Lauri Luosta

Specialist, VATT Institute for Economic Research
Affiliate Economist, RISEI Lab, Northwestern University

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Research interests: Applied microeconomics, public policy, child well-being, behavioral health, consumer finance, social security, administrative register data, causal inference.

Appointments

2026– **Specialist**, Data Room, VATT Institute for Economic Research, Helsinki

2025– **Affiliate Economist**, Research and Innovation for Social and Economic Inclusion (RISEI) Lab, Northwestern University

2025–2026 **Postdoctoral Scholar**, Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, Polish Academy of Sciences
Wellbeing Simulation Model (WELLMOD), with LSE, Paris School of Economics and University of Luxembourg

2026 **Visiting Researcher**, University of Luxembourg (January–February)

2025 **Visiting Research Fellow**, INVEST Fellowship Programme, University of Turku (October–December)

Education

2025 **PhD, Consumer Behavior and Family Economics**, University of Wisconsin–Madison
Dissertation: *Spillovers from Risky Behavior on Family and Child Well-being: Quasi-Experimental Evidence from the Legalization of Marijuana and Sports Gambling*
Committee: J. Michael Collins (chair), Katie Fitzpatrick, Lawrence Berger, Meg Doherty Bea

2021 **Master of International Public Affairs**, La Follette School of Public Affairs, University of Wisconsin–Madison

2019 **BA, magna cum laude**, Winona State University
Double major in Political Science and Global Studies; minor in Economics

Working Papers

"The Cross-Border Spillover Effects of Recreational Marijuana Dispensaries on Child Protective Services Reporting." *Under review.*

"Does Increasing the Minimum Wage Reduce Racial Disparities in Access to Local Financial Services?" (with Meg Doherty Bea). *Under review.*
ACCI–NEFE Paper Award, 2024

"The Impact of Recreational Marijuana Legalization on Child Welfare" (with Jessica Pac, Christine Durrance and Manisha Jain).

"The Impact of Sports Gambling Legalization on Alternative Financial Service Use."

"The Impact of Sports Gambling Legalization on Child Protective Services Reporting."

Work in Progress

The development of the relationship between earnings-related and basic social security over time

Consumer confidence and its connection to economic growth

AI-assisted workflows for register-based policy analysis

Policy Writing

2026 "Nuoret ovat työn ja koulutuksen ulkopuolella useimmiten vain hetkellisesti" [Most young people's spells outside work and education are short]. *VATT Blog*, 22 October 2026. vatt.fi

2022 "Gun Culture Limits Our Right to Life." *Wisconsin State Journal*, 24 July 2022.

2018 "Debating Is a Horrible Way to Discuss Politics." *Winona Daily News*, 22 February 2018.

Presentations

* poster

2025 INVEST Brown Bag Seminar, Turku · INVEST Scientific Seminar XI, Helsinki

2024 Finnish Health Economics Seminar Series (FINHESS), online · Southern Economic Association Annual Meeting, Washington DC · Virtual Economics of Poverty and Policy Seminar (VEPPS), online · Research Showcase for Legislators, Wisconsin State Capitol, Madison*

2023 APPAM Annual Conference, Atlanta · American Society of Health Economists (ASHEcon), St. Louis · American Council on Consumer Interests (ACCI), Las Vegas* · Population Association of America (PAA), New Orleans* · Atlanta Workshop on Public Policy and Child Well-Being, Georgia Tech

Teaching

2024 **Instructor of record**, Consumer Insights (CNSR SCI 201), Department of Consumer Science, University of Wisconsin–Madison

2023–2025 **Teaching Assistant**, Consumer Insights (CNSR SCI 201), University of Wisconsin–Madison

2020 **Teaching Assistant**, Folklore Studies (FOLKLORE 100), University of Wisconsin–Madison

2019–2020 **Teaching Assistant**, Second-Year Swedish (SCAND ST 211), University of Wisconsin–Madison

Research Experience

2024 **PhD Student Researcher** (summer), Urban Institute, Washington DC

2021–2024	**Project Assistant** to Prof. J. Michael Collins, Center for Financial Security, University of Wisconsin–Madison
2022–2023	**Project Assistant** to Prof. Meg Doherty Bea, School of Human Ecology, University of Wisconsin–Madison

Honors and Awards

2025	Teaching Assistant Award, School of Human Ecology, University of Wisconsin–Madison
2025	ACCI Young Professional Conference Scholarship
2024	ACCI–National Endowment for Financial Education Paper Award (with Meg Doherty Bea)
2024	PhD Dissertation Project Award
2023	Institute for Research on Poverty Graduate Research Fellow Conference Travel Award
2023	Summer Time Academic Research (STAR) Award
2022, 2023	Conference Travel Scholarship

Fellowships and Affiliations

2025–	Affiliate, Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, Polish Academy of Sciences
2022–2025	Graduate Research Fellow, Institute for Research on Poverty, University of Wisconsin–Madison
2023–2025	Student Trainee, Center for Demography and Ecology, University of Wisconsin–Madison
	Memberships: Western Economic Association (2024–), APPAM (2023–2025), Southern Economic Association (2024–2025), ACCI (2023–2024)

Service

2024	Discussant, Population Association of America Annual Meeting · Student Ambassador, APPAM Annual Conference · Panelist, Quantitative Research Methods Seminar, School of Human Ecology
2023–2025	Graduate Student Appointee, Center for Financial Security Steering Committee
2023–2024	Graduate Student Representative, Consumer Behavior and Family Economics Graduate Program Committee
2022–2025	Peer mentor to incoming graduate students, School of Human Ecology
2023	Panelist, graduate student visit day, School of Human Ecology · Graduate Student Facilitator, PEOPLE Program

Skills

Methods	Causal inference, modern difference-in-differences, fixed effects and panel data methods, program evaluation, cost-benefit analysis, microsimulation, survey and experimental design

Data	Finnish administrative registers; Wisconsin Administrative Data Core; US consumer credit data
Software	Stata (expert); R, LaTeX, Qualtrics (proficient); Python (beginner)
Languages	Finnish (native), English (full professional), Swedish (intermediate), French (beginner)

References

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University of Wisconsin–Madison
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Last updated November 2026