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SMEA
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ED ECONOMIA AGRO-ALIMENTARE



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The publications of agricultural and applied economists: trends and perspectives

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Objectives of the presentation

- 1) Can we identify specific trends in the **research topics** of agricultural and applied economists?
- 2) Are Italian researchers in line with these trends?
- 3) Can we identify specific trends in the **journals** where Italian researchers publish?



Trends in research topics: source

- On this analysis, I am using data from an old paper I wrote for the first issue of BAE (2012)
- I acknowledge that this database should be updated, but this requires a lot of time.....
- I hope this becomes a message for some of you to update this work (and possibly publish another paper...)
- Although the data are old, I think it is instructive both from a methodological point of view and in terms of general trends that we can discuss



Trends in research topics: methodology

- I have analysed trends in **JEL codes** of ALL articles published in the period **2000-2011** in the 7 most prestigious agricultural economics journals indexed in Web of Science, using the database **Econlit**
- The 7 journals are those having the highest ranking in terms of IF in the last 20 years and are in the “Agricultural economics and policy” Web of Science category since its origin
- I have carried out the same analysis for the articles with at least one author working in Italian institutions
- I have analysed similarities, differences and trends



Trends in research topics: Journals

- The journals considered are:
 - 1) Agricultural Economics (AE)
 - 2) American Journal of Agricultural Economics (AJAE)
 - 3) Australian Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics (AJARE)
 - 4) Canadian Journal of Agricultural Economics (CJAE)
 - 5) European Review of Agricultural Economics (ERAЕ)
 - 6) Food Policy (FP)
 - 7) Journal of Agricultural Economics (JAE)



Trends in research topics: Limitations

- Agricultural and applied economists publish also in other journals (economic journals, technical journals, environmental science journals, food science journals, interdisciplinary journals)
- This is true also for Italian researchers!
- Most articles have more than one JEL code (up to 7) and there is no priority (their purpose is to facilitate bibliographic search)
- Some JEL codes have a very large scope (used more often) and some others are more specific (used less often)



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Trends in research topics: Articles and authors

	Total	Italian
Agricultural Economics	687	10
American Journal of Agricultural Economics	1303	14
Australian Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics	322	0
Canadian Journal of Agricultural Economics	379	4
European Review of Agricultural Economics	279	18
Food Policy	557	12
Journal of Agricultural Economics	370	16
Total	3897	74



Trends in research topics: differences across journals

		AE	AJAE	AJARE	CJAE	ERAE	EP	JAE	Total
Q18	Agricultural Policy; Food Policy	17.0%	17.5%	16.1%	22.4%	28.0%	41.5%	30.0%	23.1%
O13	Economic Development: Agriculture; Natural Resources; Energy; Environment; Other Primary Products	46.1%	11.8%	11.5%	4.7%	3.9%	48.3%	17.3%	22.3%
Q12	Micro Analysis of Farm Firms, Farm Households, and Farm Input Markets	32.9%	16.5%	17.7%	15.3%	26.5%	16.9%	28.6%	21.3%
Q16	Agricultural R&D; Agricultural Technology; Biofuels; Agricultural Extension Services	26.6%	14.0%	11.8%	19.5%	15.4%	22.8%	14.3%	18.0%
Q11	Agriculture: Aggregate Supply and Demand Analysis; Prices	19.5%	15.6%	9.9%	14.0%	14.7%	18.7%	13.0%	15.8%
Q13	Agricultural Markets and Marketing; Cooperatives; Agribusiness	11.2%	13.3%	7.5%	22.2%	16.8%	16.9%	10.8%	13.8%
Q17	Agriculture in International Trade	10.2%	7.8%	8.7%	16.4%	15.1%	10.1%	12.2%	10.4%
Q15	Land Ownership and Tenure; Land Reform; Land Use; Irrigation; Agriculture and Environment	13.1%	7.1%	18.9%	11.1%	7.5%	5.7%	12.2%	9.9%
D12	Consumer Economics: Empirical Analysis	6.1%	7.7%	5.3%	8.7%	13.6%	11.5%	8.6%	8.4%
L66	Food; Beverages; Cosmetics; Tobacco; Wine and Spirits	5.8%	5.0%	2.8%	12.9%	12.9%	12.6%	8.1%	7.7%
O15	Economic Development: Human Resources; Human Development; Income Distribution; Migration	7.9%	3.8%	1.9%	0.5%	1.1%	18.7%	2.2%	5.8%
F13	Trade Policy; International Trade Organizations	3.1%	4.1%	4.7%	9.5%	9.0%	5.9%	8.1%	5.5%
Q25	Renewable Resources and Conservation: Water	4.7%	3.2%	16.8%	7.9%	2.5%	1.4%	2.2%	4.6%
O18	Economic Development: Urban, Rural, Regional, and Transportation Analysis; Housing; Infrastructure	10.6%	1.7%	1.9%	1.1%	0.0%	9.5%	3.0%	4.3%
D18	Consumer Protection	1.5%	3.0%	0.6%	4.0%	5.4%	12.2%	3.2%	4.1%
P32	Collectives; Communes; Agriculture	6.8%	2.0%	3.1%	2.6%	3.6%	7.0%	2.7%	3.9%
D24	Production; Cost; Capital, Total Factor, and Multifactor Productivity; Capacity	6.8%	3.0%	5.6%	2.1%	5.0%	0.7%	4.9%	3.8%
I12	Health Production	2.3%	3.0%	0.0%	1.1%	2.5%	13.8%	0.8%	3.7%
Q28	Renewable Resources and Conservation: Government Policy	3.2%	3.5%	12.1%	2.9%	3.9%	0.4%	3.5%	3.7%
Q58	Environmental Economics: Government Policy	1.3%	3.4%	10.9%	6.1%	3.6%	0.5%	4.9%	3.6%
Q14	Agricultural Finance	3.8%	5.4%	1.6%	5.3%	2.5%	0.5%	2.7%	3.6%
O19	International Linkages to Development; Role of International Organizations	4.4%	2.3%	0.6%	2.1%	3.6%	7.0%	3.0%	3.3%
Q22	Renewable Resources and Conservation: Fishery; Aquaculture	1.2%	4.2%	5.6%	1.6%	3.9%	2.7%	3.8%	3.3%
Q24	Renewable Resources and Conservation: Land	4.1%	3.2%	4.3%	2.6%	2.2%	0.9%	3.8%	3.1%
F14	Country and Industry Studies of Trade	3.1%	2.5%	2.2%	4.5%	2.9%	2.9%	3.0%	2.9%
I32	Measurement and Analysis of Poverty	4.4%	1.9%	1.6%	0.0%	1.1%	6.8%	0.5%	2.6%



Trends in research topics: differences over time

	2000-2005	2006-2011	Total
Q180 Agricultural Policy; Food Policy	22.4%	23.8%	23.1%
O130 Economic Development: Agriculture; Natural Resources; Energy; Environment; Other Primary Products	22.2%	22.5%	22.3%
Q120 Micro Analysis of Farm Firms, Farm Households, and Farm Input Markets	18.4%	24.0%	21.3%
Q160 Agricultural R&D; Agricultural Technology; Biofuels; Agricultural Extension Services	17.5%	18.5%	18.0%
Q110 Agriculture: Aggregate Supply and Demand Analysis; Prices	15.2%	16.3%	15.8%
Q130 Agricultural Markets and Marketing; Cooperatives; Agribusiness	12.5%	15.1%	13.8%
Q170 Agriculture in International Trade	11.0%	9.8%	10.4%
Q150 Land Ownership and Tenure; Land Reform; Land Use; Irrigation; Agriculture and Environment	8.5%	11.2%	9.9%
D120 Consumer Economics: Empirical Analysis	6.4%	10.2%	8.4%
L660 Food; Beverages; Cosmetics; Tobacco; Wine and Spirits	5.0%	10.2%	7.7%
O150 Economic Development: Human Resources; Human Development; Income Distribution; Migration	6.3%	5.3%	5.8%
F130 Trade Policy; International Trade Organizations	5.6%	5.4%	5.5%
Q250 Renewable Resources and Conservation: Water	4.5%	4.8%	4.6%
O180 Economic Development: Urban, Rural, Regional, and Transportation Analysis; Housing; Infrastructure	3.4%	5.3%	4.3%
D180 Consumer Protection	3.7%	4.6%	4.1%
P320 Collectives; Communes; Agriculture	4.0%	3.8%	3.9%
D240 Production; Cost; Capital, Total Factor, and Multifactor Productivity; Capacity	2.8%	4.7%	3.8%
I120 Health Production	2.5%	5.0%	3.7%
Q280 Renewable Resources and Conservation: Government Policy	4.1%	3.3%	3.7%
Q580 Environmental Economics: Government Policy	2.1%	5.1%	3.6%
Q140 Agricultural Finance	3.9%	3.4%	3.6%
O190 International Linkages to Development; Role of International Organizations	3.3%	3.4%	3.3%
Q220 Renewable Resources and Conservation: Fishery; Aquaculture	3.4%	3.2%	3.3%
Q240 Renewable Resources and Conservation: Land	3.3%	2.8%	3.1%
F140 Country and Industry Studies of Trade	2.3%	3.5%	2.9%
I320 Measurement and Analysis of Poverty	2.8%	2.5%	2.6%



Trends in research topics: Italian authors

		2000-05	2006-11	Totale
Q18	Agricultural Policy; Food Policy	16.0%	34.7%	28.4%
Q17	Agriculture in International Trade	28.0%	24.5%	25.7%
Q12	Micro Analysis of Farm Firms, Farm Households, and Farm Input Markets	16.0%	24.5%	21.6%
F13	Trade Policy; International Trade Organizations	20.0%	20.4%	20.3%
D12	Consumer Economics: Empirical Analysis	20.0%	18.4%	18.9%
Q13	Agricultural Markets and Marketing; Cooperatives; Agribusiness	16.0%	18.4%	17.6%
Q16	Agricultural R&D; Agricultural Technology; Biofuels; Agricultural Extension Services	20.0%	14.3%	16.2%
O13	Economic Development: Agriculture; Natural Resources; Energy; Environment; Other Primary Products	0.0%	24.5%	16.2%
L66	Food; Beverages; Cosmetics; Tobacco; Wine and Spirits	12.0%	14.3%	13.5%
P32	Collectives; Communes; Agriculture	0.0%	10.2%	6.8%
D18	Consumer Protection	12.0%	4.1%	6.8%
Q11	Agriculture: Aggregate Supply and Demand Analysis; Prices	4.0%	8.2%	6.8%
D24	Production; Cost; Capital, Total Factor, and Multifactor Productivity; Capacity	8.0%	4.1%	5.4%
O19	International Linkages to Development; Role of International Organizations	0.0%	6.1%	4.1%
J43	Agricultural Labor Markets	8.0%	2.0%	4.1%



Trends in research topics: Remarks

- Some core research topics tends to remain at the top
 - a) Agricultural and food policies
 - b) Agricultural and economic development
 - c) Microeconomic analysis of agricultural production
 - d) Agricultural and food markets and prices
- Increasing interest in some other research topics:
 - a) Consumer economics and marketing
 - b) Supply chain and industrial organisation
 - c) Relationships between agriculture and environment
 - d) Agricultural research and biotechnologies
- Italian researchers only partly in line with these trends:
 - a) Same trends for policies and farm micro analysis
 - b) Stronger interest in consumer economics and trade
 - c) Almost absent in areas like environment and prices
- Of course, the most recent data may give a different picture (*but also in the top journals?*)



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Trends in journals: Methodology

- Analysis carried out by the four Italian Agricultural Economics associations on the publications in the period 2013-17
- Here we considered **all publications** with at least one author working in Italian Universities (no other institutions) indexed in **Scopus** (1513 articles in total)
- Focus on the **journals only** (not on the research topics)



Trends in journals: Italian publications

N	Journal	Number of articles	5year IF 2016	WOS category
1	quality - access to success	162		
2	british food journal	65	1.437	Food science & technology
3	sustainability (switzerland)	47	1.850	Green & Sustainable Science & Technology
4	new medit	45	0.576	Agriculture, multidisciplinary
5	land use policy	41	3.527	Environmental studies
6	rivista di studi sulla sostenibilità	40		
7	journal of cleaner production	29	6.207	Green & Sustainable Science & Technology
8	agricultural and food economics	25		
9	wine economics and policy	23		
10	acta horticulturae	22		
11	american journal of applied sciences	18		
12	agriculture and agricultural science procedia	18		
13	food quality and preference	17	3.532	Food science & technology
14	appetite	16	3.843	Behavioral science
15	italian journal of food science	16	0.427	Food science & technology
16	food policy	15	3.676	Agricultural economics & policy
17	agribusiness	14	1.253	Agricultural economics & policy
18	energies	14	2.707	Energy & fuels
19	eurochoices	14		
20	bio-based and applied economics	14		
21	international food and agribusiness management review	13	0.816	Agricultural economics & policy
22	european review of agricultural economics	12	2.069	Agricultural economics & policy
23	water (switzerland)	12	2.056	Water resources
24	recent patents on food nutrition and agriculture	12		
25	journal of food products marketing	12		
26	chemical engineering transactions	12		
27	agricultural economics review	12		
28	agricultural systems	11	3.190	Agriculture, multidisciplinary
29	journal of rural studies	11	3.379	Geography
30	journal of international food and agribusiness marketing	11		
31	aestimum	11		



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Trends in journals: Italian authors in the 7 top journals

	2000-11	2013-17
Agricultural Economics	10	5
American Journal of Agricultural Economics	14	0
Australian Journal of Agricultural and Resource Econom	0	4
Canadian Journal of Agricultural Economics	4	0
European Review of Agricultural Economics	18	12
Food Policy	12	15
Journal of Agricultural Economics	16	9
Total	74	45



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Trends in publications: average Scopus profile of Italian professors

Category	Articles	Citations	h-index
Ordinario	23.3	283.5	8.2
Associato	16.3	257.2	8.5
Associato confermato	9.7	151.3	5.7
Ricercatore	10.0	96.1	4.7
Ricercatore a t.d. - t.defin. (art. 24 c.3-a L. 240/10)	18.3	196.0	7.3
Ricercatore a t.d. - t.pieno (art. 24 c.3-a L. 240/10)	11.8	92.3	5.0
Ricercatore a t.d. - t.pieno (art. 24 c.3-b L. 240/10)	14.9	192.0	7.9
Totale complessivo	15.3	197.2	6.9



Trends in journals: Remarks

- Enormous increase of the number of articles indexed in Scopus by Italian researchers after 2010
- The target journals cover a huge variety of subject categories, such that it is difficult to identify a specific profile of the profession
- Possible drivers of the choice of the journals (and the prevalence of inter-disciplinarity):
 - a) Easier to publish?
 - b) EU projects?
- In some cases, the most important driver seems to be the increase in the bibliometric indicators (ASN, local positions,...)
- The presence of Italian researchers in the top journals is slightly increasing, but is still rather limited



A proposal for the next workshop (.....)

- Do we think it is relevant to discuss publication ethics issues (<https://publicationethics.org/>)?
- Some relevant topics:
 - a) Authorships
 - b) Conflicts of interests
 - c) References and citations
 - d) Data and reproducibility
 - e) Intellectual property rights
 - f) Peer review process
 - g) Journal management