

Erick BAUMGARTNER

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PERSONAL DATA

PLACE AND DATE OF BIRTH: São Paulo, Brazil | 03 March 1988
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EDUCATION

2021–present PhD in ECONOMICS, **Bocconi University**, Italy
2024 PHD FELLOW, **Center for International Development**, **Harvard University**, USA
2017 Master of Science in ECONOMIC THEORY, **University of São Paulo (USP)**, Brazil
Thesis: “The Payroll Tax Exemption and its Effect on the Brazilian Labor Market”
Advisor: Prof. Renata del Tedesco NARITA
2015 Bachelor of Science in ECONOMICS, **Freie Universität Berlin (FUB)**, Germany
Thesis: “Employment History and the Demographic Transition in Germany”
Advisor: Prof. Viktor STEINER
2010 Bachelor of INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, **São Paulo State University (UNESP)**, Brazil
Thesis: “Income Transfer and Basic Income: an International Overview”
Advisor: Prof. Patricia SORAYA MUSTAFA
2008 Exchange Semester at **Technical University - Dresden**, Germany

TEACHING

Bocconi University, Italy
2023–present Microeconometrics (Graduate) - Teaching Assistant to Prof. Thomas Le Barbanchon
2025–present Econometrics (Graduate) - Teaching Assistant to Prof. Massimiliano Marcellino
2025–present Poverty, Inequality and Income Distribution (Undergraduate) - Teaching Assistant to Prof. Diogo Britto
2022–present Development (Undergraduate) - Teaching Assistant to Profs. Stefano Fiorin, Diogo Britto and Alexia Delfino

World Bank DIME (Development Impact Evaluation)
2019, 2020 Manage Successful Impact Evaluation Surveys - Instructor

University of São Paulo, Brazil
2015 Microeconometrics (Undergraduate) - Teaching Assistant to Prof. Fabiana Fontes Rocha
2016 Microeconometrics (Undergraduate) - Teaching Assistant to Prof. Fabio Miessi

LANGUAGES

PORTUGUESE: Native
ENGLISH: Fluent
GERMAN: Fluent
SPANISH: Fluent
ITALIAN: Fluent

WORKING PAPERS

Direct and Spillover Effects of Generative AI: Evidence from the Judiciary (2026)

Generative AI lowers the cost of producing text, but much of that text must be processed by others. I study this two-sided productivity shock in civil litigation, where lawyers write petitions and judges turn them into decisions. Using metadata and full text from airline small-claims cases in São Paulo, I detect AI use directly in legal documents from 2022–2025. Lawyers respond mainly on the extensive margin: after ChatGPT, adopting lawyers become 16 percentage points more likely to file an airline case in a given month and 9 points more likely to file outside the airline docket. The additional cases are not observably weaker, and petitions become less repetitive and denser, with no detectable effects on case winning rates and on proxies for procedural mistakes. Cases filed by adopting lawyers show downstream effects, leading to a 9 pp decrease in the likelihood that the judge reaches a decision within six months. Judges' own AI adoption produces no immediate average productivity gain, although output rises with experience and among early adopters. Adoption also increases cross-judge dispersion in awards for cases with similar pleaded facts. In a Priest-Klein framework, greater outcome dispersion feeds back into more litigation. The results show that adopter-side productivity gains can miss the margin that matters for system-wide performance.

Payroll Tax, Employment and Labor Market Concentration (2026) [\[Link\]](#)

with Raphael Corbi and Renata Narita. *R&R at Labour Economics*.

Winner of the Applied Microeconomics prize at the Brazilian Econometric Society conference in 2024. Presented at the SBE Congress in 2024, the IZA Summer School in Labor Economics of 2024, the IAB Imperfect Competition Workshop of 2023, the EEA-ESEM Congress of 2022 and the EALE Congress of 2022.

How much employment can be generated by decreasing payroll taxes? We examine this question by exploring the staggered rollout of a large payroll tax reform in Brazil. Using administrative matched employer-employee data, we find a 5 percent increase in employment due to both firm growth and firm entry, no impact on wages and a significant increase in profits. Moreover, employment effects are driven by less concentrated labor markets, consistent with predictions from an oligopsony model.

The Electoral Effects of Conditional Cash Transfers (2026)

Presented at Doctorissimes (2026), the Milan PhD Workshop (2025) and Relaunch (Bicocca University).

The literature on the electoral effects of social policy expenditures reports generally positive impacts on incumbent electoral support. On the other hand, studies such as Imai et al. (2020) suggest these results may be confined to discretionary spending, whereas programmatic expenditures are less likely to increase political support. In this paper, we exploit a quasi-exogenous shock to access to Bolsa Família, the Conditional Cash Transfer program in Brazil, to assess whether expanded access increased support for the incumbent, and how this interacts with local political alignment. Our findings show that, despite a large shock that increased the number of CCT recipients by around 13%, estimated electoral gains are close to zero and statistically insignificant. We then analyze a second shock that excluded more than 700,000 families from the program in the first semester of 2013 through eligibility checks. The exclusions are correlated with higher shares of blank votes and lower support for the Workers' Party, providing some evidence of asymmetric electoral effects.

The Chosen, the Cool and the Central: Peer Education and Teen Pregnancy in Brazil (2026)

with Emily Breza, Eliana La Ferrara, Pedro Rosa Dias and Victor Orozco

We combine insights from network theory and social psychology to target a program aimed at reducing teen pregnancies among Brazilian high school students. The program trains a group of peer educators in each school, who then disseminate information among other students. We propose a model of diffusion and adoption under school-level externalities, extending the framework of Banerjee et al. (2019) to allow certain nodes to have differential effectiveness in the transmission of information - notably, "popular" students may be more influential than others. We conduct an RCT with 88 schools to test the effectiveness of three strategies for selecting peer educators: (i) selection by school administrators, (ii) most connected students, as measured by eigenvector centrality; and (iii) most popular students, based on survey responses. We find that (ii) and (iii) significantly increase contraceptive use, reduce teen pregnancy, and increase intended post-secondary school enrolment, relative to a control group. By estimating the model parameters we show that pure centrality is particularly effective in shaping the spread of information and knowledge, while popularity plays an important role in converting those knowledge gains into the adoption of contraception.

WORK IN PROGRESS

Political brokers and the allocation of social benefits: the case of Bolsa Família (2025)

with Caio Pedro Castro, Thea How Choon and Giovanna Marcolongo

We propose a model to explain the role of political brokers in targeting beneficiaries of social programs and the welfare implications of their involvement. The marginal utility of a social benefit provided by the government depends on voters' income and health status. Income is observed by the government, while health status is only observed by social workers during their frequent interactions with the population. Governments can either: I) allocate benefits based on observables (income), or II) hire social workers as political brokers and allocate the benefits based on income and health status. If voters with higher marginal utility are also the most likely to reciprocate in the election, political brokers achieve a first best allocation. We test the implications of the model in the context of Brazil's "Bolsa Família", one of the largest conditional cash transfer programs in the world. We exploit a plausible exogenous shock to the eligibility of the benefit. We test: I) whether social workers with political ties (i.e., political brokers) are more likely to allocate benefits to now-ineligible individuals and II) whether, in doing so, they take private information (i.e., citizens' health status) into account. Finally, if this is the case, we test whether the modified allocation leads to electoral reciprocation by voters.

REFERENCES

Massimo Morelli

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