

Departments (research groups) of the Faculty of Business and Economics, University of Antwerp

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Accountancy and Finance ([ACF](#))

The Department of Accountancy and Finance aims to be an international center of excellence in the fields of accounting, finance and insurance. It strives to optimise the accounting and finance landscape for governments, business and the broader society alike. The department does this by producing high quality fundamental research and publishing in top international academic journals, but also by performing applied research directed towards businesses and other organisations. Its members are encouraged to disseminate this research by presenting at international academic conferences, and to communicate via other forums to other societal actors.

The research topics studied by the accounting members cover topics in financial reporting and analysis for both profit and non-profit organisations, earnings management, sustainability reporting, management accounting and control, cost allocation systems, management control system design, audit as corporate governance tool, ... Our corporate finance colleagues focus on entrepreneurial finance and small business finance, as well as business group finance. In the area of financial economics, the focus lies on portfolio management, real estate and insurance related research and asset pricing. A unifying theme across several members of our research group is financial history related research based on the data of our SCOB. Also research on corporate governance unifies several accounting and finance researchers.

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Economics ([ECO](#))

The Department of Economics is an internationally visible and respected research group in the European research scene. Our Department members are from a diverse international background and we recruit our PhD students worldwide. Our fields of research are mainly on societal relevant topics in labour economics – in its broadest sense – from macroeconomic as well as microeconomic perspectives. The research topics range from public economics, to family economics, social network analysis, revealed preference theory, fiscal policy, international trade, economic geography, crime and gender economics. Furthermore, our Department members are also very active in the fields of industrial organisation, health economics and socioeconomic inequality of health and the history of economic thought.

We produce state-of-the-art research which is firmly grounded in economic theory and which offers new insights into policy-relevant problems. We invest in *active, visible* participation to the *European research scene* to produce socially relevant and high-quality research, and to get our research published in leading general and field-specific international economics journals. We regard peer-reviewed publications in established scientific outlets as a credible means of guaranteeing independent, high-quality research.

We value our research-based contributions to policy discussions highly. Our economic research provides robust conceptual input for societal decision-making processes and is a serious contributor to help policymakers in making better decisions for society. As a research group, we want to contribute to the policy debate on a broad number of important issues, such as the functioning of the energy

market, the organisation of the health sector, the mobility problem, the functioning of the labour market. Our policy reports and recommendations are therefore also research-based and scientifically sound.

We firmly believe that applied economics cannot be taught effectively without serious underlying research and scientific reflection upon real-world economic policy issues. We want our students to use modern scientific methods to approach societal problems. As a result, our teaching is guided by *research-orientated* and *research-led* teaching practices. This approach also emphasises the teaching of inquiry skills and the importance of acquiring a 'research ethos'.

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Engineering Management ([ENM](#))

Engineering Management is a broad field of research, ranging from technical and methodological subjects (operations research, data mining), via engineering, to management and policy aspects (sustainability, entrepreneurship, innovation, energy and environment). For this reason, the Department of Engineering Management consists of five subgroups, that cover together the most important subdomains of the field of Engineering Management (in alphabetical order):

- (i) *ANT/OR - Operations Research* focuses on applications of operations research.
- (ii) *Applied Data Mining* focuses on mining behavioural data for marketing and risk management applications, and data science ethics.
- (iii) *Active Perception Lab* focuses on the development of biomimetic sensors.
- (iv) *Risk Models in Innovation* focuses on the discovery of the characteristics of successful and failing projects.
- (v) *EnvEcon - Environmental Economics* focuses on economic and sustainability assessments of environmental, agricultural and energy systems and technologies and safety and security.

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Management ([MNG](#))

The Department of Management is committed to providing high quality education, research and professional and community service in the domain of organization and strategic management, all at a local and an international level together with a focus on understanding the functioning and effectiveness of organisations in the private, public and social profit sector. Our work is characterised by a multidisciplinary perspective. We seek a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods, conceptual and empirical approaches, and fundamental and applied research. This pluralistic approach help us build a wide range of expertise across our five teaching and research domains:

- (i) *Management, Strategy and Organisation* focuses on the way environmental pressures shape employee and top management team behaviour, corporate innovation and decision-making processes.
- (ii) *International Management* aims to improve understanding of the antecedents, processes, structures and outcomes of a firm's international activities. Our IM researchers pay particular attention to issues of international entrepreneurship, change processes and

dynamics in and across firms, and inter-organizational relationships in international business.

- (iii) *Entrepreneurship and Innovation Management* performs leading edge research about antecedents, processes, and performance of innovation and entrepreneurial actions, projects and strategy. It focuses on the changing innovation context in a digital era where data sharing, platform development and ecosystem management become essential to thrive.
- (iv) *Cultural Management* provides comprehensive specialised research and advice both within and across the areas of management and policy research within the cultural and creative sectors.
- (v) *Professional Communication* specialises in different types of writing research. It focuses on applied, methodological and fundamental research in the broad field of professional communication and digital writing processes.

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Management Information Systems (MIS)

Research in the Department of Management Information Systems focuses on two areas, i.e. Digital Governance and Normalized Systems.

Research on Digital Governance takes a management and organisational perspective towards digital transformation. More specially, it address how organisations can design and diagnose governance and management control systems that enable deep integration and alignment between business and technology strategies and operations and as a consequence the realization of the intended digital business value. The research also includes the role of the board of directors in these domains and the related areas of digital risk, cybersecurity and assurance..

Normalized Systems is a theoretical framework that studies the evolvability of modular structures based on concepts from engineering such as stability from systems theory and entropy from thermodynamics. In the context of software, research on Normalized Systems offers insights into the (lack of) agility and evolvability of software architectures and information systems, and provides an industry-ready methodology for building information systems with next-level evolvability characteristics, based on meta-circular code generators. This methodology has been applied extensively in industry by NSX for example, an official spin-off of the University of Antwerp, in the context of administrative and industrial (IoT-related) information systems.

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Marketing (MKT)

The mission of the Marketing Department can be summarised as ‘doing cutting-edge research on marketing and innovation with the ambition to be highly visible in international academic networks and highly relevant for practice, both in a business and a social-profit context’.

The group has an academic identity that is based on two main pillars: (1) marketing communications and consumer behaviour, and (2) co-creation and innovation. Specifically, the research group boasts expertise in persuasive communications (e.g., in the area of user-generated content, marketing via social media, branded content, nudging), (sustainable) consumer behaviour, adoption of innovations,

sustainable business models, value co-creation in multistakeholder settings, applying innovative methodological approaches, i.e. systemic perspective and a range of qualitative and quantitative research methods for data collection and analysis. Opportunities to cooperate in new research projects, bridging the two main research pillars of the group (for instance, marketing communications in co-creation processes), are actively explored.

As a research group, we value and focus on quality and valorisation of academic work, integration and cooperation as well as managerial relevance. Research projects often have a managerial angle, and/or are conducted in cooperation with companies and organisations (for instance, media companies, pharmaceutical companies, government agencies).

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Transport and Regional Economics (TPR)

The Department of Transport and Regional Economics aims at a wide array of research projects, incorporating longer term fundamental research projects, as well as contracts with diverse customers and limited assignments intended for immediate application. Business knowledge involves to a large extent policy advice, consulting and individual research of the Department members. This way, in the past years, a lot of research was performed for companies, and high-standing research was done into the evaluation of transport investments, mobility policy, tourism, the maritime and port sector, and regional aspects and city policy.

The lines of research pursued by the Transport and Regional Economics Department are located on the interface of general and business economics. The rich set of tools that the fields of transport and regional economics offers, are visible in the broad range of research methodologies applied. These include strategic analyses, methods of economic research and assessment, information gathering and analysis, operational research, model-based analysis, forecasting and simulations.

The research activities unfold within the framework of programmes instigated by the university and the authorities (regional, federal and European) as well as specific assignments from the public and private sectors. The topics covered relate to: the interaction between transport and economics; freight transport; the port and maritime sector; the air transport business and markets; urban logistics and distribution; the assessment of infrastructure projects; strategic analyses and policy recommendations (private companies, authorities); interaction between transport and physical planning; urban studies and regional economics.

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