NOWCASTING

The 24th Federal Forecasters Conference

September 22, 2022

Theme
Nowcasting

When
Thursday, September 22, 2022, 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

Where
Lindner Family Commons, Room 602
Elliott School of International Affairs
The George Washington University, Washington, DC

Sponsoring Agencies
Bureau of Economic Analysis • Bureau of Labor Statistics • Congressional Budget Office • Department of Veterans Affairs • Economic Research Service, USDA • Federal Aviation Administration • Federal Reserve Board • Internal Revenue Service • Office of Economic Policy, U.S. Department of the Treasury • U.S. Census Bureau • U.S. Department of Labor • U.S. Energy Information Administration, Office of Energy Analysis • U.S. Geological Survey

Partnering Organizations
H.O. Stekler Research Program on Forecasting, The George Washington University • Institute for International Economic Policy, Elliott School of International Affairs • Society of Government Economists

www.federalforecasters.org

FFC/2022
The 24th Federal Forecasters Conference

Conference Theme: Nowcasting

Thursday, September 22, 2022, 9:00 AM - 4:30 PM

**Elliott School of International Affairs, 1957 E. Street NW
The George Washington University, Washington, DC**

Sponsoring Agencies
    Bureau of Economic Analysis
    Congressional Budget Office
    Department of Veterans Affairs
    Economic Research Service, USDA
    Federal Aviation Administration
    Federal Reserve Board
    Internal Revenue Service, RAAS
    Office of Economic Policy, U.S. Department of the Treasury
    U.S. Census Bureau
    U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics
    U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration
    U.S. Energy Information Administration, Office of Energy Analysis
    U.S. Geological Survey

Partnering Organizations
    H. O. Stekler Research Program on Forecasting, The George Washington University
    Institute for International Economic Policy, Elliott School of International Affairs
    Society of Government Economists

Program Committee
    Greg Won, Chair, Federal Aviation Administration; Jeffrey Busse, U.S. Geological Survey;
Neil R. Ericsson, Federal Reserve Board; Edward N. Gamber, Congressional Budget Office;
Kyle Hood, Bureau of Economic Analysis; Maria Hussain, Bureau of Labor Statistics; Maros
Ivanic, U.S. Department of Agriculture; Matthew MacLachlan, U.S. Department of
Agriculture; Andrew B. Martinez, U.S. Department of the Treasury; Anne Morse, U.S.
Census Bureau; Andy Roche-DeJesus, Internal Revenue Service; Tara Sinclair, The
George Washington University; Brian Sloboda, Department of Labor, OSHA.

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FFC/2022 Conference at a Glance

8:30 AM — 9:00 AM   **Registration** ....6th Floor Lobby

9:00 AM — 11:45 AM   **Morning Session ....Lindner Family Commons (Room 602)**

   9:00 AM — 9:15 AM   Opening Remarks and Welcome

   9:15 AM — 9:30 AM   Award Announcements

   9:30 AM — 10:00 AM   Retrospective: Frederick L. Joutz

   10:00 AM — 10:15 AM   Break

   10:15 AM — 11:45 AM   Panel Discussion

11:45 AM — 1:15 PM   **Lunch (On Your Own – restaurant list at end of program)**

1:15 PM — 4:30 PM   **Afternoon Concurrent Sessions ....various rooms**

   1:15 PM — 2:45 PM   Concurrent Sessions I

   2:45 PM — 3:00 PM   Afternoon Break

   3:00 PM — 4:30 PM   Concurrent Sessions II

Morning Session

9:00 AM – 11:45 AM.. Lindner Family Commons (Room 602)

9:00 AM – 9:15 AM   Opening Remarks and Welcome

Greg Won
Chair, Federal Forecasters Consortium Board
Federal Aviation Administration

Steven Suranovic
Director, Institute for International Economic Policy

9:15 AM – 9:30 AM   Award Announcements

2022 Forecasting Contest Winners
Brian W. Sloboda, U.S. Department of Labor, OSHA

Debra Gerald Founder's Award
Anne Morse
U.S. Census Bureau

9:30 AM – 10:00 AM   Retrospective: Frederick L. Joutz:

Honoring the life and work of friend, colleague, and longtime supporter of the Federal Forecasters Consortium, Professor Frederick L. Joutz

Tara Sinclair
Director, H.O. Stekler Research Program on Forecasting
The George Washington University

10:15 AM – 11:45 AM   Panel Discussion

Panel Discussion... 10:15 AM – 11:45 AM

Conference Theme: Nowcasting

Forecasters often need to predict the present—or "nowcast"—to help inform policy decisions. The onset of the pandemic highlighted the importance of nowcasting the economy and the pandemic itself. Conditions altered rapidly and policymakers responded to those changes with unprecedented fiscal and monetary stimulus and with public policies such as lockdowns and mask mandates. To aid in nowcasting, forecasters turn to machine-learning techniques and high-frequency data, which are often drawn from alternative data sources such as social media, rather than from standard sample surveys and administrative data. Nowcasting poses difficult challenges, particularly because data about the present may be unavailable, incomplete, or inaccurately measured. While high-frequency data can be a great source of timely and detailed information, it can come with its own dynamics, noise, and structural breaks. Those features can arise as a byproduct of individual decisions (as with Twitter) or the customer composition for private businesses (as with credit card transactions). The conference will consider nowcasting and its roles in decision-making. How have recently developed tools and data sources contributed to nowcasting, and how do nowcasts serve policymakers?

Moderator

Neil R. Ericsson
Federal Reserve Board

Panelists

Dr. Baoline Chen
Senior Research Economist
U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

Dr. Neil Mehrotra
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Macroeconomic Policy
U.S. Department of the Treasury

Dr. Jason Schachter
Chief International Migration Branch
U.S. Census Bureau

Question and answer discussion with audience will follow

Panelist Information

Dr. Baoline Chen is a senior research economist at the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis. Her recent research focuses on applied macroeconomic time series analysis, which includes nowcasting and forecasting of GDP and its components, structural time series modeling for business fluctuation in GDP and its major components, detecting and correcting residual seasonality in the national account statistics, and benchmarking and reconciliation of large system of economic time series. Before she joined BEA in 2001, she was an associate professor of economics at Rutgers University, NJ. She holds a PhD in economics from Indiana University.

Dr. Neil Mehrotra serves as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Macroeconomic Policy in the Office of Economic Policy at US Treasury. He was most recently Senior Economist at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York in the Research and Statistics Group. He joined the Macroeconomic and Monetary Studies Function at the NY Fed in July of 2019. His research focuses on declining interest rates and secular stagnation, including implications for monetary and fiscal policy. He also studies the importance of financial frictions for the behavior of firms over the business cycle. Mehrotra's research has been published in journals such as the American Economic Review, the Journal of Monetary Economics, and AEJ: Macroeconomics. Prior to joining the New York Fed, Mehrotra was an Assistant Professor in the Economics Department at Brown University from 2013 to 2019. His research has been supported by grants from the National Bureau of Economic Research, the Institute for New Economic Thinking, the Washington Center for Equitable Growth, and the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation. From 2016 to 2017, Mehrotra was a visiting junior scholar at the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis. He received his Bachelor's degree in Economics from Princeton University in 2005 and a Ph.D. in Economics from Columbia University in 2013.

Dr. Jason Schachter is Chief of the US Census Bureau's International Migration Branch and has worked in the fields of demography and statistics for over twenty years. Prior to his current position at the Census Bureau, he worked in Geneva, Switzerland for the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe as their expert on international migration statistics. He started his career as a demographer for the U.S. Census Bureau, but later worked as a senior statistician for the International Labour Organization, and served as a consultant for international organizations like the World Bank and the International Organization for Migration. He has also held the position of Director of Research for New York City's Division of Citywide Equal Employment Opportunity, served as a Population Affairs Officer in the Policy Section of the United Nation's Population Division and was an Adjunct Professor at Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs. He received his PhD in Rural Sociology and Demography from Pennsylvania State University, examining internal U.S. migration patterns and reasons for move of the poor and international migrants.

Afternoon Concurrent Sessions

Concurrent Session #1

1:15 PM – 2:45 PM ....

Special Afternoon Session: Simple versus Complex Forecasting Methods……Commons

Chair: Kevin Dubina

Thinking through the pros and cons
Presenter: **Anne Morse**

Evidence from Forecasting Competitions
Presenter: **Neil R. Ericsson**

Why do projections?
Presenter: **Maria Hussain**

Open Discussion

Session: Nowcasting (1:15 pm – 2:15 pm) ……………… ISCS Suite 605 Conference Room

Chair: Constantin Bürgi

New information and forecast inefficiency
Authors: *Constantin Bürgi*, Julio Ortiz

Impact of Exogenous Variable Forecasts in Nowcasting: Results, Tools, and Methods
Authors: *Tammy Jackson*

Session: Energy (1:15 pm – 2:15 pm) ………… Sigur Center Suite 503 Conference Room

Chair: Andy Roche

Saudi petrochemical sector and its economic, energy, and environmental implications
Authors: *Fakhri J. Hasanov*, Muhammad Javid, Heyran Aliyeva

[Impact of the Ukraine War on Gas Price Expectations: New Survey Evidence from Chinese Households](#)
Authors: *Xuguang Simon Sheng*, Zidong An, **Carola Binder**

Session: Structural Breaks …………………..……………… IIEP Suite 502 Conference Room

Chair: David Bernstein

The Asymmetric Vector Autoregressive Moving Average Model
Author: *John W. Keating*

Forecasting under Structural Breaks Using Improved Weighted Estimation
Authors: *Shahnaz Parsaeian*, Tae-Hwy Lee, Aman Ullah

Jointly Modeling Male and Female Labor Participation and Unemployment
Authors: *David Bernstein*, Andrew B. Martinez

2:45 PM – 3:00 PM   **Afternoon Break**

Concurrent Session #2

3:00 PM – 4:30 PM ....

Session: Inflation ……………………....……………… **ISCS Suite 605 Conference Room**

Chair: Julio L. Ortiz

Forecasting the future from the past: How high must interest rates go to affect inflation?
Author: ***Carolyn Carroll***

[Forecasting the FOMC's Longer Run Forecasts](#)
Authors: ***Jaime Marquez***

Misspecified Expectations
Author: ***Julio L. Ortiz***

Session: Interest Rates……………………….…… **Sigur Center Suite 503 Conference Room**

Chair: William Larson

Macroeconomic Forecasting using Filtered Signals from a Stock Market Cross Section
Authors: ***Menzie D. Chinn***, Nicolas Chatelais and Arthur Stalla-Bourdillon

How Well Can Economists Forecast the Housing Market
Authors: ***Prakash Loungani***, Hites Ahir, and Karan Bhasin

Effects of Mortgage Interest Rates on House Price Appreciation
Author: ***William Larson***

Session: COVID-19 Effects on Macroeconomics………… **IIEP Suite 502 Conference Room**

Chair: Brian Sloboda

Forecasting Monthly Tourism Arrivals to Aruba Since Pandemic
Author: ***Olga Bespalova***

Systematizing Macroframework Forecasting
Authors: ***Sakai Ando***, Taehoon Kim

A LSTM Approach to Forecast the Macroeconomic Impacts of COVID-19
Authors: ***Brian W. Sloboda***, Rolando Santos

Session: Big Data.…………………………….…………… **Dean's Suite 401 Conference Room**

Chair: Andy Roche

Estimation and Identification of Latent Group Structures in Panel Data
Author: ***Ali Mehrabani***

Machine Learning Methods are Better – But When?
Author: ***Keith Ord***

Large Network Autoregressions with Unknown Adjacency Matrix
Author: ***Kenwin Maung***

Lunch Options

Name and Website	Address	Phone	Notes
California Tortilla	1809 E St NW	202-750-8574	(v) (ve) (gf)
Chop't Creative Salad Co	1730 Pennsylvania Ave NW	202-499-2393	(v) (ve) (gf)
&pizza	2224 F St NW	202-849-8497	(v) (ve) (gf)
Starbucks	1957 E St, NW	202-296-1613	
Tonic	2036 G St NW	202-296-0211	(gf)
Carvings	2021 F Street NW	202-994-8844	(v)
Subway	1959 E Street NW	202-994-7929	(v)
GCDC: Grilled Cheese Bar	1730 Pennsylvania Ave NW	202-393-4232	(v) (gf) American
SecreTea	1959 E Street NW	202-452-9622	
Beefsteak	22nd & I Street NW	202-296-1421	(v) (gf)
RAWish	2000 Pennsylvania Ave NW		(v) (gf)
Onkei	2000 Pennsylvania Ave NW		Sushi / ramen
Toryumon Japanese House	1901 Pennsylvania Ave NW	202-785-4600	(v) (ve)
Devon & Blakely	2200 Pennsylvania Ave NW	202-659-9070	(v) (gf)
Flower Child	2112 Pennsylvania Ave NW	202-919-3646	(v) (gf)
Magic Gourd Restaurant	528 23rd St NW	202-466-3995	
GW Deli	2133 G Street NW	202-331-9391	(v) (gf) breakfast
Jetties	1921 I Street NW	202-380-9272	(v)
Whole Foods Market	2201 I Street NW	202-296-1660	(v) (ve) (gf) kosher halal
Poppabox	20th & I Street NW	202-659-1111	(v)
Roti	2221 I Street NW	202-499-2095	(v) (ve) Mediterranean
Sweetgreen	2221 I Street NW	202-507-8357	(v) (ve) (gf)
Bindaas	2000 Pennsylvania Ave NW	202-516-4326	(v)
Uptowner Cafe	2023 G Street NW	202-955-0004	(v)
Chipotle	2000 Pennsylvania Ave NW	202-706-6761	(v) (gf)
Panera Bread	800 21st St NW	202-423-2137	(v)
Abunai Poke	1920 L St NW	202-838-9718	(v) (ve) (gf)
Baja Fresh	990 K St NW	202-525-2967	(v) (gf)
Butter Chicken Company	818 18th Street NW	202-331-4175	
Duke's Grocery	2000 Pennsylvania Ave NW	202-733-3967	(v)

Notes: Vegetarian (v), Vegan (ve), Gluten free (gf) options available.