

Aggregating Tastes, Beliefs, and Attitudes under Uncertainty

E Danan¹ T Gajdos² B Hill³ J-M Tallon⁴

¹THEMA, University of Cergy-Pontoise, CNRS

²CNRS, GREQAM, Aix-Marseille University

³CNRS, HEC Paris

⁴Paris School of Economics, Université de Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne, CNRS

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Motivation

Social decisions in uncertain environments where individual agents have both different tastes/interests and different beliefs

SEU preferences:

- Tastes captured by a utility function
- Beliefs captured by a prior

Paretian aggregation impossible unless common beliefs

Non-SEU (ambiguity) preferences:

- Tastes captured by a utility function
- Beliefs captured by (e.g.) a set of priors
- Ambiguity attitudes

Paretian aggregation impossible even when common beliefs

Example



Example

	$\Delta t^\circ < 2$	$\Delta t^\circ > 2$
Nothing)()(\$	\$
Treatment)()(\$)(\$\$\$
Prevention)(\$ \$)(\$ \$

SEU preferences:

- Fishery sector believes $\Delta t^\circ = 3$
- Tech sector believes $\Delta t^\circ = 1$

Spurious unanimity

Non-SEU preferences:

- Both sectors believe $1 \leq \Delta t^\circ \leq 3$
- Both sectors are ambiguity averse (MEU)

“Spurious hedging”

Contribution

Introduce a weakening of Pareto Domiance – Unambiguous Pareto Dominance – that is immune to spurious hedging (and a further weakening of this axiom that is immune to spurious unanimity as well)

Show that these axioms restore the possibility of preference aggregation for ambiguity sensitive decision makers and relate social beliefs to individual beliefs (independently of ambiguity attitudes)

Within a general class of preferences and a flexible notion of beliefs so results applicable to many popular models of decision under uncertainty

Introduce a new axiom allowing aggregation of ambiguity attitudes, independently of beliefs and tastes

Related literature

Paretian aggregation of SEU preferences:

- Hylland, Zeckhauser (1979); Mongin (1995, 1997, 1998); Chambers, Hayashi (2014); Billot, Vergopoulos (2014)

Paretian aggregation of ambiguity preferences:

- Gajdos, Tallon, Vergnaud (2008); Crès, Gilboa, Vieille (2011); Nascimento (2012); Herzberg (2013); Qu (2014)

Weakenings of Pareto Dominance:

- Gilboa, Samet, Schmeidler (2004); Gilboa, Samuelson, Schmeidler (2014); Gayer, Gilboa, Samuelson, Schmeidler (2014); Alon, Gayer (2014); Blume, Cogley, Easley, Sargent, Tsyrennikov (2014); Brunnermeier, Simsek, Xiong (2014)

Outline

Setup

Preference and unambiguous preference

Pareto Dominance

Unambiguous Pareto Dominance

Applications

- MEU preferences

- CEU preferences

- Smooth Ambiguity preferences

Aggregating ambiguity attitudes

Anscombe-Aumann acts

\mathcal{S} a finite set of states

\mathcal{X} a finite set of prizes

$\mathcal{P} = \Delta(\mathcal{X})$ the set of lotteries

$\mathcal{F} = \mathcal{P}^{\mathcal{S}}$ the set of acts

- $\lambda f + (1 - \lambda)g$ statewise mixing
- $\mathcal{P} \subset \mathcal{F}$ constant acts
- $u \circ f = (E_{f(s)}(u(x)))_{s \in \mathcal{S}}$ utility act

$\succsim \subseteq \mathcal{F} \times \mathcal{F}$ a preference relation

- \succ and \sim the asymmetric and symmetric parts of \succsim

SEU preference relation

Axiom (Completeness)

For all $f, g \in \mathcal{F}$, $f \succsim g$ or $g \succsim f$.

Axiom (Transitivity)

For all $f, g, h \in \mathcal{F}$, if $f \succsim g$ and $g \succsim h$ then $f \succsim h$.

Axiom (Non-Triviality)

There exist $f, g \in \mathcal{F}$ such that $f \succ g$.

Axiom (Monotonicity)

For all $f, g \in \mathcal{F}$, if $f(s) \succsim g(s)$ for all $s \in \mathcal{S}$ then $f \succsim g$.

Axiom (Mixture Continuity)

For all $f, g, h \in \mathcal{F}$, the sets $\{\lambda \in [0, 1] : \lambda f + (1 - \lambda)g \succsim h\}$ and $\{\lambda \in [0, 1] : h \succsim \lambda f + (1 - \lambda)g\}$ are closed.

Axiom (Independence)

For all $f, g, h \in \mathcal{F}$ and $\lambda \in (0, 1)$, if $f \succsim g$ then $\lambda f + (1 - \lambda)h \succsim \lambda g + (1 - \lambda)h$.

SEU representation

Proposition (Anscombe, Aumann, 1963)

A binary relation \succsim on \mathcal{F} satisfies Completeness, Transitivity, Non-Triviality, Monotonicity, Mixture Continuity, Independence if and only if

there exist a non-constant function $u : \mathcal{X} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ and a probability distribution $m \in \Delta(S)$ such that for all $f, g \in \mathcal{F}$,

$$f \succsim g \Leftrightarrow E_m(u \circ f) \geq E_m(u \circ g).$$

(Moreover, u is unique up to a positive affine transformation, and m is unique.)

m is the agent's prior.

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MBA preference relation

Weaken Independence to:

Axiom (Risk Independence)

For all $p, q, r \in \mathcal{P}$ and $\lambda \in (0, 1)$, if $p \succsim q$ then $\lambda p + (1 - \lambda)r \succsim \lambda q + (1 - \lambda)r$.

MBA representation

Proposition (Cerreià-Vioglio, Ghirardato, Maccheroni, Marinacci, Siniscalchi, 2011)

A binary relation \succsim on \mathcal{F} satisfies Completeness, Transitivity, Non-Triviality, Monotonicity, Mixture Continuity, Risk Independence if and only if

there exist a non-constant function $u : \mathcal{X} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ and a monotonic, continuous, normalized functional $J : \text{conv}(u(\mathcal{X}))^S \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ such that for all $f, g \in \mathcal{F}$,

$$f \succsim g \Leftrightarrow J(u \circ f) \geq J(u \circ g).$$

(Moreover, u is unique up to a positive affine transformation, and J is unique given u .)

Unambiguous preference relation

\succsim^* , subrelation of \succsim :

for all $f, g \in \mathcal{F}$, if $f \succsim^* g$ then $f \succsim g$.

Bewley preference relation

Weaken completeness to:

Axiom (Risk Completeness)

For all $p, q \in \mathcal{P}$, $p \succsim q$ or $q \succsim p$.

But maintain Independence.

Bewley representation

Proposition (Bewley, 2002)

A binary relation \succsim^ on \mathcal{F} satisfies Risk Completeness, Transitivity, Non-Triviality, Monotonicity, Mixture Continuity, Independence if and only if*

there exist a non-constant function $u : \mathcal{X} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ and a non-empty, compact, convex set $M \subseteq \Delta(\mathcal{S})$ of probability distributions such that for all $f, g \in \mathcal{F}$,

$$f \succsim^* g \Leftrightarrow [E_m(u \circ f) \geq E_m(u \circ g) \text{ for all } m \in M].$$

(Moreover, u is unique up to a positive affine transformation, and M is unique.)

M is the agent's set of relevant priors.

Examples

Example (Ghirardato, Maccheroni, Marinacci, 2004; Nehring, 2007)

Define $f \succsim^{*GMMN} g$ if and only if

$\lambda f + (1 - \lambda)h \succsim \lambda g + (1 - \lambda)h$ for all $h \in \mathcal{F}$ and $\lambda \in (0, 1]$.

Define M^{GMMN} the corresponding set of relevant priors.

Example (Klibanoff, Mukerji, Seo, 2014)

Consider acts on \mathcal{S}^∞ (iid).

Identify a non-empty, closed set $R \subseteq \Delta(\mathcal{S})$ of “relevant measures” through bets on limiting frequency over \mathcal{S} .

Define $M^{KMS} = \text{conv}(R)$.

Define \succsim^{*KMS} the corresponding unambiguous preference relation.

Generalized Hurwicz representation

Proposition (CGMMS, 2011)

\succsim is an MBA preference relation on \mathcal{F} with unambiguous part \succsim^* if and only if

there exist a non-constant function $u : \mathcal{X} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$, a non-empty, compact, convex set $M \subseteq \Delta(S)$ and a function $\alpha : \mathcal{F} \rightarrow [0, 1]$ such that:

- (u, M) is a Bewley representation of \succsim^* ,
- The functional $J : \text{conv}(u(\mathcal{X}))^S \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ defined by, for all $f \in \mathcal{F}$,

$$J(u \circ f) = \alpha(f) \min_{m \in M} E_m(u \circ f) + (1 - \alpha(f)) \max_{m \in M} E_m(u \circ f)$$

is monotonic, continuous, and normalized, and (u, J) is an MBA representation of \succsim .

(Moreover, u is unique up to a positive affine transformation, M is unique, and α is unique on \succsim^* -non-crisp acts.)

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Setup

\mathcal{I} a finite set of individuals

$\mathcal{I}' = \{0\} \cup \mathcal{I}$, 0 for society

$\succsim_i \subseteq \mathcal{F} \times \mathcal{F}$ a preference relation, for all $i \in \mathcal{I}'$

Definition

Individual $i \in \mathcal{I}$ is **null** if there exist no $p, q \in \mathcal{P}$ such that $p \succ_0 q$ and $p \sim_j q$ for all $j \in \mathcal{I} \setminus \{i\}$.

Axioms

Axiom (Risk Diversity)

For all $i \in \mathcal{I}$, there exist $p, q \in \mathcal{P}$ such that $p \succ_i q$ and $p \sim_j q$ for all $j \in \mathcal{I} \setminus \{i\}$.

Axiom (Risk Minimal Agreement)

There exist $p, q \in \mathcal{P}$ such that $p \succ_i q$ for all $i \in \mathcal{I}$.

Axiom (Pareto Dominance)

For all $f, g \in \mathcal{F}$, if $f \succsim_i g$ for all $i \in \mathcal{I}$ then $f \succsim_0 g$.

Axiom (Risk Pareto Dominance)

For all $p, q \in \mathcal{P}$, if $p \succsim_i q$ for all $i \in \mathcal{I}$ then $p \succsim_0 q$.

Risk Pareto Dominance

Proposition (Harsanyi, 1955)

Assume that \succsim_i is an MBA preference relation on \mathcal{F} for all $i \in \mathcal{I}'$.

Then $(\succsim_i)_{i \in \mathcal{I}'}$ satisfies Risk Pareto Dominance if and only if

for all MBA representations $(u_i, J_i)_{i \in \mathcal{I}'}$ of $(\succsim_i)_{i \in \mathcal{I}'}$, there exist $\theta \in \mathbb{R}_+^{\mathcal{I}} \setminus \{0\}$ and $\gamma \in \mathbb{R}$ such that

$$u_0 = \sum_{i \in \mathcal{I}} \theta_i u_i + \gamma.$$

Moreover, if $(\succsim_i)_{i \in \mathcal{I}}$ satisfies Risk Diversity then θ and γ are unique given $(u_i)_{i \in \mathcal{I}'}$ and an individual $i \in \mathcal{I}$ is null if and only if $\theta_i = 0$.

Spurious unanimity

Example

$\mathcal{S} = \{s_1, s_2\}$, $\mathcal{X} = \{x, y, z\}$, $\mathcal{I} = \{1, 2\}$.

\succsim_i is SEU with representation (u_i, m_i) for all $i = 0, 1, 2$, where

$$u_1(x) = 1, u_1(y) = 0, u_1(z) = 0, \quad m_1(s_1) = \frac{1}{4},$$

$$u_2(x) = 0, u_2(y) = 1, u_2(z) = 0, \quad m_2(s_1) = \frac{3}{4}.$$

Then $(\succsim_i)_{i=0,1,2}$ can only satisfy Pareto Dominance if 1 or 2 is null. Indeed, suppose $\theta_1\theta_2 > 0$ (w.l.o.g. $\theta_1 + \theta_2 = 1$), and define

$$\begin{array}{ll} f(s_1) = p, f(s_2) = q, & \text{where} \quad p = \theta_2x + \theta_1z, \\ g(s_1) = q, g(s_2) = p, & q = \theta_1y + \theta_2z. \end{array}$$

Then $g \succ_i f$ for $i = 1, 2$ but $f \sim_0 g$.

Spurious hedging

Example

$\mathcal{S} = \{s_1, s_2\}$, $\mathcal{X} = \{x, y, z\}$, $\mathcal{I} = \{1, 2\}$.

\succsim_i is MEU with representation (u_i, M_i) for all $i = 0, 1, 2$, where

$$\begin{aligned} u_1(x) = 1, u_1(y) = 0, u_1(z) = 0, \\ u_2(x) = 0, u_2(y) = 1, u_2(z) = 0, \end{aligned} \quad M_1 = M_2 = \left[\frac{1}{4}, \frac{3}{4} \right].$$

Then $(\succsim_i)_{i=0,1,2}$ can only satisfy Pareto Dominance if 1 or 2 is null. Indeed, suppose $\theta_1\theta_2 > 0$ (w.l.o.g. $\theta_1 + \theta_2 = 1$), and define

$$\begin{aligned} f(s_1) = p, f(s_2) = q, \\ g(s_1) = q, g(s_2) = p, \end{aligned} \quad \text{where} \quad \begin{aligned} p &= \theta_2x + \theta_1z, \\ q &= \theta_1y + \theta_2z. \end{aligned}$$

Then $\frac{1}{2}f + \frac{1}{2}g \succsim_i f \sim_i g$ for $i = 1, 2$ but $\frac{1}{2}f + \frac{1}{2}g \sim_0 f \sim_0 g$.

Outline

Setup

Preference and unambiguous preference

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Applications

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Aggregating ambiguity attitudes

Unambiguous Pareto Dominance

Axiom (Unambiguous Pareto Dominance)

For all $f, g \in \mathcal{F}$, if $f \succsim_i^* g$ for all $i \in \mathcal{I}$ then $f \succsim_0^* g$.

Unambiguous Pareto Dominance

Theorem

Assume that \succsim_i is an MBA preference relation on \mathcal{F} with unambiguous part \succsim_i^* for all $i \in \mathcal{I}'$ and that $(\succsim_i)_{i \in \mathcal{I}}$ satisfies Risk Diversity.

Then $(\succsim_i)_{i \in \mathcal{I}'}$ satisfies Unambiguous Pareto Dominance if and only if

for all generalized Hurwicz representations $(u_i, M_i, \alpha_i)_{i \in \mathcal{I}'}$ of $(\succsim_i)_{i \in \mathcal{I}'}$, there exist $\theta \in \mathbb{R}_+^{\mathcal{I}} \setminus \{0\}$ and $\gamma \in \mathbb{R}$ such that $u_0 = \sum_{i \in \mathcal{I}} \theta_i u_i + \gamma$ and

$$M_0 \subseteq \bigcap_{i \in \mathcal{I}, \theta_i > 0} M_i.$$

Common-Taste Unambiguous Pareto Dominance

Definition

f and g are **common-taste acts** if $p \succsim_i q \Leftrightarrow p \succsim_j q$ for all $i, j \in \mathcal{I}$ and $p, q \in \text{conv}(f(\mathcal{S}) \cup g(\mathcal{S}))$

Axiom (Common-Taste Unambiguous Pareto Dominance)

For all common-taste acts $f, g \in \mathcal{F}$, if $f \succsim_i^* g$ for all $i \in \mathcal{I}$ then $f \succsim_0^* g$.

Common-Taste Unambiguous Pareto Dominance

Theorem

Assume that \succsim_i is an MBA preference relation on \mathcal{F} with unambiguous part \succsim_i^* for all $i \in \mathcal{I}'$ and that $(\succsim_i)_{i \in \mathcal{I}}$ satisfies Risk Minimal Agreement.

Then $(\succsim_i)_{i \in \mathcal{I}'}$ satisfies Common-Taste Unambiguous Pareto Dominance

if and only if

for all generalized Hurwicz representations $(u_i, M_i, \alpha_i)_{i \in \mathcal{I}'}$ of $(\succsim_i)_{i \in \mathcal{I}'}$, there exist $\theta \in \mathbb{R}_+^{\mathcal{I}} \setminus \{0\}$ and $\gamma \in \mathbb{R}$ such that $u_0 = \sum_{i \in \mathcal{I}} \theta_i u_i + \gamma$ and

$$M_0 \subseteq \text{conv} \left(\bigcup_{i \in \mathcal{I}} M_i \right).$$

Outline

Setup

Preference and unambiguous preference

Pareto Dominance

Unambiguous Pareto Dominance

Applications

- MEU preferences

- CEU preferences

- Smooth Ambiguity preferences

Aggregating ambiguity attitudes

Outline

Setup

Preference and unambiguous preference

Pareto Dominance

Unambiguous Pareto Dominance

Applications

- MEU preferences

- CEU preferences

- Smooth Ambiguity preferences

Aggregating ambiguity attitudes

MEU preferences

MEU preferences correspond to MBA functionals of the form

$$J(u \circ f) = \min_{m \in M} E_m(u \circ f),$$

where $M \subseteq \Delta(\mathcal{S})$ is non-empty, compact, convex. (M is unique.)

We have:

$$M^{\text{GMMN}} = M^{\text{KMS}} = M.$$

Outline

Setup

Preference and unambiguous preference

Pareto Dominance

Unambiguous Pareto Dominance

Applications

- MEU preferences

- CEU preferences

- Smooth Ambiguity preferences

Aggregating ambiguity attitudes

CEU preferences

CEU preferences correspond to MBA functionals of the form

$$J(u \circ f) = \int_{\mathcal{S}} u \circ f \, d\nu,$$

where $\nu : 2^{\mathcal{S}} \rightarrow [0, 1]$ is a capacity and the integral is Choquet. (ν is unique.) Equivalently, writing $\mathcal{S} = \{s_1, \dots, s_N\}$,

$$J(u \circ f) = E_{m_{\nu, \sigma}}(u \circ f)$$

where $u \circ f(s_{\sigma(1)}) \geq \dots \geq u \circ f(s_{\sigma(N)})$ and

$$m_{\nu, \sigma}(s_n) = \nu(\{s_{\sigma(1)}, \dots, s_{\sigma(n)}\}) - \nu(\{s_{\sigma(1)}, \dots, s_{\sigma(n-1)}\})$$

We have:

$$M^{\text{GMMN}} = \text{conv}(\{m_{\nu, \sigma} : \sigma \in \text{perm}(N)\}).$$

Unambiguous Pareto Dominance

Corollary

Assume that \succsim_i is a CEU preference relation on \mathcal{F} with unambiguous part \succsim_i^{*GMMN} for all $i \in \mathcal{I}'$ and that $(\succsim_i)_{i \in \mathcal{I}}$ satisfies Risk Diversity.

Then $(\succsim_i)_{i \in \mathcal{I}'}$ satisfies Unambiguous Pareto Dominance if and only if

for all CEU representations $(u_i, \nu_i)_{i \in \mathcal{I}'}$ of $(\succsim_i)_{i \in \mathcal{I}'}$, there exist $\theta \in \mathbb{R}_+^{\mathcal{I}} \setminus \{0\}$ and $\gamma \in \mathbb{R}$ such that $u_0 = \sum_{i \in \mathcal{I}} \theta_i u_i + \gamma$ and for all $\sigma \in \text{perm}(N)$,

$$m_{\nu_0, \sigma} \in \bigcap_{i \in \mathcal{I}, \theta_i > 0} \text{conv}(\{m_{\nu_i, \tau} : \tau \in \text{perm}(N)\}).$$

Common-Taste Unambiguous Pareto Dominance

Corollary

Assume that \succsim_i is a CEU preference relation on \mathcal{F} with unambiguous part \succsim_i^{*GMMN} for all $i \in \mathcal{I}'$ and that $(\succsim_i)_{i \in \mathcal{I}}$ satisfies Risk Minimal Agreement.

Then $(\succsim_i)_{i \in \mathcal{I}'}$ satisfies Common-Taste Unambiguous Pareto Dominance

if and only if

for all CEU representations $(u_i, \nu_i)_{i \in \mathcal{I}'}$ of $(\succsim_i)_{i \in \mathcal{I}'}$, there exist $\theta \in \mathbb{R}_+^{\mathcal{I}} \setminus \{0\}$ and $\gamma \in \mathbb{R}$ such that $u_0 = \sum_{i \in \mathcal{I}} \theta_i u_i + \gamma$ and for all $\sigma \in \text{perm}(N)$,

$$m_{\nu_0, \sigma} \in \text{conv}(\{m_{\nu_i, \tau} : \tau \in \text{perm}(N), i \in \mathcal{I}'\}).$$

Outline

Setup

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Applications

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Aggregating ambiguity attitudes

Smooth Ambiguity preferences

Smooth Ambiguity preferences correspond to MBA functionals of the form

$$J(u \circ f) = \phi^{-1}(E_{\mu}(\phi(E_m(u \circ f))))),$$

where $\phi : \text{conv}(u(\mathcal{X})) \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ is continuous and strictly increasing and μ is a countably additive probability measure over $\Delta(\mathcal{S})$. (μ is unique and ϕ is unique up to a positive affine transformation given u .)

If (u, μ, ϕ) is regular (e.g. if $\text{supp}(\mu)$ is finite) then we have:

$$M^{\text{KMS}} = \text{conv}(\text{supp}(\mu)).$$

Unambiguous Pareto Dominance

Corollary

Assume that \succsim_i is a regular SA preference relation on \mathcal{F} with unambiguous part $\succsim_i^{*\text{KMS}}$ for all $i \in \mathcal{I}'$ and that $(\succsim_i)_{i \in \mathcal{I}}$ satisfies Risk Diversity.

Then $(\succsim_i)_{i \in \mathcal{I}'}$ satisfies Unambiguous Pareto Dominance if and only if

for all regular SA representations $(u_i, \mu_i, \phi_i)_{i \in \mathcal{I}'}$ of $(\succsim_i)_{i \in \mathcal{I}'}$, there exist $\theta \in \mathbb{R}_+^{\mathcal{I}} \setminus \{0\}$ and $\gamma \in \mathbb{R}$ such that $u_0 = \sum_{i \in \mathcal{I}} \theta_i u_i + \gamma$ and

$$\text{supp}(\mu_0) \subseteq \bigcap_{i \in \mathcal{I}, \theta_i > 0} \text{conv}(\text{supp}(\mu_i)).$$

Common-Taste Unambiguous Pareto Dominance

Corollary

Assume that \succsim_i is a regular SA preference relation on \mathcal{F} with unambiguous part $\succsim_i^{*\text{KMS}}$ for all $i \in \mathcal{I}'$ and that $(\succsim_i)_{i \in \mathcal{I}}$ satisfies Risk Minimal Agreement.

Then $(\succsim_i)_{i \in \mathcal{I}'}$ satisfies Common-Taste Unambiguous Pareto Dominance

if and only if

for all regular SA representations $(u_i, \mu_i, \phi_i)_{i \in \mathcal{I}'}$ of $(\succsim_i)_{i \in \mathcal{I}'}$, there exist $\theta \in \mathbb{R}_+^{\mathcal{I}} \setminus \{0\}$ and $\gamma \in \mathbb{R}$ such that $u_0 = \sum_{i \in \mathcal{I}} \theta_i u_i + \gamma$ and

$$\text{supp}(\mu_0) \subseteq \text{conv} \left(\bigcup_{i \in \mathcal{I}} \text{supp}(\mu_i) \right).$$

Outline

Setup

Preference and unambiguous preference

Pareto Dominance

Unambiguous Pareto Dominance

Applications

- MEU preferences

- CEU preferences

- Smooth Ambiguity preferences

Aggregating ambiguity attitudes

Uncertainty-Adjusted Pareto Dominance

Definition

\underline{p} is a **lower certainty-equivalent** of f if for all $p \in \mathcal{P}$,

$$f \succsim^* p \Leftrightarrow \underline{p} \succsim p.$$

\bar{p} is an **upper certainty-equivalent** of f if for all $p \in \mathcal{P}$,

$$p \succsim^* f \Leftrightarrow p \succsim \bar{p}.$$

Axiom (Uncertainty-Adjusted Pareto Dominance)

For all $f \in \mathcal{F}$, all lower and upper certainty equivalents $(\underline{p}_i, \bar{p}_i)_{i \in \mathcal{I}} \in (\mathcal{P}^2)^{\mathcal{I}}$ of f , and all $\lambda \in [0, 1]$,

- if $f \succsim_i \lambda \underline{p}_i + (1 - \lambda) \bar{p}_i$ for all $i \in \mathcal{I}$ then $f \succsim_0 \lambda \underline{p}_0 + (1 - \lambda) \bar{p}_0$,
- if $\lambda \underline{p}_i + (1 - \lambda) \bar{p}_i \succsim_i f$ for all $i \in \mathcal{I}$ then $\lambda \underline{p}_0 + (1 - \lambda) \bar{p}_0 \succsim_0 f$.

Uncertainty-Adjusted Pareto Dominance

Theorem

Assume that \succsim_i is an MBA preference relation on \mathcal{F} with unambiguous part \succsim_i^* for all $i \in \mathcal{I}'$.

Then $(\succsim_i)_{i \in \mathcal{I}'}$ satisfies Uncertainty-Adjusted Pareto Dominance if and only if

for all generalized Hurwicz representations $(u_i, M_i, \alpha_i)_{i \in \mathcal{I}'}$ of $(\succsim_i)_{i \in \mathcal{I}'}$ and every $f \in \mathcal{F}$ that is not \succsim_0 -crisp,

$$\alpha_0(f) \in \text{conv}(\{\alpha_i(f) : i \in \mathcal{I}, f \text{ is } \succsim_i\text{-non-crisp}\}).$$