CALL FOR PAPERS

Economics of Crime

A Special Issue to be published in the

*Italian Economic Journal*

Deadline for Paper Submission: June 30, 2019

Special Issue Editor: Paolo Pinotti, Bocconi University (Milan, Italy)

paolo.pinotti@unibocconi.it

Description of the Special Issue

The decision about committing a crime rationally compares the expected costs and benefits from such action, so crime is inherently an economic phenomenon. This simple observation by Gary Becker more than forty years ago – and, even before, by Cesare Beccaria – has spawned a major research agenda in economics.

Do higher wages reduce the propensity to engage in crime? Why does the homicide rate vary widely across similar cities within the same country? Do longer prison sentences deter crime? What are the economic costs imposed by the presence of criminal organizations? These are just some of the questions that have been explored through the lens of economic analysis.

While basic economic principles deliver interesting insights into all these issues, empirical work in this area has long been challenged by two fundamental problems. First, in most cases criminals devote considerable effort to hiding their actions, so the actual measurement of crime becomes difficult. Second, crime is an equilibrium phenomenon that depends on the complex interactions between several individual agents, as well as on the characteristics of the local environment. These features considerably hamper the identification of both the causes and the consequences of crime. This is particularly true for complex criminal endeavors, such as corruption, white-collar crimes, tax evasion, and drug-trafficking. At the same time, these types of crime impose the greatest economic costs.
It was only very recently that a credible body of empirical evidence emerged in this area, thanks to increasing availability of detailed data sets and econometric techniques allowing for the identification and estimation of causal relationships.

The Italian Economic Journal will contribute to our knowledge in this area of research by publishing a Special Issue on the Economics of Crime. Topics of interest include, but are not limited to:

- Drug-trafficking
- Evaluation of police crime reduction strategies
- Organized crime
- Tax evasion
- Immigration and crime
- Social interactions, networks, and crime
- Money laundering and other white collar crimes
- Crime and labor markets
- Economic crises, poverty, inequality and crime

**Timeline from Paper Submission to Publication**

- August 30, 2019: First feedback from reviewers
- October 15, 2019: deadline for sending revised paper
- November 15, 2019: closing second round of reviews (if needed)
- 2020: Special issue publication