



UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI
DI CAGLIARI

Economics Seminars

Friday 8 Maggio 2026 at 12:00

Aula Magna Edificio Baffi

Facoltà di Scienze Economiche Giuridiche e Politiche - Viale Sant'Ignazio 74

Paolo Roberti

Libera Università di Bolzano

A remedy to the demand for bad policy (con R. Ghidoni e G. Immordino)

Abstract. Voters often oppose welfare-enhancing policies because they fail to anticipate how others will adjust their behavior. We show that policy design can align political support with efficiency even under biased beliefs. We study a remedy---priority policies---that reshapes incentives so that even pessimistic voters support reform. Guided by a simple theoretical framework, we conduct a laboratory experiment in which participants choose between an inefficient status quo (a Prisoner's Dilemma) and a welfare-improving alternative. While a standard tax on defection attracts only 27.5 percent support, a priority policy raises support to about 70 percent. The increase is mostly driven by pessimistic participants.