

Individual Project – Guidelines

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Data Analysis for Economics – Fall 2026

The individual project is **optional**. It consists of an essay where you report the results from a data analysis on an *economics-related* topic of your choice. For those who choose to do it, the project counts for **50% of the final grade**.

If you decide to carry out the project, you should follow **all of these steps**:

1. Submit (by email) a short note (a few lines) describing your topic and the dataset you plan to use.
2. Present the project at an intermediate/advanced stage to receive feedback.
3. Submit a 5–10 page essay and the corresponding scripts/codes to reproduce figures and tables.

Dates

- **Deadline to submit the proposal:** October 15th
- **Presentations (intermediate stage):** week 6 (dates to be announced)
- **Deadline to submit final project:** November 15th

Project Structure

Your essay (5–10 pages) should follow this structure:

1. Abstract (the whole story in 150 words)
2. Research question (and why it matters)
3. Brief review of literature (what we know)
4. Data description (which data, why, and how they look)
5. Results: 3–4 objects to summarize findings (+ your comments)
6. Scripts (and source files) to **reproduce** figures, tables, analyses

Recommendations

- **Be specific:** Avoid overly broad questions. Narrow the focus to one specific topic you can really address. For example, avoid very general questions such as:
 - The relationship between unemployment and GDP
 - How technological progress impacts growth
- In general, the guideline is: it is better to answer a narrow question well than a broad one superficially.
- **Think in terms of mechanisms:** Identify the theoretically plausible channels linking your variables, and try to test (or provide evidence for) some of them.
 - **Check data availability:** You can either look at traditional data sources (Eurostat, ISTAT, OECD...) or try to find/collect novel or less-used data (this second option is encouraged).
 - In either case, verify sources and variables *before* committing to the topic. Make sure the data you plan to use are available and contain the level of detail you need.
 - **Be transparent:** You must understand every line of your code. Avoid shortcuts you cannot explain. You are free to use AI, but you are solely responsible for what you submit, and in the presentation you may be asked about any line of your code.

Examples from previous years

Here are the titles of earlier student projects.

Fall 2025

- Income Variation Across Education Levels: A Descriptive Study of U.S. Workers. Evidence from the 2023 American Community Survey (IPUMS).
- The Role of Labor in Wellbeing: A Quantitative Analysis of Labor Market Conditions on European Life Satisfaction.
- Education Level and Work Force Participation: An Analysis of Women across Asia and the Case of Vietnam.
- Pensions and Expectations: Demographic Change and Young People's Expectations on the Future of Pensions.
- Impact of Immigration on Key Economic Indicators in EU Countries.
- Renewable Energy and Economic Resilience.
- The Relationship between GDP per Capita and Alcohol Consumption: Evidence from European Countries and Italian Regions (2012–2022).

- The Wage Premium of Higher Education in Romania.
- University Reform and Youth Unemployment.

Fall 2024

- From Italian Cuisine to the Global Marketplace: Eating Habits and Obesity.
- Impact of the Pandemic on Italian Universities: Evolution in Enrollments and Graduates.
- How does economic support (like AUU) influence birth rates in Italy when combined with family support services such as early childhood education and care (ECEC)?
- Social media engagement: exploring possible impacts on mental health and work impairment.
- Migration Flows and Economic Impacts: An Analysis between Countries of Origin and Destination.
- Can we increase the number of female STEM graduates?
- Education and the Labour Market: How Educational Attainment Affects Income and Occupation.
- Decoupling of Energy Use and European Productivity.
- Career Paths and Earnings of Graduates of Research and Non-Research Universities: Evidence from the Polish Graduate Tracking System.
- Adapting and Evolving: Degree Programs Facing Challenges and Opportunities in Italian Universities.