Lab paper

- Presentation
  - To get feedback on your work
  - **March 14th**

- Paper
  - Final hand in for both report and Stata code
  - **March 21st**

Lab paper components

- Title

- Introduction

- Literature review / theoretical background

- Data and methods

- Analysis and discussion

- Conclusion

Lab paper title

- Clearly state the topic, region, and period.
- Signal the focus (e.g., convergence, structural change).

- Bridging the Gap? An Analysis of the North–South Divide in Italian Regional Development, 1900–2015

Lab paper introduction

- Provide background and context for Italy's regional disparities.
- State the research objectives and key questions/hypotheses.
- Outline the structure of the paper.

Italy is well known for its economic divide between the prosperous North and the lagging South. This paper examines regional GDP per capita trends from 1900 to 2015 using data from the Rosés-Wolf database. The goal is to assess whether poorer southern regions have experienced faster growth than their northern counterparts and to understand the structural factors that have contributed to this divide. The paper is organized as follows: first, a review of the literature on Italy's North–South divide; second, a description of the data and methods; third, an analysis of convergence patterns; and finally, a discussion of the findings.

Literature Review / Theoretical Background

• Summarize major debates and key theoretical frameworks (e.g., Southern Question, beta and sigma convergence).
• Compare different viewpoints and highlight gaps.

Over the past decades, scholars have debated Italy's "Southern Question" by examining historical legacies, policy failures, and structural differences between the North and South. Researchers such as Felice (2013) and Zamagni (1993) argue that factors like underinvestment in the South and over-reliance on agriculture have perpetuated regional disparities. Federico, et al (2018) show that human capital was key to higher real wages and industrial development in the Northwest of the country. In addition, convergence theories—both beta (where poorer regions grow faster) and sigma (decline in income dispersion)—offer a useful framework for testing whether southern regions are catching up with the North over time. This review sets the stage for our empirical analysis.
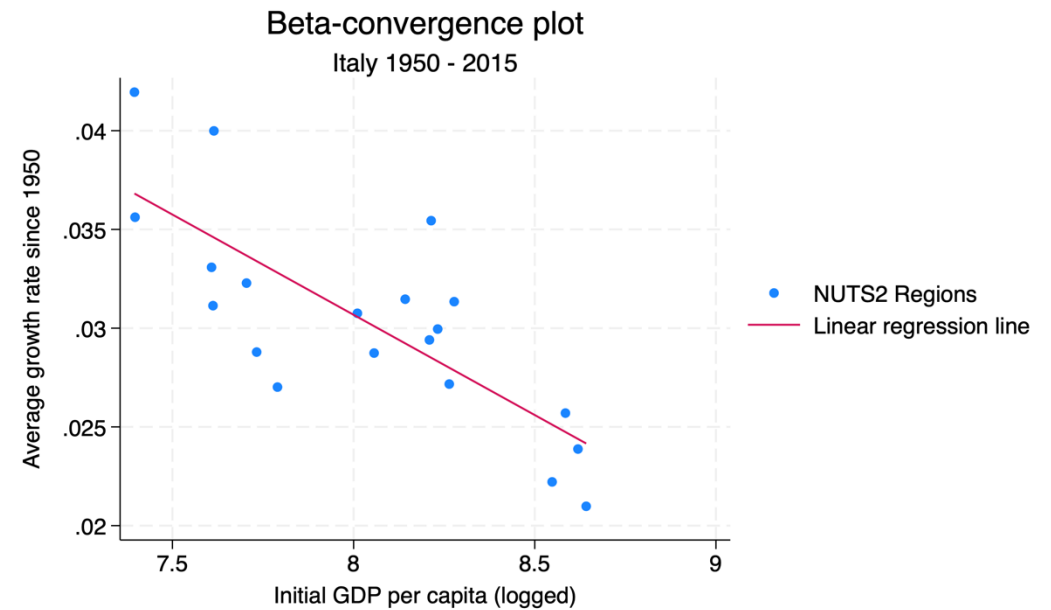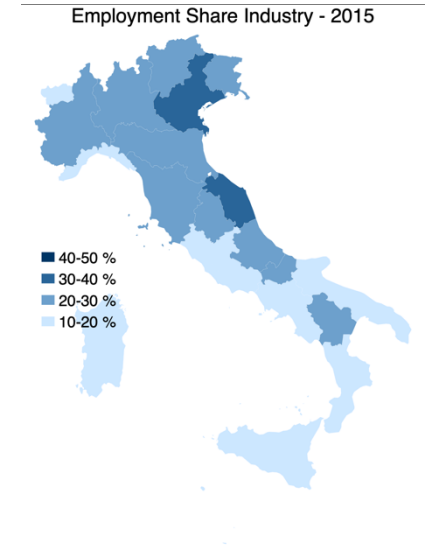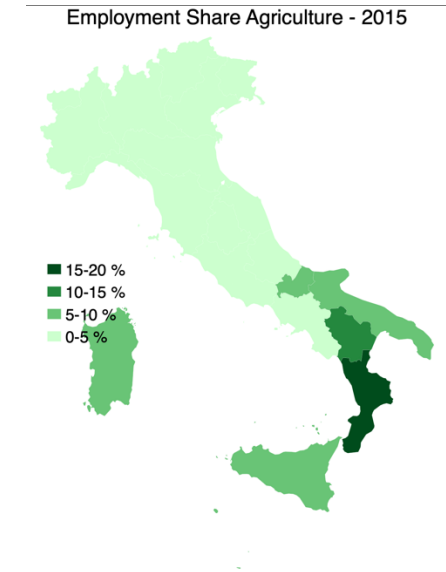
Data and Methods

• Describe the Rosés-Wolf database (Italian NUTS-2 regions, 1900–2015).
• List variables you usse (nominal GDP, population, area, sector employment shares).
• Detail the empirical strategy (descriptive maps, beta and sigma convergence tests).

This study uses the Rosés-Wolf database, which provides data for Italian NUTS-2 regions from 1900 to 2015. The dataset includes nominal GDP (measured in 1990 and 2011 PPP), population, area, and employment shares across agriculture, industry, and services. The analysis begins with a descriptive exploration using choropleth maps to illustrate GDP per capita differences. Further, a beta convergence regression is used to test whether regions with lower initial GDP per capita have experienced higher growth rates.

Analysis

- Present descriptive results (maps, tables) and basic summary statistics.
- Report econometric findings (beta convergence regression, scatterplots, sigma convergence trends).

Employment Share Agriculture - 2015

Employment Share Industry - 2015

Beta-convergence plot
Italy 1950 - 2015

Discussion

- Interpret empirical findings in light of the reviewed literature and theories.
- Discuss policy implications and limitations.
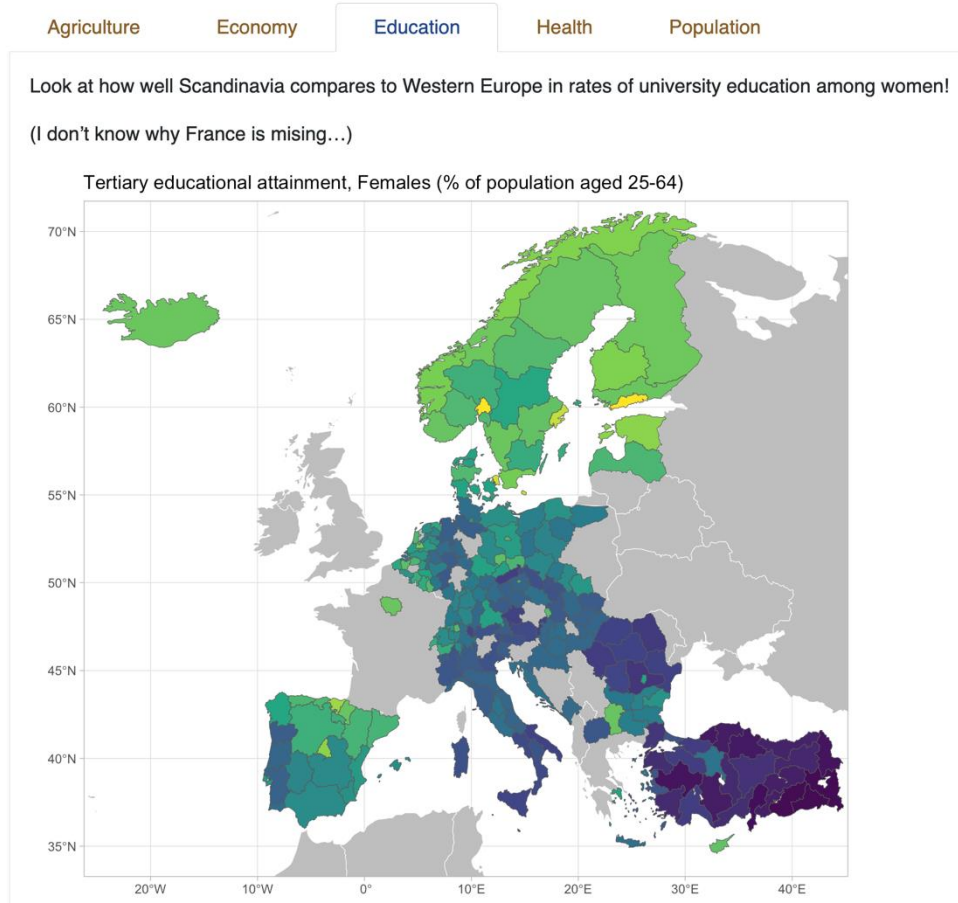- Suggest areas for future research.

The findings indicate that although there is some evidence of beta convergence, the overall reduction in regional disparities has been weak, and gaps existed already in 1900 between the North and South. The modest beta coefficient suggests that the faster growth in poorer southern regions has not been sufficient to close the gap with the North. This result aligns with historical accounts that emphasize structural disadvantages and policy failures in the South.

Conclusion

• Summarize the main findings and contributions of the paper.
• Reflect on the implications for understanding Italy's regional disparities.

This paper has analyzed the evolution of the North–South divide in Italian regional development between 1900 and 2015. While the beta convergence analysis suggests that poorer regions in the South have grown at a slightly faster rate, the overall level of convergence remains limited. Structural factors, historical policy choices, and persistent institutional differences continue to contribute to the regional gap.

What can you do to stand out?

Agriculture | Economy | Education | Health | Population

Look at how well Scandinavia compares to Western Europe in rates of university education among women!

(I don't know why France is mising…)

Tertiary educational attainment, Females (% of population aged 25-64)

- Use the additional data
  - Find it on the course website
  - DOSE database
  - Eurostat
- Both have data on outcomes today, not as much historical data
- I've formatted this into Stata format for you