Application to Economics of Digitization Tutorial

Dear all,

thank you very much for organizing the Economics of Digitization Tutorial in 2021. Although, these times come up with new challenges for all of us it is a great pleasure to be able to apply for an virtual event – and hopefully take part – even from Germany. Therefore, you find some further information about my background and research projects in the following.

I am looking forward to hearing from you.

Best regards,
Rebecca Janßen

Contact Information

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Course work and institutions

After completing my undergraduate studies in Business Administration and Economics at the Leuphana University Lüneburg in 2016, I attended a two-year master program in Economics at the University of Münster which I finished in August 2018. Next to main graduate courses in Microeconomics, Macroeconomics and Microeconometrics I attended further ones on Advanced Microeconomics (PhD level) and quite some classes on economic and public policy. A direct connection to digitization was mainly in the context of taxation of digital companies visible.
Since October 2018 I am working as a researcher and doctoral student in the Digital Economy research department at ZEW - Leibniz Centre for European Economic Research in Mannheim, Germany. Our department leader is Irene Bertschek. While working and doing most of my research projects here, I am officially enrolled as a PhD student at

the University of Zurich since February 2020. Within our structured doctoral program at ZEW as well as at the University of Zurich, I completed further course work on Advanced Microeconomics and Microeconometrics, Machine Learning, Text Analysis, Webscraping and Applied Theory for Empiricists.

Research interests and projects

Due to my affiliation with ZEW's Digital Economy department most of my projects are directly related to the consequences, fundamentals and challenges of digitization. In this regard, I mainly focus on digital platforms.

My first ongoing project is on the unintended consequences of the General Data Protection Regulation on the market for mobile applications. Using a large dataset reflecting almost all apps in the Google Play Store and their corresponding characteristics we analyze whether the GDPR – which came into effect in May 2018 in order to protect user privacy within the European Union – led to a lost generation of innovative apps and which welfare effects were associated with that. Main drivers, therefore, might be an increase in app exit due to additional costs of compliance as well as reduced entry for revenue and uncertainty reasons. The project is joint work with Reinhold Kesler (University of Zurich and ZEW Mannheim), Michael Kummer (University of East Anglia, Giorgia Institut of Technology, and ZEW Mannheim), and Joel Waldfogel (University of Minnesota, NBER, and ZEW Mannheim).

A second project, which is still rather at the beginning and work in progress for sure, is about the neutrality of digital platforms and mechanisms of premium memberships offered by these. Using a panel dataset of around 120,000 physicians on Germany's largest online rating platform for physicians *jameda* we would like to analyze the effects of premium memberships (including additional scope for design and content among other things) on ratings, reviews and treatment by the platform. It is joint work with Reinhold Kesler (University of Zurich and ZEW Mannheim) and Ulrich Laitenberger (Telecom Paristech and ZEW Mannheim).

Lastly, I started scraping data from a large wine platform including information on wine characteristics, reviews and user characteristics. Although, not being quite sure about the exact research question I see potential for investigating contexts of home-country bias or using the information on a huge amount of text reviews.

Being supervised by Ulrich Kaiser at the University of Zurich, it is not completely clarified whether all and how the project introduced above will be consolidated in my dissertation. The same is true for the exact composition of the committee.