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Financial networks and stress testing: challenges and new research avenues for systemic risk analysis and financial stability implications $\stackrel{\diamond}{\approx}$

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Abstract

Network models, stress testing methods and early warning systems are attracting growing interest both among scholars and practitioners. In this short paper, we illustrate some examples of the insights they have to offer both in terms of new fundamental scientific understanding and in terms of concrete applications to the policy area of financial stability and macro-prudential policy. Finally, we discuss some new research pathways that the field could engage in order to address the challenging questions still open.

Keywords: financial networks, systemic risk, financial contagion, financial stability.

1. Financial networks: the main insights and the main challenges for future research

In the recent years, the field of financial networks models and its applications to stress testing methods and financial stability have attracted growing interest both among scholars and practitioners. It has built both on the literature on complex networks (e.g. Barabási, 2011; Caldarelli, 2007; Dorogovtsev & Mendes, 2003; Barrat et al., 2008) and on the literature in economic networks (e.g. Jackson & Watts, 2002; Goyal & Vega-Redondo, 2005; Galeotti et al., 2010). Today, the field is mature to deliver concrete policy insights and policy applications to financial stability and macro-prudential regulation, as demonstrated by the increasing number of conferences bringing together policy makers and scholars¹, highly visible positioning papers (Battiston et al., 2016e) and scientific articles (see more below), as well as practical outputs such as systemic risk dashboards², recommendations for stress testing (BCBS, 2015), as well and new tools developed in collaborations among scholars and regulators³.

 $^{^{\}circ}$ The authors would like to dedicate this paper and also the special issue to our friend, colleague and contributor Ivan Alves. *Corresponding author

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¹see e.g. the IMF conference on Interconnectedness, April 2014, Washington DC; the joint conference of Banco de México, CEMLA, the Univ. of Zurich and the Journal of Financial Stability on "Network models, stress testing, and other tools for financial stability monitoring and macroprudential policy design and implementation", November 2015, Mexico City

²E.g. stress-test dashboard for the Euro Area banking system, see https://simpolproject.eu/2016/06/09/debtrank-2 developed within the FET projects SIMPOL and DOLFINS, Battiston et al. (2016b)

 $^{^{3}}$ An example among many others is the collaboration between Univ. of Zurich and the European Systemic Risk Board for the development of the Flow of Risk Analysis of the CDS market, D'Errico et al. (2017); and with the European Central Bank on the analysis of systemically important banks and economic sectors in the Euro Area.

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