Tomas Wilner

Northwestern
Economics

Placement Director:	Professor Alessandro Pavan	847-491-8266	alepavan@northwestern.edu
Placement Administrator:	Lola Ittner	847-491-5694	econjobmarket@northwestern.edu

Contact Information

Department of Economics
Northwestern University
2211 Campus Drive
Evanston, IL 60208

Mobile: 224-435-7019
twilner@u.northwestern.edu
www.tomaswilner.com
Citizenship: Argentinian

Fields

Research: Environmental and Energy Economics, Industrial Organization
Teaching: Environmental and Energy Economics, Industrial Organization, Econometrics

Education

Ph.D., Economics, Northwestern University (anticipated) 2024
Committee: Mar Reguant (Chair), Gaston Illanes, Robert Porter, Vivek Bhattacharya
M.A., Economics, Northwestern University 2021
M.A., Economics, Universidad de Chile 2017
B.Sc.Eng., Industrial Engineering, Universidad de Chile 2015

Fellowships & Awards

Dissertation University Fellowship, Northwestern University 2023–2024
Distinguished Teaching Assistant Award, Northwestern University 2020–2021
University Fellowship, Northwestern University 2018–2023
National Masters Degree Fellowship, Chilean Ministry of Education 2015–2017

Teaching Experience

Teaching Assistant, Northwestern University 2019–2023
Industrial Organization (graduate), Energy Economics (undergrad), Applied Econometrics (undergrad)
Teaching Assistant, Universidad de Chile 2013–2016
Econometrics (graduate), Statistics (undergrad), Finance II (undergrad), Marketing (undergrad)

Research Experience

Research Assistant, Professor Gaston Illanes, Northwestern University 2021–2023
Research Assistant, Professor Mar Reguant, Northwestern University 2021
Research Assistant, Professor Carlos Noton, Universidad de Chile 2017
Research Assistant, Professor Juan Escobar, Universidad de Chile 2016
Research Assistant, Professor Marcelo Olivares, Universidad de Chile 2015-2016

Other Experience

Summer Intern, Chilean Antitrust Agency 2016

Job Market Paper

"Natural gas to complement solar intermittency: Long-run consequences of policy interventions" with Jingyuan Wang

Abstract: Natural gas has become pivotal in the energy transition, as it can complement renewable energy at a lower emission rate compared to alternative fossil fuels. In countries with scarce natural gas reserves, firms might exhibit insufficient import levels relative to governmental preferences. In this paper, we study several policies designed to incentivize larger natural gas orders and examine their impact on long-term solar entry. Our research is conducted in Chile, a notable solar energy adopter, which implemented a policy to encourage natural gas procurement. We find that while the policy displaces coal usage, it simultaneously increases natural gas imports to an extent that counterbalances its positive effects on emissions, incurring a net pollution cost of $20 million per year. Removing

this policy would not only result in a short-term reduction in emissions but also stimulate increased solar energy adoption in the long run by 10%. Among the policies we examined, implementing a carbon price proves most effective, as it raises natural gas imports, lowers emissions in the short run by $191 million annually, and enhances solar energy entry in the long term by 54%.

Working papers

"Beyond the impossible: Steering consumers away from beef"

Abstract: The effect of meat consumption on the environment is well-documented, yet little is known about the effect of policies targeting environmentally harmful food choices. I build a structural model of the demand for meat, which allows me to study three different policies: a 50% reduction of beef products on retail shelves, an environmental tax reflecting the environmental costs of food products, and advertisements for plant-based products that increase consumers' valuation of them. I also analyze the supply side to estimate how prices would change in equilibrium under these policies. I find that limiting beef products alone does not reduce emissions significantly; its benefits can be easily matched with a small tax on beef, and the consumer welfare loss outweighs the environmental gains. Conversely, the other policies prove to be more effective in reducing emissions. However, I find that the burden of the tax is born disproportionately by underprivileged consumers, and its environmental benefits come mainly from consumers switching to poultry and pork products. Subsidizing these meat products while taxing beef might achieve more progressive results.

Work in progress

"The effects of environmental regulation on firm competitiveness: The Porter Hypothesis under the lens"

Abstract: Although posed in 1991, the Porter Hypothesis is still open for debate: can environmental regulation often enhance firm competitiveness? A usual challenge that arises when trying to address this question comes from imprecise measures of treated and untreated groups. For instance, the Clean Air Act poses a vague definition of emitter vs non-emitter, requiring researchers to set thresholds to differentiate between treated and untreated plants. In this paper, we study a green tax implemented in Chile in 2017. We collected data, both before and after 2017, on plant emissions and tax payments and merged it with the Government's Annual Manufacturing Survey. The tax has outstanding variability, targeting specific pollutants and applying only to plants with power exceeding 50 MW. Moreover, tax rates vary based on the plants' locations. By exploiting several sources of discontinuity in the data, our aim is to identify the impacts of environmental regulation on productivity and employment across diverse industry sectors.

Invited workshops

Berkeley/Sloan Summer School in Environmental and Energy Economics, University of California, Berkeley 2020

Programming

Matlab, Python, Julia, Stata, R, QGIS (basic)

Languages

English (fluent), Spanish (native), Portuguese (basic)

References

Professor Mar Reguant
Department of Economics
Northwestern University
2211 Campus Drive
Evanston, IL 60208
847.491.8221
mar.reguant@northwestern.edu

Professor Gaston Illanes
Department of Economics
Northwestern University
2211 Campus Drive
Evanston, IL 60208
847.491.8227
gaston.illanes@northwestern.edu

Professor Robert Porter
Department of Economics
Northwestern University
2211 Campus Drive
Evanston, IL 60208
847.491.3491
r-porter@northwestern.edu

Professor Vivek Bhattacharya
Department of Economics
Northwestern University
2211 Campus Drive
Evanston, IL 60208
847.491.8213
vivek.bhattacharya@northwestern.edu