

Stefan Traub, Hamburg, Departmental Seminar on 30 June 2025

Host: Stefan Trautmann

Sow the Doubt, Reap the Inefficiency: An Experimental Study on Risk Communication and Risk Taking in the Presence of Non-Events

Abstract:

An important task of health agencies is to inform the public about health risks. However, successful risk communication may lead to non-events and therefore sow doubt amongst the public about the existence and extent of the risks. We provide a theoretical framework for the behavioral economic analysis of individual risk taking in the presence of non-events and test it in an online experiment. We find that both the credibility of the risk communicator and the accuracy of the signal contribute to the efficiency of risk communication.