Adam Di Lizia

Address: Department of Economics, University of Warwick, Coventry CV4 7AL, UK
E-mail: adam.di-lizia@warwick.ac.uk Website: adamdilizia.github.io | Citizenship: British

Education

PhD in Economics — *University of Warwick*
2023–2027 (Expected)

Master of Research in Economics — *University of Warwick*
with Distinction — *2021–2023*

BSc in Economics — *University of Warwick*
First Class Honours — *2018–2021*

Research Interests

Applied Microeconomics, Political Economy, Platform Design

Job Market Paper

Brainrot? The Effect of Short-Form Content on Long-Form Attention

Winner, Best Poster, RES 2026

Does short-form content impact our attention spans? I study viewing patterns for a large set of news channels on YouTube, using attention heatmaps that record within-video click data. Leveraging the staggered rollout of YouTube Shorts across markets, I show that exposure to short-form content reduces continuous spells of attention to videos. Within-video skipping increases immediately and persists at about 40% above the pre-Shorts mean, with larger effects for longer videos. In turn, I document two important findings. First, the likely mechanism is reduced attention span, since I am able to rule out changing user composition and cross-video substitution as alternative explanations. This is supported by a model in which videos are bundles of interdependent slices where skipping trades off single-slice content against multi-slice context. The effect of short-form content then enters by lowering the value viewers place on context. Second, I show that news viewing patterns on YouTube have changed significantly, with viewers effectively reducing the amount of rich, informational context that they consume. Specifically, a structural model indicates that the value of context in news videos fell by at least a quarter with the introduction of Shorts.

Working Papers

Can Hate Speech Be Banned Online? The Effects of Shutting Down Toxic Forums on Reddit

(with Lily Shevchenko)

Is deplatforming effective in reducing toxicity on social media? To answer this question we study a policy change on Reddit in June 2020 which led to a simultaneous ban of thousands of forums containing hateful content, but not the users of these forums. We use data on the near universe of comments left on Reddit to examine the impact of the ban on user behaviour in a differences-in-differences design. We find that the most active users of banned subreddits comment more after the policy change and substitute to new forums in the weeks after the ban. The increase in activity persists in the long run, but is not associated with higher toxicity: instead, the comments left by affected users outside banned subreddits contain 20% fewer instances of hate speech. We do not find evidence that the policy leads to lower quality of engagement, negative spillover effects or recreation of banned subreddits elsewhere on the platform. Overall, the results suggest that moderation targeting toxic digital spaces can be effective in combating hate speech without lowering user engagement, and thus can be aligned with platforms' incentives.

Social Influence in Online Reviews: Evidence from the Steam Store

Winner, Best Paper, NIE Conference 2024 (Business and Industry Section of the Royal Statistical Society)

This paper investigates how pre-existing consumer assessments bias online ratings by exploiting a natural experiment on the Steam gaming platform. In 2019, an update exogenously removed the average rating being shown to incoming reviewers by default. I show that exposure to average ratings significantly alters reviewing behavior, driven entirely by compounding negativity. Reviewers exposed to a lower average rating become significantly more negative, but do not respond to a higher rating. Using owner data, I price the policy effect: a one percentage point increase in rating is equivalent to a 2 dollar price reduction.

Teaching

EC226 Econometrics 1 (2024/25) — *Evaluation: 4.53/5*
University of Warwick, Undergraduate

EC9A3 Advanced Econometrics (2023/24) — *Evaluation: 4.95/5*
University of Warwick, Postgraduate — *Teaching Excellence Prize*

EC226 Econometrics 1 (2022/23, Autumn and Spring) — *Evaluation: 4.68/5, 4.65/5*
University of Warwick, Undergraduate — *Teaching Excellence Prize × 2*

Awards, Scholarships and Grants

Winner, Best Poster, RES Annual Conference (2026) — *Royal Economic Society*

CAGE Research Grant (2026–2027) — *CAGE, University of Warwick*

Winner, Best Paper, NIE Conference (2024) — *Royal Statistical Society, Business and Industry Section*

Teaching Excellence Prize × 3 (2023, 2024) — *University of Warwick*

ESRC Scholarship (2023–2026) — *Economic and Social Research Council*

Oliver Hart Prize (2018, 2019) — *University of Warwick*

Conference Presentations

2026 Royal Economic Society, King's Quantitative Political Economy Early Careers Workshop, Warwick PhD Conference, KCL PPE Conference, LSE–Warwick Political Economy PhD Conference, Doctorissimes, Applied Young Economist Webinar in Political Economy*, European Association of Young Economists, South West Economics PhD Conference*, POLECON UK*, CESifo Workshop on Digital Platforms*

2025 NICEP*, Warwick PhD Conference, HEC PhD Conference, KCL PPE Conference*, Conference on Digital Experimentation @ MIT, RES

2024 Conference on Digital Experimentation @ MIT, Network of Industrial Economists Conference

* *denotes presentation by co-author*

Affiliations

CAGE Junior Fellow — *University of Warwick*
Centre for Competitive Advantage in the Global Economy

Programming & Software

R (Advanced), Stata (Advanced), Python (Intermediate), LaTeX

References

Mirko Draca
Department of Economics
University of Warwick
Coventry, CV4 7AL, UK
M.Draca@warwick.ac.uk

Ao Wang
Department of Economics
University of Warwick
Coventry, CV4 7AL, UK
Ao.Wang@warwick.ac.uk

Manuel Bagues
Department of Economics
University of Warwick
Coventry, CV4 7AL, UK
Manuel.Bagues@warwick.ac.uk