

## **Amsterdam Meta Science Network Seminar, 8 May 2025**

VU Amsterdam, Main Building, Forum 3, 15.00 – 16.30

You are cordially invited to the monthly seminar of the Amsterdam Meta Science Network on Thursday, 8 May 2025. The seminar features two talks (abstracts below) with Q&A. Save the date for the upcoming edition: Thursday June 13.

*How to find the venue: enter the VU Amsterdam main building (De Boelelaan 1105) through the glass doors the main entrance. Go up the stairs on your right-hand side to the 2nd floor. When you are in front of the Aula, take the stairs on your left-hand side down one level. You have now arrived at the entrance to the Forum rooms.*

### **Stanislav Avdeev (University of Amsterdam) – The Sources of Researcher Variation in Economics**

Joint work with 145+ coauthors

We use a rigorous three-stage many-analysts design to assess how different researcher decisions—specifically data cleaning, research design, and the interpretation of a policy question—affect the variation in estimated treatment effects. A total of 146 research teams each completed the same causal inference task three times each: first with few constraints, then using a shared research design, and finally with pre-cleaned data in addition to a specified design. We find that even when analyzing the same data, teams reach different conclusions. In the first stage, the interquartile range (IQR) of the reported policy effect was 3.1 percentage points, with substantial outliers. Surprisingly, the second stage, which restricted research design choices, exhibited slightly higher IQR (4.0 percentage points), largely attributable to imperfect adherence to the prescribed protocol. By contrast, the final stage, featuring standardized data cleaning, narrowed variation in estimated effects, achieving an IQR of 2.4 percentage points. Reported sample sizes also displayed significant convergence under more restrictive conditions, with the IQR dropping from 295,187 in the first stage to 29,144 in the second, and effectively zero by the third. Our findings underscore the critical importance of data cleaning in shaping applied microeconomic results and highlight avenues for future replication efforts.

Paper: [The Sources of Researcher Variation in Economics](#)

**Alexandra Sarafoglou (University of Amsterdam) – Beyond Effect Sizes: Capturing Subjective Evidence to Improve Interpretations in Many-Analysts Studies**

Many-analysts studies typically summarise their findings using a single outcome metric per team. To provide a richer, more nuanced assessment of research findings, we introduce the Subjective Evidence Evaluation Survey (SEES) and illustrate its value using data from a prior many-analysts study.

Paper: <https://royalsocietypublishing.org/doi/full/10.1098/rsos.240125>