Dario Toman

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CV Version: October 23, 2026

Research Interests: Applied Microeconomics, Health Economics, Political Economy, Development Economics
Citizenships: Canadian, Hungarian (EU), Serbian
Languages: English (*Nat.*), Serbian (*Nat.*), Hungarian (*Nat.*), French (*Adv.*), German (*Int.*), Spanish (*Beg.*)

Academic Appointments

Assistant Professor, *2026 – present*.
Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy, University of Toronto.

Research Affiliate, *2026 – present*.
Forward Society Lab, University of Toronto.

Education

PhD Economics, *University of Toronto*, *2026*.
Committee: Gustavo J. Bobonis (Supervisor), Ceren Baysan, Rob Gillezeau

Visiting Student Research Collaborator, *Princeton University*, *Winter/Spring 2023*.
Center for Health and Wellbeing

MA Economics, *University of Toronto*, *2019*.

Hons. BA Economics (Major), **Mathematics** (Minor), **German** (Minor), *University of Toronto*, *2018*.

Other Coursework:
Graduate Course in Peace Research, *University of Oslo* and *Peace Research Institute of Oslo, 2017*.

Research

Working Papers

"Partisan Elections, Competition, and Candidate Selection: Evidence from School Boards"

"Improving Judicial Protection in Intimate Partner Violence Cases: The Role of Specialized Courts and Judges."
With Carolina Arteaga, Gustavo J. Bobonis and Paola Salardi.
Revise and Resubmit, *Review of Economics and Statistics*. NBER Working Paper No. 34293.

"Poppy Bloom and Bust: Violence and Poverty During the Mexican Opium Crisis."

Work in Progress

"Understanding Judicial Decision-Making: Ability, Preferences, and Court Organization."
With Gustavo J. Bobonis, Boriana Miloucheva and Paola Salardi.

"Candidates, Rhetoric, and the Political Economy of Populism: Evidence from Municipal and State Elections in Brazil."
With Gustavo J. Bobonis, Claudio Ferraz and Helios Herrera.

Publications

"Electoral Cycles in Female Sterilization."
With Simeon Nichter.
World Development, 204, 107407, 2026.

Published Non-Peer Reviewed Work

"Local Manufacturing in a Conflict Zone: Lessons from the White Helmets' PPE Project"
With Carolina Canepari, Isabel Davis, Kristyn Lee, and Stanley Zlotkin. Reach Alliance, 2022.

"#AUEU: A Twitter analysis of the AU-EU summit 2017."
With Alexander Gaus. African Policy Circle, 2018.

Presentations

2026: Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México, Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy (University of Toronto), Society of Labor Economists (SOLE) Annual Meeting, Canadian Economics Association (CEA) Annual Conference, RIDGE-LACEA Impact Evaluation Network Forum, Workshop on the Economics of Crime for Junior Scholars (IFS), Virtual Crime Economics (ViCE) Seminar

2025: Canadian Economics Association (CEA) Annual Conference, Workshop on Firms and Inclusive Economic Growth (Queen's University), Banff Empirical Microeconomics Workshop (University of Calgary), University of Toronto (*SWEAT*, Emp. Micro. Brown Bag)

2024: University of Toronto (Emp. Micro. Brown Bag)

2023: Princeton, American Society of Health Economists Annual Conference

2022: Latin American and Caribbean Economic Association Annual Meeting, Reach Symposium (Munk School of Global Affairs)

2021: University of Toronto (Emp. Micro. Brown Bag)

Awards

Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Institutional Grant (SIG), ($3,905, Co-PI), *2026*.
Shortlisted Candidate for TATP TA Teaching Excellence Award, *2023*.
Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Doctoral Fellowship, (4×$20,000), *2021 – 2024*.
Mobilizing Insights in Defence and Security (MINDS) Doctoral Award, ($35,000), *2020 – 2021*.
University of Toronto Doctoral Fellowship, (5×$17,000), *2019 – 2024*.

Experience

Reach Alliance, Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy, Researcher, *2021 – 2023*.

Global Public Policy Institute (Berlin), Research Intern – Peace and Security Group, *2017*.

Teaching

Course Instructor

`GLA2062` – Voters, Politicians, and Accountability: Political Economy in the Developing World, *Winter 2027* [@ `Munk School MGA`].
`MUN221/MUN202` – Microeconomics for Policy Analysis / Microeconomics for Engineers, *Fall 2026*.
`GLA1010` – Microeconomics for Global Affairs, *Fall 2026* [@ `Munk School MGA`].
`PPG201` – Microeconomics for Engineers, *Fall 2024*.
`PCJ260` – Introduction to Peace, Conflict and Justice I: Data and Applications, *Fall 2023*.

Teaching Assistantships

`ECO334` – Political Economy of Media, *Winter 2019, Winter 2024, Winter 2025*.
`GLA1010` – Microeconomics for Global Affairs, *Fall 2023, Fall 2024, Fall 2025*.
`GLA2060` – Topics in Development I, *Fall 2021, Fall 2022* [@ `Munk School MGA`].
`ECO372` – Data Analysis and Applied Econometrics in Practice, *Fall 2022*.
`PCJ360` – Topics in Peace, Conflict, and Justice, *Fall 2022*.

PCJ260 – Introduction to Peace, Conflict and Justice I: Data and Applications, *Fall 2022*.
ECO102 – Principles of Macroeconomics, *Winter 2020* [Head TA], *Winter 2021* [Head TA], *Winter 2022* [Head TA].
ECO368 – Economics of Conflict, *Winter 2020 Fall 2021*.
PCJ460 – Causes and Consequences of Civil War, *Fall 2020*.
ECO403 – Topics in Development, *Fall 2018*, *Fall 2019*.
ECO324 – Economic Development, *Fall 2019*.
ECO320 – Economics and the Law, *Winter 2019*.
ECO101 – Principles of Microeconomics, *Fall 2018*.

Service

Referee: *Journal of Population Economics*.

Graduate Students Support Working Group *2024*.

Graduate Appeals Committee *2023 – 2024*.

Department Chair Search Committee *2022*.

Graduate Student Mentor *2021-2022*.

Graduate Economics Union
Co-President, *2020 – 2021*.
Event Coordinator, *2019 – 2020*.
First Year Representative, 2019 – 2020.

References

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Abstracts

Partisan Elections, Competition, and Candidate Selection: Evidence from School Boards

How do partisan electoral institutions affect local democracy? I study this question in the context of North Carolina school boards, where the state legislature has gradually converted nonpartisan elections to partisan contests since 2014. Using a difference-in-differences design that exploits this staggered rollout, I estimate the causal effect of partisan elections on candidate entry, voter behaviour, and representation. The reforms reshaped competition by creating partisan strongholds, in which candidates were increasingly unlikely to run in districts dominated by the opposing party. As a result, uncontested races rose sharply and candidates with professional experience, such as principals and former board members, were less likely to enter. At the same time, partisan labels polarized voter choice and mobilized turnout, reinforcing strongholds. These dynamics ultimately advantaged Republicans overall and reduced the professional expertise represented on school boards. The findings reveal a central tradeoff: while partisan rules lower information costs for voters, they also weaken competition and diminish the quality of representation in local governance.

Improving Judicial Protection in Intimate Partner Violence Cases: The Role of Specialized Courts and Judges (joint with Carolina Arteaga, Gustavo J. Bobonis, and Paola Salardi)

We study the large-scale implementation of a system of specialized domestic violence courts (SDVCs), an innovation in access to justice programs for potential victims of intimate partner violence (IPV) and offenders. Using individual-level administrative data from the universe of civil domestic violence cases in Puerto Rico during the period 2014-2020, we leverage the staggered opening of SDVCs across judicial regions to examine the consequences for victims' judicial protection and offender recidivism. Access to SDVCs leads to a considerable 8 percentage points increase in the probability that judges issue a protection order and a 1.7 percentage point (15 percent) decrease in victim and offender reappearance rates within one year of the start of the case. Effects are more pronounced for cases in which parties have children in common and in which access to SDVCs is more limited. Linking the case data to administrative and survey data on judges, we show that the priorities of judges assigned to SDVCs play a prominent role in explaining these outcomes.

Electoral Cycles in Female Sterilization
(joint Simeon Nichter)

Many women across the world face substantial challenges in obtaining access to family planning — an important problem emphasized by the Sustainable Development Goals. The present study explores electoral cycles in female sterilization, the most prevalent contraceptive method in the world. We focus on Brazil, a country where many women have unmet demands for sterilization and often queue for many months or even years for their surgeries. Qualitative evidence suggests that local politicians manipulate the provision of publicly funded tubal ligation surgeries for political purposes. We analyze the universe of tubal ligation surgeries performed by the public health system, using regression analysis to examine variation across Brazilian municipalities in 1998-2019. We find that female sterilizations increase 8.8% during municipal election years. Moreover, they surge during electoral campaigns: female sterilizations increase 30.5% in the three months before municipal elections. Findings are similar when adjusting for overall hospitalizations, which rise less than 1% during municipal elections. Female sterilizations have more pronounced electoral cycles than do other elective surgeries (including vasectomies), and no cycles are detected for emergency surgeries. Electoral cycles in female sterilization are concentrated among nonwhite Brazilians, who face substantial health disparities. Female sterilizations increase far more during municipal than national elections, and they spike especially in poor municipalities and in the Northeast region. More broadly, our findings suggest that Brazilian politicians distort the public provision of contraception, a crucial problem not least because family planning is widely deemed a basic human right.