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Alain Monfort, Jean-Paul Renne, Guillaume Roussellet

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A Quadratic Kalman Filter*

Alain MONFORT[†], Jean-Paul RENNE[‡], and Guillaume ROUSSELLET[§]

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Abstract

We propose a new filtering and smoothing technique for non-linear state-space models. Observed variables are quadratic functions of latent factors following a Gaussian VAR. Stacking the vector of factors with its vectorized outer-product, we form an augmented state vector whose first two conditional moments are known in closed-form. We also provide analytical formulae for the unconditional moments of this augmented vector. Our new quadratic Kalman filter (QKF) exploits these properties to formulate fast and simple filtering and smoothing algorithms. A simulation study first emphasizes that the QKF outperforms the extended and unscented approaches in the filtering exercise showing up to 70% RMSEs improvement of filtered values. Second, it provides evidence that QKF-based maximum-likelihood estimates of model parameters always possess lower bias or lower RMSEs that the alternative estimators.

JEL Codes: C32, C46, C53, C57

Key-words: Non-linear filtering, non-linear smoothing, quadratic model, Kalman filter, quasi maximum likelihood

^{*}Functions for the Quadratic Kalman Filter are implemented with the R-software and are available on the runmycode-website at http://www.runmycode.org/companion/view/313.

[†]CREST and Banque de France, alain.monfort@ensae.fr

[‡]Banque de France, jeanpaul.renne@banque-france.fr

[§]Corresponding author. Banque de France, CREST and CEREMADE guillaume.roussellet@banque-france.fr

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