

Curriculum Vitae of Mara Soncin

1. General information

Mara soncin

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- Current position (since 05/10/2020): Junior Assistant Professor at the Department of Management, Economics and Industrial Engineering, Politecnico di Milano, Italy, on the topic *Evaluating the impact of technology on educational performance*
- Short summary: I attained the PhD degree in January 2020 with a thesis on the evaluation of the performances of digital learning initiatives in Higher Education. Since 2015, I work on the topics of performance management in public administrations, with a specific focus on the educational sector. My research interests also involve school management and leadership and the use of quantitative models for the evaluation of educational policies. I am also involved in teaching activities and training both in University and in *post-lauream* courses.

2. Education and qualifications

Degree and PhD

- 2020: Ph.D. degree in Management Engineering, Politecnico di Milano, Italy. Thesis: “A performance evaluation of digital learning in higher education”
- 2014: Master degree in Management Engineering, Politecnico di Milano, Italy. Thesis: “School factors helping disadvantaged students to succeed: empirical evidence from five Italian cities” (with Riccardo Valenti)
- 2012: Bachelor degree in Management Engineering, Politecnico di Milano, Italy. Thesis: Business game.

Other educational programs/qualifications

- 22/05/2019 – 24/05/2019: Course “Advanced Methods for Impact Evaluation” organised by IRVAPP – Research Institute for the Evaluation of Public Policies. Venice, Italy
- 11/09/2018 – 14/09/2018: Summer school on “Defining the impact of research: scope, methods and practices” organised by AiIG – Associazione Italiana Ingegneria Gestionale (Italian Association of Management Engineering). Turin, Italy.
- 16/10/2017 – 18/10/2017: “2nd EdEN Summer School on Applied Techniques” organised by EdEN – Education Economics Network. Budapest, Hungary.
- 12/09/2017 – 15/09/2017: Summer school on “How to design relevant and robust research” organised by AiIG – Associazione Italiana Ingegneria Gestionale (Italian Association of Management Engineering). Milan, Italy

- 08/02/2016 – 13/02/2016: Winter school on “Fundamentals and Methods for Impact Evaluation of Public Policies” organised by IRVAPP – Research Institute for the Evaluation of Public Policies. Trento, Italy
- 06/06/2016 – 07/06/2016: Course “Training in Structural Models for Policy Evaluation in the realm of Education and Discrete Choice Approaches” organised by EdEN – Education Economics Network. Maastricht, the Netherlands.
- 18/11/2015 – 20/11/2015: Course “School on data analysis and programming with R” organised by the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano. Bolzano, Italy
- 24/08/2015 – 29/08/2015: Course “Panel Data Econometrics: Theory and Applications” organised by CidE - Centro Interuniversitario di Econometria. Bertinoro (FC), Italy.

3. Research activity

Past research positions

- 01/2020 – 09/2020: Post-Doctoral Researcher at the Department of Management, Economics and Industrial Engineering, Politecnico di Milano, Italy, on the topic *Estimating school value added with Invalsi data*
- 06/2016 - 07/2016: Temporary research fellow at the University of Milan-Bicocca, CRISP (Centro di Ricerca Interuniversitario per i Servizi di Pubblica Utilità) on the topic: *Analisi e definizione del costo per studente nella Provincia Autonoma di Trento* (Analysis and definition of the cost per student in the Autonomous Province of Trento)
- 09/2015 - 10/2016: Temporary research fellow at the Department of Management, Economics and Industrial Engineering, Politecnico di Milano, on the topic: *Sviluppo e implementazione di un sistema misurazione e benchmarking nella Pubblica Amministrazione* (Design and implementation of a measurement and benchmarking model in public administration)
- 02/2015 - 05/2015: Research collaborator at IPRASE – Istituto provinciale per la ricerca e la sperimentazione educativa, Rovereto (TN) (Italy) on the topic: *Analisi dei costi delle scuole nella Provincia Autonoma di Trento* (Analysis of the costs of schools in the Autonomous Province of Trento)

Research areas of interest

My research interests are focused on performance measurement and management in public administrations and on educational institutions in particular. This can be further detailed as follows:

- (i) Study of the impact of digital learning tools on student achievement and on organisational performance. In my dissertation I investigated this issue with a specific focus on the higher education system. Now, I am widening my scope of interest to other educational levels for which large databases are available to study the impact on student achievement measured through standardised test scores.
- (ii) Study of educational management and leadership, with particular attention to the effect of management practices on student achievement. I studied this issue by means of a quantitative approach through statistical models able to quantify this effect. In so doing, I also collaborated with international scholars.

- (iii) Study of performance measurement and management in public administrations, with particular reference to local governments and higher education institutions. I studied the adoption of performance measurement systems (PMS) in local governments, and I am now deepening the analysis of factors that may impact the organisational performance (like digitisation).

Participation in National and International Research Projects

- 2020-now: Collaboration in the research project *Digital Divide e Covid-19: quali effetti sui risultati degli studenti? Un'indagine per comprendere la risposta della scuola all'emergenza e come abbia influenzato gli andamenti scolastici delle categorie più svantaggiate* (Digital Divide and Covid-19: which effects on students' achievement? A research to understand how schools reacted to the emergency and how disadvantaged students have been affected). INVALSI and Politecnico di Milano.
- 2020-now: Collaboration in the research project *Gestire e innovare l'attività scolastica durante e dopo l'emergenza COVID: esperienze, modelli e indicazioni*; the project aims at collecting and analysing the experiences of innovative teaching applied in two private schools of the Lombardy region, during the COVID-19 emergency. Collegio San Carlo in Milano, Collegio San Giuseppe Villoresi in Monza and Politecnico di Milano.
- 2019-now: Collaboration in the research project *Piacenza Orienta*, Department of Management, Economics and Industrial Engineering, Politecnico di Milano; the project is aimed at monitoring and analyzing student performance in order to enhance the orienteering activity at the end of the middle school. Networks of schools *Piacenza Orienta* and Politecnico di Milano.
- 2018-now: Member of the research project "EUFIN", an Erasmus+ project aimed at analysing financial education in Europe. This is a joint project with KU Leuven University, Estonian Business School, HVA Amsterdam, University of Zilinska, Banca d'Italia.
- 2017-2018: Collaboration in the research project *Contabilità economico-patrimoniale e controllo di gestione: sviluppare esperienze innovative: Un progetto realizzato per l'Università Ca' Foscari di Venezia* (Accounting and management control: developing innovative experiences), Università Ca' Foscari Venezia e Politecnico di Milano.
- 2016-now: Member of the research project *Progetto Good Practice*; the project is devoted to measuring the performance of public higher education institutions in Italy. Politecnico di Milano School of Management.
- 2016-now: Member of the research group *ReMaps - Research in Management of Arts and Public Sector*, at the Politecnico di Milano School of Management.
- 2016-2018: Member of the European H2020 project *EdEn - Education Economics Network* - joint project with: KU Leuven, Belgium; University of Maastricht, the Netherlands; Centre for Economic and Regional Studies - MTA KRTK, Budapest, Hungary.
- 2016-2017: Collaboration in the research project *Analisi dei RAV delle istituzioni scolastiche emiliano-romagnole* (Analysis of self-evaluation reports of schools in Emilia-Romagna); the project was devoted to make a quantitative analysis of the self-evaluation reports of schools in Emilia-Romagna. USR Emilia-Romagna (Regional School Office) and Politecnico di Milano.
- 2016-2017: Collaboration in the research project *Rendicontazione sociale dei risultati delle istituzioni scolastiche paritarie: un framework comune* (Social reporting for private schools: defining a common framework), Department of Management, Economics and Industrial

- Engineering, Politecnico di Milano; the project was aimed at defining a common framework for school social reporting. CdO Opere Educative – FOE and Politecnico di Milano.
- 2015-2017: Collaboration in the research project *Good Practice PA*; the project was aimed at measuring the performance of local governments in Italy. Agenzia per la Coesione Territoriale and Politecnico di Milano
 - 2015-2017: Member of the research group *head* (Research on Health and Education systems Assessment using administrative Data) funded by a FARB (Fondo di Ateneo per la Ricerca di Base) grant on the topic *Public Management Research: Health and Education Systems Assessment* within the Department of Management, Economics and Industrial Engineering, Politecnico di Milano – joint project with the Department of Mathematics, Politecnico di Milano.

Honors, Awards and Memberships

- Finalist for the best paper award for *Factors driving university choice: a principal component analysis on Italian Institutions* (co-author: Azzone, G.) during the 4th International Conference on Higher Education Advances (HEAD'18), Valencia, Spain.
- Best paper award for *Assessing the performance of Massive Online Open Courses -an empirical case study of POK (PoliMi Open Knowledge) experience, 2014/15* (co-authors: Agasisti, T., Azzone, G., Bertolotti, A.) during the 2017 Workshop on Efficiency in Education, Budapest, Hungary.
- Junior member of *Associazione italiana Ingegneria Gestionale* (Italian Association of Management Engineering)
- Scholarship *Tesi all'estero* granted by Politecnico di Milano to complete the master thesis abroad (2014).

Visiting periods

- February 2020: LEER (Leuven Economics of Education Research), Faculty of Economics and Business, KU Leuven, Leuven, Belgium; research visiting under the supervision of Prof. Kristof De Witte
- September 2018 – March 2019: LEER (Leuven Economics of Education Research), Faculty of Economics and Business, KU Leuven, Leuven, Belgium; research visiting under the supervision of Prof. Kristof De Witte
- July 2017: Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, USA; research visiting under the supervision of Prof. Alex J. Bowers
- November 2017: Institute of Economics, Centre for Economic and Regional Studies, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest, Hungary (CERSHAS); research visiting under the supervision of Prof. Daniel Horn
- June 2016 – July 2016: Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, USA; research visiting under the supervision of Prof. Alex J. Bowers
- September 2014 – November 2014: Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, USA; research visiting under the supervision of Prof. Henry M. Levin (during the master thesis)

4. Teaching activities

Current and past teaching assignments

Teaching activities in University courses

- From A.Y. 2015/16 to A.Y. 2019/20: Assistant teacher in “Business Economics” (Economia e Organizzazione Aziendale) at Politecnico di Milano within the Bachelor of Science in Mathematical Engineering
- From A.Y. 2015/16 to A.Y. 2017/18: Assistant teacher in “Public Management” at Politecnico di Milano within the Master of Science in Management Engineering
- In A.Y. 2016/17: Student tutor in “Public Management” at Politecnico di Milano within the Master of Science in Management Engineering

Teaching activities in *post-lauream* courses

- In 2015/16 and 2017/18: Tutor in the course for school principals “School leadership and management” organised by *MIP Politecnico di Milano Graduate School of Business* in collaboration with *IPRASE - Istituto provinciale per la ricerca e la sperimentazione educativa, Provincia Autonoma di Trento*.
- Since 2018 – now: Supervisor of students’ project works in the Master Program SUM - *Management dell’Università e della Ricerca* (Management of Universities and Public Research Centres) organised by *I&PA, Scuola di Management per le Università, Enti di ricerca, Istituzioni scolastiche, Enti territoriali e Enti culturali* of *MIP Politecnico di Milano Graduate School of Business*

Moreover, I held lectures in the following Master Programs and Courses:

- Master Program SUM - *Management dell’Università e della Ricerca* (Management of Universities and Public Research Centres) organised by *I&PA, Scuola di Management per le Università, Enti di ricerca, Istituzioni scolastiche, Enti territoriali e Enti culturali* of *MIP Politecnico di Milano Graduate School of Business*
- Master Program MES - *Management delle Istituzioni Scolastiche e Formative* (Management of Educational Institutions) organised by *I&PA, Scuola di Management per le Università, Enti di ricerca, Istituzioni scolastiche, Enti territoriali e Enti culturali* of *MIP Politecnico di Milano Graduate School of Business* and by the *Catholic University of Milan*
- Ad hoc course on *Cost Accounting in Universities* organised by *I&PA, Scuola di Management per le Università, Enti di ricerca, Istituzioni scolastiche, Enti territoriali e Enti culturali* of *MIP Politecnico di Milano Graduate School of Business* for the *University of Florence*

Involvement in programs design or improvement

- I am currently serving as coordinator of the students’ project works in the Master Program SUM - *Management dell’Università e della Ricerca* (Management of Universities and Public Research Centres) organised by *I&PA, Scuola di Management per le Università, Enti di ricerca, Istituzioni scolastiche, Enti territoriali e Enti culturali* of *MIP Politecnico di Milano Graduate School of Business*
- I am currently involved in the design and improvement of the Master Program MES -

Management delle Istituzioni Scolastiche e Formative (Management of Educational Institutions) organised by *I&PA, Scuola di Management per le Università, Enti di ricerca, Istituzioni scolastiche, Enti territoriali e Enti culturali* of *MIP Politecnico di Milano Graduate School of Business* and by the *Catholic University of Milan*

- I am currently involved in the design and improvement of the Master Program MIDIS - *Executive Master in Gestione dell'Innovazione digitale nelle istituzioni scolastiche* (Management of digital innovation in the schools) organised by *I&PA, Scuola di Management per le Università, Enti di ricerca, Istituzioni scolastiche, Enti territoriali e Enti culturali* of *MIP Politecnico di Milano Graduate School of Business* and by the *HOC Lab, Politecnico di Milano*.
- I am currently involved in the design and improvement of the Master Program SUM - *Management dell'Università e della Ricerca* (Management of Universities and Public Research Centres) organised by *I&PA, Scuola di Management per le Università, Enti di ricerca, Istituzioni scolastiche, Enti territoriali e Enti culturali* of *MIP Politecnico di Milano Graduate School of Business* and by the *HOC Lab, Politecnico di Milano*.

Master thesis supervision

I have been co-supervisor of the following master thesis:

- October 2020: *Design of an educational production function to determine the relevant characteristics at student level that influence performance and at school level that influence school value-added*. Master thesis by Maria Paola Coba Morales & Maria Alejandra Drombo Patiño
- October 2020: *Early warning systems to predict and prevent academic failure in high school*. Master thesis by Veronica Baldi & Filippo Bolzoni
- July 2020: *Modelling strategies and business models for MOOCs: building the MOOC ecosystems for higher education institutions*. Master thesis by Filippo Prampolini & Pietro Zamboni
- July 2018: *Are we all going online? Preliminary insights into the market of digital learning providers*. Master thesis by Maria del Pilar Vallejos Meana
- December 2017: *How digital innovation can transform higher education: qualitative analysis of adopted practices in Italian higher education*. Master thesis by Carolina Petrillo
- December 2017: *Good practice in public administration: an empirical analysis on eight Italian municipalities*. Master thesis by Eugenia Orzi & Matilde Morelli Caleffi
- April 2017: *Efficiency comparison between public and private education: a case study on lower-secondary Italian schools*. Master thesis by Luca Ponte

5. Administration tasks

- I supported the research group in the administrative supervision and reporting of national and international projects
- I provided support with the organisation of the 4th Workshop on Efficiency in Education held in Milan on 20-21 October 2016 as well as with the 2017 EGPA Annual Conference held in Milan on 30 August-1 September 2017

6. Collaboration with industry, institutions and other external bodies

- I collaborated with several external organisations and institutions for which I conducted activities related to (i) data collection (ii) research analysis (iii) preparation of research reports and (iv) presentation of research results. Here is a list of Institutions I collaborated with during past research projects:
 - *INVALSI – Istituto Nazionale per la Valutazione del Sistema Educativo di Istruzione e Formazione* (National Evaluation Committee for Education)
 - *IPRASE - Istituto provinciale per la ricerca e la sperimentazione educativa, Provincia Autonoma di Trento* (Institute for educational research, Autonomous Province of Trento)
 - *Ufficio Scolastico Regionale* (Regional School Office) *Emilia-Romagna*
 - Several networks of schools (CdO Opere Educative – FOE; Piacenza Orienta; Collegio San Carlo; Collegio Villoresi)
 - Several Universities and Research Institutes both nationally and internationally

7. List of publications

International indexed journals

(1) Agasisti, T., Falzetti, P., & Soncin, M. (2020). School principals' managerial behaviours and students' achievement: an empirical analysis of Italian middle schools. *International Journal of Educational Management*. Vol. 34 No. 5, pp. 937-951. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEM-11-2018-0350>

(2) Agasisti, T., Agostino, D., & Soncin, M. (2019). Implementing Performance Measurement Systems in Local Governments: Moving from the “How” to the “Why”. *Public Performance & Management Review*, 1-29. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/15309576.2019.1700806>

(3) Azzone, G., & Soncin, M. (2019). Factors driving university choice: a principal component analysis on Italian institutions. *Studies in Higher Education*, 1-13. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2019.1612354>

(4) Agasisti, T., Bowers, A. J., & Soncin, M. (2019). School principals' leadership types and student achievement in the Italian context: Empirical results from a three-step latent class analysis. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 47(6), 860-886. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143218768577>

(5) Agasisti, T., Soncin, M., & Valenti, R. (2016). School factors helping disadvantaged students to succeed: empirical evidence from four Italian cities. *Policy Studies*, 37(2), 147-177. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/01442872.2015.1127341>

Chapters in international books

(1) Agasisti, T., Ieva, F., Masci, C., Paganoni, A. M., & Soncin, M. (2017). Using Statistical Analytics to Study School Performance through Administrative Datasets. In Vanthienen, J., & De Witte, K. (Eds.). *Data analytics applications in education*. CRC Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1201/b20438>

Proceedings in international conferences

- (1) Azzone, G., & Soncin, M. (2018). Factors driving university choice: a principal component analysis on Italian institutions. *4th International Conference on Higher Education Advances*. Editorial Universitat Politècnica de València.
- (2) Agasisti, T., Azzone, G., Bertolotti, A., & Soncin, M. (2018) Assessing the performance of Massive Online Open Courses-an empirical case study of POK (PoliMi Open Knowledge) experience. *Proceedings of the Annual Conference of the Association for Education Finance and Policy (AEFP)*, Portland, USA.
- (3) Agasisti, T., Azzone, G., & Soncin, M. (2018). Assessing The Effect Of Massive Online Open Courses As Remedial Courses In Higher Education. *Proceedings of the EDEN 2018 Annual Conference, Exploring the Micro, Meso and Macro*, pp. 226-233, Genoa, Italy.
- (4) Agasisti, T., Soncin, M., & Valenti, R. (2015). Resilient students in four Italian cities: a probit analysis. *Proceedings of the SIS2015 Statistical Conference*, Treviso, Italy.

Italian journals and chapters

- (1) Arnaboldi, M., Bertolotti, A., & Soncin, M. (2019). Good Practice e la sostenibilità nei campus: evidenze empiriche. In Arnaboldi, M., Azzone, G., & Periti, E. (Eds.) *Università Sostenibili – Progetti e Azioni per Campus Attenti all’Ambiente*. Bologna: Il Mulino.
- (2) Agasisti, T., & Soncin, M. (2017). I RAV delle istituzioni scolastiche emiliano-romagnole: un’analisi quantitativa. *Studi e Documenti n. 17: Dall’autovalutazione alle azioni di miglioramento*.

Working papers

- (1) Ferraro, S., Agasisti, T., Porcelli, F., & Soncin, M. (2020). *Local governments’ efficiency and educational results: empirical evidence from Italian primary schools*. Società Italiana di Economia Pubblica (SIEP) Working paper No. 756. Retrieved from http://www.siepweb.it/siep/images/joomd/1591801028Ferraro_et_al_Wp_SIEP_756.pdf
- (2) Soncin, M (2020). A Performance Evaluation of Digital Learning in Higher Education. (Doctoral dissertation, Politecnico di Milano, Milan, Italy). Retrieved from <https://www.politesi.polimi.it/handle/10589/150881>
- (3) Agasisti, T., Falzetti, P., Soncin, M. (2016) Italian school principals’ managerial behaviors and students’ test scores: an empirical analysis. Società Italiana di Economia Pubblica (SIEP) Working paper No. 709. Retrieved from http://www.siepweb.it/siep/images/joomd/1464777038Agasisti_et_al_WP_SIEP_709.pdf
- (4) Agasisti, T., Soncin, M., & Valenti, R. (2016). School factors helping disadvantaged students to succeed: empirical evidence from four Italian cities. Invalsi Working Paper N. 23/2015. Retrieved from https://www.invalsi.it/download/wp/wp23_Agasisti_Soncin_Valenti.pdf

Articles in newspapers

- (1) Agasisti, T. and Soncin, M. (2018, May 3). *La leadership dei dirigenti scolastici ha impatto positivo anche sugli alunni*. Scuola24. Retrieved from <http://scuola24.ilsole24ore.com/art/scuola/2018-05-02/la-leadership-dirigenti-scolastici-ha-impatto-positivo-anche-alunni-193723.php?uuid=AE5fEthE>
- (2) Agasisti, T. and Soncin, M. (2020, July 7). *Studenti più bravi quando il preside è un buon manager*. LaVoce.info. Retrieved from <https://www.lavoce.info/archives/68328/studenti-piu-bravi-quando-il-preside-e-un-buon-manager/>

Paper presentation in academic conferences

- (1) April 2020: Digital panel on *Accounting and Accountability for the Digital Transformation of Public Services – IRSPM Special Interest Group on Accounting and Accountability*.
- (2) November 2019: *Workshop “I dati INVALSI: Uno strumento per la ricerca”*. Rome, Italy.
- (3) October 2019: *2019 AiIG – Associazione Italiana Ingegneria Gestionale – Annual Conference*. Turin, Italy.
- (4) September 2019: *Workshop on Efficiency in Education, Healthcare and Other Public Services*. Barcelona, Spain.
- (5) June 2019: *AEDE Meeting. Spanish Association of Economics of Education*. Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Spain.
- (6) April 2019: *LEER Conference on Education Economics 2019*. Leuven, Belgium.
- (7) November 2018: *International Conference on Education Economics*. Budapest, Hungary.
- (8) September 2018: *International Workshop on Efficiency in Education*. Huddersfield, UK.
- (10) June 2018: *4th International Conference on Higher Education Advances (HEAD’18)*. Valencia, Spain.
- (11) June 2018: *EDEN Annual Conference*. Genoa, Italy.
- (12) June 2018: *XXVII Meeting of the Economics of Education Association*. Barcelona, Spain.
- (13) March 2018: *LEER Conference on Education Economics 2018*. Leuven, Belgium.
- (14) March 2018: *2018 AEFPP – Association for Education Finance and Policy*. Portland, USA.
- (15) December 2017: *OBHE Global Forum*. London, United Kingdom.
- (16) November 2017: *Workshop “I dati INVALSI: Uno strumento per la ricerca”*. Florence, Italy.
- (17) October 2017: *2017 Workshop on Efficiency in Education*. Budapest, Hungary.
- (18) August 2017: *2017 EGPA – European Group for Public Administration – Annual Conference*. Milan, Italy.
- (19) October 2016: *2016 Workshop on Efficiency in Education*. Milan, Italy.
- (20) October 2016: *2016 AiIG – Associazione Italiana Ingegneria Gestionale – Annual Conference*. Bergamo, Italy.
- (21) March 2016: *2016 AEFPP – Association for Education Finance and Policy*. Denver, USA.
- (22) October 2015: *2015 AiIG – Associazione Italiana Ingegneria Gestionale – Annual Conference*. Vicenza, Italy.
- (23) September 2015: *2015 SIS Statistical Conference*. Treviso, Italy.

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