

AIKO SCHMEISSER

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EDUCATION

Berlin School of Economics & University of Potsdam 2020 -

PhD in Economics

Fields: Labor Economics, Political Economy

Thesis Committee: Marco Caliendo, Thomas Siedler

University of Göttingen 2018 - 2020

Graduate studies in International Economics (M.Sc.)

University of Bayreuth 2014 - 2018

Undergraduate studies in Economics (B.Sc.) and International Economics and Development (B.A.)

WORKING PAPERS

Do Unions Shape Political Ideologies at Work? (with Johannes Matzat), CESifo Working Paper 10301.

[\[Latest version\]](#)

Labor unions' greatest potential for political influence likely arises from their direct connection to millions of individuals at the workplace. There, they may change the ideological positions of both unionizing workers and their non-unionizing management. In this paper, we analyze the workplace-level impact of unionization on workers' and managers' political campaign contributions over the 1980-2016 period in the United States. To do so, we link establishment-level union election data with transaction-level campaign contributions to federal and local candidates. In a difference-in-differences design that we validate with regression discontinuity tests and a novel instrumental variables approach, we find that unionization leads to a leftward shift of campaign contributions. Unionization increases the support for Democrats relative to Republicans not only among workers but also among managers, which speaks against an increase in political cleavages between the two groups. We provide evidence that our results are not driven by compositional changes of the workforce and are weaker in states with Right-to-Work laws where unions can invest fewer resources in political activities.

The Accuracy of Job Seekers' Wage Expectations (with Marco Caliendo, Robert Mahlstedt, and Sophie Wagner). [\[Latest version\]](#)

Job seekers' misperceptions about the labor market can distort their decision-making and increase the risk of long-term unemployment. Our study establishes objective benchmarks for the subjective wage expectations of unemployed workers. This enables us to provide novel insights into the accuracy of job seekers' wage expectations. First, especially workers with low objective earnings potential tend to display excessively optimistic beliefs about their future wages and anchor their wage expectations too strongly to their pre-unemployment wages. Second, among long-term unemployed workers, overoptimism remains persistent throughout the unemployment spell. Third, higher extrinsic incentives to search more intensively lead job seekers to hold more optimistic wage expectations, yet this does not translate into higher realized wages for them. Lastly, we document a connection between overoptimistic wage expectations and job seekers' tendency to overestimate their reemployment chances. We discuss the role of information frictions and motivated beliefs as potential sources of job seekers' optimism and the heterogeneity in their beliefs.

WORK IN PROGRESS

Job Losses and Political Careers: Evidence from Brazil (with Laura Barros)

Worker Preferences for Co-Racial Colleagues (with Katharina Fietz)

PRE-PHD PUBLICATIONS

A Tale of (Almost) 1001 Coefficients: Deep and Heterogeneous Effects of the EU-Turkey Customs Union (with Mario Larch and Joschka Wanner), 2021, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 59(2), 242-260. [\[link\]](#)

PROFESSIONAL WORK EXPERIENCE

University of Potsdam Research Assistant at Chair of Empirical Economics	2021 -
University of Göttingen Student Research Assistant at the Research Training Group Globalization and Development Fieldwork Assistant for RCT in Cambodia	2018 - 2020
German Council of Economic Experts Internship at Labor Market Team of Scientific Staff	2018
University of Bayreuth Student Research Assistant at Chair of Development Economics	2017 - 2018
German Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy Internship at Department for Trade Policy with North America	2017

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Conference and Seminar Presentations

European Association of Labor Economics (Prague), European Economic Association (Barcelona), Society for Institutional & Organizational Economics (Frankfurt), European Society for Population Economics (Belgrade), IAAEU Colloquium on Economics (Trier), Research Seminar in Economics (Potsdam)	2023
ifo Workshop on Political Economy (Dresden), Verein für Socialpolitik (Basel), European Association of Labor Economics (Padua), European Society for Population Economics (Calabria), Research Seminar for Applied Microeconomics (FU Berlin), BeNA Winter Workshop (Berlin), BSE Summer Workshop (Berlin)	2022
European Association of Labor Economics (online), European Society for Population Economics (online)	2021
Workshop Internationale Wirtschaftsbeziehungen (Göttingen)	2019
Refereeing <i>Journal of Labor Market Research, Empirical Economics</i>	
Other Organization of BeNA Labor Economics Workshop	2023

SCHOLARSHIPS & AWARDS

Wicksell Prize of the European Public Choice Society, 2nd place for the research paper "Do Unions Shape Political Ideologies at Work?"	2023
PhD scholarship Berlin School of Economics	2020 - 2021
Student scholarship Konrad Adenauer Foundation	2015 - 2018

TEACHING

University of Potsdam Policy Evaluation (practical session, graduate level)	Summer 2023
Advanced Microeconometrics (practical session, graduate level)	Winter 2021/22, 2022/23
Advanced Methods and Applications in Policy Evaluation (seminar, graduate level)	Winter 2022/23
Research Idea Development Seminar (seminar, graduate level)	Winter 2021/22
Methods in Policy Evaluation (seminar, undergraduate level)	Summer 2022, Summer 2023
Statistics (practical session, undergraduate level)	Summer 2022
University of Bayreuth Macroeconomics I (practical session, undergraduate level)	Summer 2016, Summer 2017
Microeconomics I (practical session, undergraduate level)	Winter 2015/16