regions.

CURRENT RESEARCH QUESTION

Evaluating the applied value of the European Research Council grant in creating social-valuable outcomes, i.e., patents based on scientific publications. Are the projects funded by ERC producing more publications with a higher probability of citation in patents compared to other European research projects? The geographical distribution of innovation and patenting activities based on ERC-funded science in EU regions is also studied.

DATA & METHOD

We are using the patent and publication level data for the ERC-funded research project sourced from ERIS Database, PATSTAT, Scopus, and Microsoft Academic Graph. We build a novel dataset of patents citing the publication produced by ERC-funded research projects using text-mining and web-scraping methods.

SOCIETAL INTEREST

Measuring the social value of the public investment in science becomes difficult as most academic research projects generate scientific publications that may appear to have very little direct utility to the public. The fruits of scientific research may divert to places where laws are less stringent or a large market for scientific innovation exists. The geographical disparity of opportunities can lead to the diversion of the value created by public funding of science.

