

# MAXIMILIAN LINEK

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November 2019

## Berlin School of Economics

Placement Director: Dirk Engelmann

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## Office Contact Information

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## Education

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Ph.D. Candidate in Economics  
Berlin School of Economics (BSE) – Hertie School, 2015 to present  
Thesis Title: *Essays in Development and Labor Economics*  
Expected Completion Date: June 2020

### Research Visit

Bocconi University (Eliana La Ferrara), Fall 2018

### Previous Education

M.Sc. in Economics, University of Muenster, 2013  
M.Sc. in Development Economics, University of London – SOAS, 2012  
B.Sc. in European Business Studies, University of Bamberg, 2010

## Research and Teaching Fields

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*Primary:* Development Economics, Labor Economics  
*Secondary:* Political Economy, Behavioral Economics

## Teaching Experience

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Spring 2018 and 2019, Public Economics, Hertie School, TA for Christian Traxler

## Job Market Paper

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Dictating Development? Achieving Targets through Community Work

This paper studies how central governments can use local community meetings to change individual behavior. I investigate the effect of a local institution – mandatory community work on Saturdays – before and after an accountability reform in Rwanda. The reform introduced performance incentives for local leaders of communities. I analyze the effects on four government-promoted, behavioral changes in malaria prevention and family planning. For the analysis, I compile individual level panel data. I exploit quasi-experimental variation in attendance rates over time and estimate the reduced-form effect of Saturday rainfall. An additional rainy Saturday in a month reduces the probability of (i) households to acquire mosquito bed nets, and of (ii) women to adopt modern contraception. The relative effects for both outcomes are very similarly and around 13%. Evidence on women’s (iii) contraceptive discontinuations and (iv) conceptions is consistent with pressure as the mechanism operating through community work. All Saturday rainfall effects arise only after incentivizing leaders. This pattern for targeted, but otherwise very different behavioral changes and an analysis over time suggest complementarity between community work and performance incentives. Placebo tests with rainfall on other weekdays consistently yield null results throughout. Overall, my results provide a new perspective on Rwanda’s development and shed light on the merits and perils of strong accountability in decentralized policy implementation.

## Work in Progress

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### Time Use under Basic Income: Evidence from a Large-scale Survey Experiment

What would you do if you received basic income? This paper analyzes a survey experiment among 70,541 registered users of a NGO which promotes basic income in Germany. Treated individuals received a hypothetical basic income scenario varying the amount, duration and the number of recipients. Following the scenario, individuals were asked how they plan to adjust their time use across 7 activity categories. I find statistically significant responses to the amount of basic income, but no differential adjustments with respect to duration or the number of recipients. Planned adjustments are decreasing in the amount of basic income. On average, respondents reduce their working time by 1.5 hours a week for every 500 Euros of additional basic income. Time use increases in all other categories. Contrasted with a pure control group, respondents only adjust time use for basic income amounts larger than 500 Euros. Overall, the evidence suggests that basic income has only moderate effects on time use in general and on working time in particular.

### Social Information and Online Donations: Experimental Evidence from Wikimedia (with Christian Traxler)

This paper analyzes six trials conducted on the German website of the world's largest online encyclopedia, Wikipedia. During fundraising campaigns, Wikipedia users were randomly assigned to different banner messages that solicit donations. The trials systematically manipulated content or framing of social information about how many other users are donating. The results provide no evidence on conditional cooperation: varying social information does not induce conditionally pro-social conduct. In fact, a trial that framed an identical number of donors as small ('few' in contrast to 'many') significantly increased users' propensity to donate. We discuss several possible explanations of these findings.

### Honors, Scholarships and Fellowships

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2016 - 2019 PhD Scholarship from the German National Merit Foundation  
2015 - 2016 PhD Scholarship from the Hertie School of Governance

### Conferences and Invited Seminars

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2019 CSAE (Oxford), German Economic Association – Annual Conference (Leipzig)  
2018 German Economic Association – Development Economics (Zurich), European Economic Association – Annual Congress (Cologne), Food for Thought Seminar (Bocconi)

### Skills

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Computer: Stata (advanced), R (intermediate), Matlab (basic), QGIS (basic)  
Languages: German (native), English (proficient), Italian (intermediate), Spanish (intermediate)

### References

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Prof. Christian Traxler (main advisor)  
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