

CHRISTIAN ALEMÁN-PERICÓN

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CURRENT APPOINTMENT

2023 - Today Postdoctoral Research Associate, NYU AbuDhabi, United Arab Emirates

PAST POSITIONS

2022 Postdoctoral Fellow, ECARES (Université Libre Bruxelles) Brussels, Belgium

EDUCATION

2018 - 2022 Ph.D. Economics (*Cum Laude*), IDEA-Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain

2020 Ph.D. Visiting Scholar, Dept. of Economics, University of Pennsylvania, USA

2016 - 2018 M.Sc. Master in Quantitative Economics, Paris1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, France

FIELDS OF INTEREST

Macroeconomics, Macrofinancial Modeling, Econometrics, Statistics, Labor Economics, Growth and Development, Inequality, Health, Family Economics, and Policy Evaluation.

My research lies at intersection of Macro, Finance and Econometrics. I develop novel statistical and econometric methods for causal inference, and combine them with structural quantitative models as tools to highlight the mechanisms behind empirical facts observed in the data.

WORKING PAPERS

“Kramer vs. Kramer. On the importance of Children and Divorce Filings for Understanding Divorce Rates in the USA”, 2026 *R&R American Economic Journal: Macroeconomics*

“Stage-Based Identification of Policy Effects” with Christopher Busch, Alexander Ludwig and Raül Santaaulàlia-Llopis, 2023

“A Quantitative Theory of the HIV Epidemic: Education, Risky Sex and Asymmetric Learning” (with Daniela Iorio and Raül Santaaulàlia-Llopis) 2025

RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

“Employment and Human Capital Investment Responses to Payroll Tax Reductions” with Étienne Wasmer, Raül Santaaulàlia-Llopis and Pranav Mimani, 2026

“On the incidence neutrality of employer and employee social contributions” with Étienne Wasmer, Raül Santaaulàlia-Llopis and Pranav Mimani, 2026

“Double Selection in Causal Inference” with Christopher Busch, Raül Santaaulàlia-Llopis and Tanya Surovtseva, 2025

“Evaluating the Effectiveness of Policy Against the Covid-19 Pandemic” with Christopher Busch, Alexander Ludwig and Raül Santaaulàlia-Llopis, Barcelona School of Economics Paper 2023

“Compensation, Talent Allocation, and Firm Dynamics: Theory and Evidence from Egg Freezing Packages” with Fane Groes, Raul Santaaulàlia-Llopis

“The Ozempic Economy, Sugar Addiction, Labor Market and Optimal Subsidies” with Fane Groes, Veda Narasimhan, Raül Santaaulàlia-Llopis and Tanya Surovtseva

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

2024 Research Assistance, Mission Bozio-Wasmer pour le Premier Ministre
Les politiques d'exonérations de cotisations sociales : une inflexion nécessaire (2023-2024)

2018 Research Internship, Banc Sabadell, Barcelona Spain

2017 (Summer) Research Internship, Leibniz Institute for Economic Research Halle IWH, Germany

2016 Research Internship, Central Bank of Bolivia-at the Advisory of Economic Policy

2013 - 2015 Research Assistant for Prof. Oscar Molina, Universidad Privada Boliviana

TEACHING EXPERIENCE Average student evaluations score: 4.3/5

2023 - 2024	Intermediate Macroeconomics (Undergraduate), New York University Abu Dhabi
2022	Research Methods in Economics (Graduate), Université Libre de Bruxelles
2021	Teaching Assistant, Econometrics I (Graduate), Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona
2020	Instructor, Statistics II (Undergraduate), Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona
2013 - 2015	Teaching Assistant, Microeconomics II (Undergraduate), Universidad Privada Boliviana

SCHOLARSHIPS AND GRANTS

2023 - 2026	Postdoctoral Research Fund Award
2018 - 2022	FPI Ph.D. Scholarship from the Spanish Ministry of Science
2016 - 2018	Erasmus Mundus Scholarship: Full funding for my Master in France
2014	Goethe Institute Excellence Scholarship: Full scholarship to learn the German language
2012-2015	Excellence Scholarship, Universidad Privada Boliviana

PRESENTATIONS IN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

On Families, Technology and the Economy (2025, NYUAD, UAE), AI and Learning the Macroeconomy (2025, BSE-UAB, Spain), Society of Economic Dynamics Conference (2025, University of Copenhagen, Denmark), Canadian Economic Association Annual Meeting (2025, UQAM, Canada), McGill Economics Brown Bag Seminar (2025, McGill University, Canada), York Economics Seminar (2025, York University, Canada), New Frontiers for Policy Evaluation (2025, NYUAD, UAE), PostDoc Seminar (2023-24-25, NYUAD, UAE), Development Seminar (2025-26, NYUAD, UAE), Melbourne Economics Seminar, (2024, University of Melbourne, Australia), Queensland Economics Seminar, (2024, University of Queensland, Australia), Workshop of the Australian Macroeconomics Society WAMS-LAEF, (2024, University of Western Australia, Australia), Deakin Economics Brownbag, (2024, Deakin University, Australia), Macro-Development Workshop, (2024, Deakin University, Australia), Monash Economics Seminar, (2024, Monash University, Australia), Developments in the Theory and the Applications of Counterfactual Methods for Policy COMPIE (2024, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, Netherlands), International Workshop on Migration and Family, Poster (2024, IESEG Paris, France), Barcelona Summer Forum, Income Dynamics and the Family (2024, UAB-BSE, Spain), Health and Demography Seminar (2024, NYUAD, UAE), Inequality Seminar (2024, NYUAD, UAE), Global Dynamics Seminar (2024, NYUAD, UAE), AFEPOP Inaugural Conference (2024, Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, France), Economics Brownbag Seminar (2023, NYUAD, UAE), Society of Economics of the Household SEHO (2023, University of Copenhagen, Denmark), Workshop on Families, Human Capital, and Inequality, Poster (2023, Mannheim University, Germany), Household Economics Gathering (2022, KU Leuven, Belgium), Leuven Summer Event (2022, KU Leuven, Belgium), DTMC Workshop on Interactions between Labor and Marriage Markets (2022, Aarhus University, Denmark), Essex-Barcelona Workshop on Labor Economics (2021, UAB, Spain), Macro Club, UAB internal seminar series (2019-20-21-22, UAB, Spain), Barcelona School of Economics Ph.D Jamboree (2018-19 UAB-Pompeu Fabra, Spain), IMF Gender and Macroeconomics Conference, Poster (2017 Washington DC, USA), 7th Bolivian Conference on Development Economics (2016 UPSA, Bolivia).

COMPUTER SKILLS

MATLAB, STATA, R, Python, Julia, (HPC & parallel computing), LaTeX

LANGUAGE SKILLS

Spanish-Native, English-Fluent TOEFL iBT grade:107, German-Fluent, TestDaF Level C1, French-Fluent TCF Level C1, Catalan-Medium, Level B1

RESEARCH

Kramer vs. Kramer. On the importance of Children and Divorce Filings for Understanding Divorce Rates in the USA (2026) *R&R American Economic Journal: Macroeconomics*

I document that approximately 70% of divorce filings in the 1970's were done by wives in the United States. Since then, this figure has experienced a large decline, reaching 56% in 2015. At the same time, divorce rates sharply increased from 1960 until the mid 1980's and have declined since then. I construct a life cycle model of endogenous marriage and unilateral divorce with endogenous labor supply and savings that jointly explains these facts. I use my model to measure the contribution of changes in the gender-wage gap, property division laws and child custody arrangements in explaining the divorce patterns over time. First, the reduction in the gender-wage gap generates two opposing effects. On the one hand, the reduction of the gender-wage gap increases the value of divorce for married women and, on the other hand, unmarried women become more selective in the marriage market thus raising the quality of newly formed matches. Second, children increase the value of divorce for the custodial parent; so a higher probability of getting child custody raises the chances of filing for divorce. Third, a higher share of assets assigned to wives upon divorce can either increase or decrease divorce rates by altering the savings decision of the household. My model accounts for approximately 50 per cent of the decline in divorce filings and 70 per cent of the variation in divorce rates between 1970 and 2015. I find that the decrease in the gender-wage gap and the increase in the probability of getting child custody for men are major drivers behind the changes in divorce rates and in divorce filings, respectively. Importantly, I find that failure to match who files for divorce can lead to opposite counterfactual results.

On the Incidence Neutrality of Employer and Employees Social Contributions (2026) joint with Etienne Wasmer, Pranav Mimani and Raül Santaeuàlia-Llopis

This paper revisits the belief that the mix of employer and employee social security contributions is neutral for employment and equilibrium wages. We establish the conditions required for neutrality across competitive settings, institutional minimum wages, progressive taxation, and search-and-matching frictions. We show that statutory invariance breaks down due to a single structural tax asymmetry wedge operating almost identically across these frameworks. Consequently, tax neutrality is restricted to a strict knife edge case that is comprehensively violated in modern labor markets, rendering statutory non-neutrality highly relevant quantitatively. Our findings offer critical implications for designing contemporary welfare and workfare policies.

Employment and Human Capital Investment Responses to Payroll Tax Reductions (2025) joint with Etienne Wasmer, Pranav Mimani and Raül Santaeuàlia-Llopis

To counter the negative effects on employment for low-skilled workers, some countries have developed policies that reduce social contributions for low wage workers. We examine the effects of such policies on employment, the incentives to invest in employee training, and salary progression. We propose a model featuring dual heterogeneity of workers and firms, as outlined by Shimer and Smith (2000), to which we add specific human capital accumulation. We calibrate the model on France, where the policy of tax relief, initiated in 1993, has reached a record of 80 billion euros (2.5% of GDP). We find that the reductions in social contributions for low wage workers disincentivize human capital investments and contribute significantly to the high concentration of workers who prefer to keep earning the minimum wage. Our simulations suggest that a one percent reduction of the social contribution subsidy increases average wages by 4% and net employment by 2.5%.

Double Selection in Causal Inference (2025) joint with Christopher Busch, Raül Santaeuàlia-Llopis and Tanya Surovtseva

A long-standing question in research using natural experiments for causal inference is the appropriate functional form of the outcome variable, often involving a choice between level or logarithmic formulations. This choice is crucial because the assumption of a single constant selection bias (CSB)—or, equivalently, a parallel time trend—for identifying the policy effect cannot hold simultaneously in both formulations. To address this issue, we propose a novel double-selection (DS) econometric approach, in which units face two types of selection: a level shifter (single CSB in levels) and a proportional shifter (single CSB in logs). We show unique identification of the DS and, consequently, the causal effects. We propose a DS estimator in levels and conduct inference.

A Quantitative Theory of the HIV Epidemic: Education, Risky Sex and Asymmetric Learning (2025) joint work with Daniela Iorio and Raül Santaaulàlia-Llopis

We explore learning about HIV infection odds from risky sex as a new mechanism explaining the Sub-Saharan Africa HIV epidemic. Our novel empirical evidence reveals a U-shaped relationship between education and being HIV positive across the epidemic, which prompts the idea of asymmetric learning: more educated individuals potentially learn faster and update their (latent) beliefs about infection odds more accurately than less educated individuals, inducing earlier sexual behavioral change among the more educated. Our non-stationary model incorporates three HIV epidemic stages, chronologically: a myopic stage where agents are unaware of how risky sex causes infections, a learning stage where agents update beliefs on infection odds, and an ART stage reflecting treatment introduction. Anchored to the micro evidence—the U-shaped HIV-education gradient—we find that our learning mechanism is powerful: a 5-year earlier learning reduces new AIDS deaths by almost 45%, and a 10-year earlier learning results in a 60% drop. Removing learning altogether reveals that under full information, i.e. life expectancy asymmetries present only through education, play a much smaller role than learning.

Stage-Based Identification of Policy Effects (2023) joint with Christopher Busch, Alexander Ludwig and Raül Santaaulàlia-Llopis

We develop a method that identifies the effects of nationwide policy, i.e., policy implemented across all regions at the same time. The core idea is to track outcome paths in terms of stages rather than time, where a stage of a regional outcome at time t is its location on the support of a reference path. The method proceeds in two steps. First, a normalization maps the time paths of regional outcomes onto the reference path—using only pre-policy data. This uncovers cross-regional heterogeneity of the stage at which policy is implemented. Second, this stage variation identifies policy effects inside a window of stages where a stage-leading region provides the no-policy counterfactual path for non-leading regions that are subject to policy inside that window. We assess our method's performance with Monte-Carlo experiments, illustrate it with empirical applications, and show that it captures heterogeneous policy effects across stages.

Evaluating the Effectiveness of Policies Against a Pandemic (2023) joint with Christopher Busch, Alexander Ludwig and Raül Santaaulàlia-Llopis

We apply a novel method to evaluate policies against a pandemic. In the context of the application, the essence of our approach is the insight that epidemic dynamics are best tracked over stages, rather than over time. The application focuses on the nationwide stay-home policy enacted in Spain against the Covid-19 pandemic. We find that the policy saved 16.8% of lives relative to the number of deaths that would have occurred had it not been for the policy intervention. Its effectiveness evolves with the epidemic and is larger when implemented at earlier stages.

Compensation, Talent Allocation, and Firm Dynamics: Theory and Evidence from Egg Freezing Packages with Fane Groes, Raul Santaaulàlia-Llopis

We study how compensation packages shape firm dynamics by attracting and retaining high talent workers. We use egg freezing (EF) benefits as a key compensation innovation adopted heterogeneously across firms. EF alters internal wage distributions, labor force attachment, the composition of talent within firms, and other key demographic margins such as age at first birth (AFB). We develop a model in which firms optimally choose the degree of EF cost subsidization to compete for high human capital women whose career family trade off is relaxed by this technology. The model predicts that firms with high capital-skill complementarity gain disproportionately from EF adoption, attracting talent at the top of the human capital distribution while crowding out lower skill workers. We match employer employee data to document how EF adoption reshapes within firm wage distributions, worker selection and fertility outcomes. Our findings speak to a broader question in corporate finance: how non-standard compensation packages function as strategic instruments for talent allocation, with measurable consequences for firm value and workforce composition.

The Ozempic Economy: Sugar Addiction, Labor Market and Optimal Subsidies with Fane Groes, Veda Narasimhan, Raul Santaaulàlia-Llopis and Tetyana Surovtseva. Read about this article in [Nada es Gratis](#) blog.

Using linked Danish administrative data on medical prescriptions and firm records, we examine the effects of weight-loss pharmacotherapy — such as Ozempic and Mounjaro — on employment, hours, and labor earnings. Our contribution is twofold. First, we document empirically the significant and robust effects of weight loss drugs on labor market outcomes using a battery of alternative identification strategies in diabetic and non-diabetic population. Second, we build a quantitative macroeconomic model with endogenous sugar consumption and pharmacotherapy uptake to assess optimal public subsidies and alternative regulatory frameworks such governing pharmaceutical pricing.