

Title: Vox populi vox dei?

Schedule: 10.05.2022 at 10:30 on MS Teams

Abstract:

Investment strategies for water service improvement used to be based on centralized planning. While the water industry has been partially liberalized for what concerns management, organization, regulation and finance, the role of customers' preferences in shaping water management choices so far has been very weak (if existing). More recently, the WHO has affirmed that investment strategies should be guided by a risk-oriented attitude, which represents the baseline framework of "water safety plans", that water management organizations are expected to adopt.

In this innovative perspective, value dimensions associated to water services become a critical aspect to investigate. Rather than descending from expert valuation of technicians, they should rely on the actual preferences of consumers. But how can these preferences be assessed? Our study applies environmental economic valuation techniques (choice-experiments and contingent valuation) in order to appreciate the usefulness of stated-preference methods as a support to water safety plans. We compare three different inquiries – two regional and a national one – from which many relevant insights can be derived.

Presenter:

Antonio Massarutto is associate professor of applied economics at the University of Udine (Italy). Antonio has a long expertise as a researcher in the field of applied environmental economics and public utility regulation and liberalization; special focus on water policy and comparative international studies. He is author of many publications in the field of water policy, waste management and public utilities, with special focus on economic evaluation, economic instruments, finance of water infrastructure, competitive tendering, liberalization and PPP in the water utility sector. His intense academic and research networking is confirmed by the continuous participation to international workshops and conferences. He is and has been responsible of many nationally-funded research project in the field of water policy and water services.