

Non-decreasing martingale coupling

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Conference: New Monge Problems and Applications

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The Optimal Transport problem

Let $\mu, \nu \in \mathcal{P}(\mathbb{R}^d)$ and $c : \mathbb{R}^d \times \mathbb{R}^d \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ measurable. The **Optimal Transport (OT)** problem states as:

$$\text{OT}(\mu, \nu, c) := \inf_{\pi \in \Pi(\mu, \nu)} \int_{\mathbb{R}^d \times \mathbb{R}^d} c(x, y) \pi(dx, dy)$$

where $\Pi(\mu, \nu)$ denotes the set of couplings between μ and ν , that is

$$\Pi(\mu, \nu) = \{\pi \in \mathcal{P}(\mathbb{R}^d \times \mathbb{R}^d) \mid \pi(dx, \mathbb{R}^d) = \mu(dx) \text{ and } \pi(\mathbb{R}^d, dy) = \nu(dy)\}.$$

The Martingale Optimal Transport problem

Let $\Pi_M(\mu, \nu)$ be the set of **martingale coupling** between μ and ν ,

$$\Pi_M(\mu, \nu) = \left\{ \pi(dx, dy) = \mu(dx)\pi_x(dy) \in \Pi(\mu, \nu) \mid \mu(dx)\text{-a.e.}, \int_{y \in \mathbb{R}} y \pi_x(dy) = x \right\}.$$

The **Martingale Optimal Transport (MOT)** problem states as:

$$\text{MOT}(\mu, \nu, c) = \inf_{\pi \in \Pi_M(\mu, \nu)} \int_{\mathbb{R}^d \times \mathbb{R}^d} c(x, y) \pi(dx, dy).$$

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For traders who want to deal an exotic option that pays $c(S_{T_1}, S_{T_2})$ where $S_{T_1} \sim \mu$ and $S_{T_2} \sim \nu$, the robust bounds are provided by

$$\text{MOT}(\mu, \nu, c) \leq \mathbb{E}[c(S_{T_1}, S_{T_2})] \leq -\text{MOT}(\mu, \nu, -c).$$

According to Hobson and Neuberger [4], the robust price bounds for the forward start options is $-\text{MOT}(\mu, \nu, -|S_{T_1} - S_{T_2}|)$.

Strassen Theorem, 1965 [6]

Let $\mu, \nu \in \mathcal{P}(\mathbb{R}^d)$ be with finite first moment, then

$$\begin{aligned}\Pi^M(\mu, \nu) \neq \emptyset &\iff \forall \varphi : \mathbb{R}^d \rightarrow \mathbb{R} \text{ convex}, \int_{\mathbb{R}^d} \varphi(x) \mu(dx) \leq \int_{\mathbb{R}^d} \varphi(y) \nu(dy) \\ &\iff \mu \leq_{cx} \nu\end{aligned}$$

The MOT problem was introduced by

- Beiglböck, Henry-Labordère, and Penkner [1] in discrete time setting in 2013,
- Galichon, Henry-Labordère, and Touzi [3] in continuous time setting in 2014
- many contributions since : Acciaio, Alfonsi, Backhoff-Veraguas, Bayraktar, Beiglböck, Brücknerhoff, Corbetta, Cox, De March, Galichon, Ghoussoub, Guo, Guyon, Henry-Labordère, Hobson, Huesmann, Juillet, Kim, Lim, Neufeld, Nutz, Oblój, Pagès, Pammer, Sester, Siorpaes, Stebegg, Tan, Touzi,...

Maximization of the cost function $c(x, y) = |x - y|$

Hobson and Neuberger [4, Theorem 8.2] state that there exists a maximizing martingale coupling

$$\pi^{\text{HN}} = \int_0^1 \left(\frac{r(u) - q(u)}{r(u) - p(u)} \delta_{(q(u), p(u))} + \frac{q(u) - p(u)}{r(u) - p(u)} \delta_{(q(u), r(u))} \right) du$$

where p, q, r are **non-decreasing** on $(0, 1)$ with $p \leq q \leq r$.

When μ is continuous [1],

$$\pi^{\text{HN}} = \int_{\mathbb{R}} \left(\frac{g(x) - x}{g(x) - f(x)} \delta_{(x, f(x))} + \frac{x - f(x)}{g(x) - f(x)} \delta_{(x, g(x))} \right) \mu(dx)$$

for **non-decreasing** functions f and g such that $\forall x \in \mathbb{R}, f(x) \leq x \leq g(x)$.

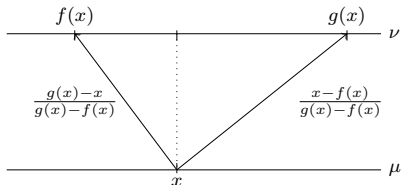


Figure: The non-decreasing coupling π^{HN}

[1] Beiglböck and Juillet stated the uniqueness of π^{HN} in [2, Theorems 7.3]

Question - Is π^{HN} still optimal for other costs?

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Answer - Yes from our numerical experiments! For $\mu \leq_{cx} \nu$,

$$\begin{aligned} \pi^{\text{HN}} \text{ attains } \overline{\mathcal{M}}_{\rho}^{\rho}(\mu, \nu) &= \sup_{\pi \in \Pi_{\text{M}}(\mu, \nu)} \int_{\mathbb{R} \times \mathbb{R}} |x - y|^{\rho} \pi(dx, dy) \text{ when } \rho \in (0, 2), \\ \text{attains } \underline{\mathcal{M}}_{\rho}^{\rho}(\mu, \nu) &= \inf_{\pi \in \Pi_{\text{M}}(\mu, \nu)} \int_{\mathbb{R} \times \mathbb{R}} |x - y|^{\rho} \pi(dx, dy) \text{ when } \rho > 2. \end{aligned}$$

Numerical experiments

| Normal distribution with $\mu \sim \mathcal{N}(0, 0.24)$ and $\nu \sim \mathcal{N}(0, 0.28)$ | | | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|--------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| ρ | $\overline{\mathcal{M}}_\rho$ | $\int x - y ^\rho \pi^{\text{HN}}(dx, dy)$ | ρ | $\underline{\mathcal{M}}_\rho$ | $\int x - y ^\rho \pi^{\text{HN}}(dx, dy)$ |
| 0.3 | 0.578737 | 0.578734 | 2.1 | 0.023250 | 0.023250 |
| 0.7 | 0.280626 | 0.280625 | 2.3 | 0.016369 | 0.016370 |
| 1.0 | 0.163683 | 0.163683 | 2.5 | 0.011537 | 0.011538 |
| 1.4 | 0.080147 | 0.080146 | 3.0 | 0.004834 | 0.004836 |
| 1.9 | 0.033062 | 0.033062 | 5.0 | 0.000158 | 0.000159 |

| Log-normal distribution with $\mu \sim \text{Lognormal}(0, 0.24)$ and $\nu \sim \text{Lognormal}(0, 0.28)$ | | | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|--------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| ρ | $\overline{\mathcal{M}}_\rho$ | $\int x - y ^\rho \pi^{\text{HN}}(dx, dy)$ | ρ | $\underline{\mathcal{M}}_\rho$ | $\int x - y ^\rho \pi^{\text{HN}}(dx, dy)$ |
| 0.3 | 0.560822 | 0.560818 | 2.1 | 0.019848 | 0.019848 |
| 0.7 | 0.261948 | 0.261947 | 2.3 | 0.013871 | 0.013871 |
| 1.0 | 0.149069 | 0.149069 | 2.5 | 0.009718 | 0.009718 |
| 1.4 | 0.070960 | 0.070960 | 3.0 | 0.004036 | 0.004037 |
| 1.9 | 0.028471 | 0.028471 | 5.0 | 0.000139 | 0.000140 |

| Binomial distribution with $\mu \sim B(10, 0.5)$ and $\nu \sim B(40, 0.5)$ | | | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|--------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| ρ | $\overline{\mathcal{M}}_\rho$ | $\int x - y ^\rho \pi^{\text{HN}}(dx, dy)$ | ρ | $\underline{\mathcal{M}}_\rho$ | $\int x - y ^\rho \pi^{\text{HN}}(dx, dy)$ |
| 0.3 | 1.295262 | 1.295258 | 2.1 | 6.684936 | 6.685331 |
| 0.7 | 1.840491 | 1.840486 | 2.3 | 8.099506 | 8.101478 |
| 1.0 | 2.407133 | 2.407133 | 2.5 | 9.831921 | 9.837066 |
| 1.4 | 3.466126 | 3.466100 | 3.0 | 16.092828 | 16.120046 |
| 1.9 | 5.527885 | 5.527669 | 5.0 | 129.174431 | 130.930978 |

| Poisson distribution with $\lambda_\mu = 1$ and $\lambda_\nu = 4$ | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|--------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| ρ | $\overline{\mathcal{M}}_\rho$ | $\int x - y ^\rho \pi^{\text{HN}}(dx, dy)$ | ρ | $\underline{\mathcal{M}}_\rho$ | $\int x - y ^\rho \pi^{\text{HN}}(dx, dy)$ |
| 0.3 | 1.163662 | 1.163638 | 2.1 | 3.735438 | 3.735438 |
| 0.7 | 1.452421 | 1.452421 | 2.3 | 4.363190 | 4.363190 |
| 1.0 | 1.740083 | 1.740083 | 2.5 | 5.121420 | 5.121420 |
| 1.4 | 2.256078 | 2.256078 | 3.0 | 7.806860 | 7.807091 |
| 1.9 | 3.213878 | 3.213878 | 5.0 | 56.008318 | 56.008318 |

Question - Why $\rho = 2$ is a threshold?

Answer - When $\mu, \nu \in \mathcal{P}_2(\mathbb{R})$, for all $\pi \in \Pi_M(\mu, \nu)$, by the martingale property $\int_{\mathbb{R}} y \pi_x(dy) = x$, we have

$$\begin{aligned} \int_{\mathbb{R}^2} |x - y|^2 \pi(dx, dy) &= \int_{\mathbb{R}} y^2 \nu(dy) + \int_{\mathbb{R}} x^2 \mu(dx) - 2 \int_{\mathbb{R}} x \underbrace{\int_{\mathbb{R}} y \pi_x(dy)}_x \mu(dx) \\ &= \int_{\mathbb{R}} y^2 \nu(dy) - \int_{\mathbb{R}} x^2 \mu(dx) \\ &= \underline{\mathcal{M}}_2^2(\mu, \nu) = \overline{\mathcal{M}}_2^2(\mu, \nu). \end{aligned}$$

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2.2 Existence and uniqueness

Without the nested supports condition

With the nested supports condition

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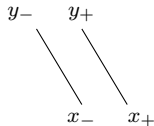
4. Directionally decomposed non-decreasing martingale couplings

Non-decreasing martingale coupling

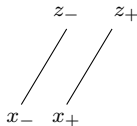
Definition 1

Let $\mu, \nu \in \mathcal{P}_1(\mathbb{R})$ be such that $\mu \leq_{cx} \nu$. A martingale coupling $\pi^\uparrow \in \Pi_M(\mu, \nu)$ is called **non-decreasing** if there exists a Borel set $\Gamma \subseteq \mathbb{R} \times \mathbb{R}$ such that $\pi(\Gamma) = 1$ and

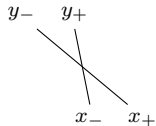
- (a) if $(x_-, y_-), (x_+, y_+) \in \Gamma$ with $y_- \leq x_-, y_+ \leq x_+$, and $x_- < x_+$, then $y_- \leq y_+$
- (b) if $(x_-, z_-), (x_+, z_+) \in \Gamma$ with $x_- \leq z_-, x_+ \leq z_+$, and $x_- < x_+$, then $z_- \leq z_+$.



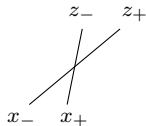
(a) non-decreasing
(left)



(b) non-decreasing
(right)



(c) forbidden case
(left)



(d) forbidden case
(right)

Figure: Non-decreasing martingale coupling

Note: π^{HN} is a non-decreasing martingale coupling as well.

Proposition 1

Let $\mu, \nu \in \mathcal{P}_1(\mathbb{R})$ be such that $\mu \leq_{cx} \nu$ and $\varphi : \mathbb{R}_+ \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ be some increasing concave function.

- (i) If $\tilde{\pi} \in \Pi_M(\mu, \nu)$ maximizes $\int \varphi(|x - y|)\pi(dx, dy)$ over $\pi \in \Pi_M(\mu, \nu)$, then $\tilde{\pi}$ is **non-decreasing**. When φ is continuous, there exists such a maximizing coupling.
- (ii) If μ and φ are continuous, there exists a unique **non-decreasing** martingale coupling $\tilde{\pi}$ that maximizes $\int \varphi(|x - y|)\pi(dx, dy)$.

Existence and uniqueness

Proposition 1

Let $\mu, \nu \in \mathcal{P}_1(\mathbb{R})$ be such that $\mu \leq_{cx} \nu$ and $\varphi : \mathbb{R}_+ \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ be some increasing concave function.

- (i) If $\tilde{\pi} \in \Pi_M(\mu, \nu)$ maximizes $\int \varphi(|x - y|)\pi(dx, dy)$ over $\pi \in \Pi_M(\mu, \nu)$, then $\tilde{\pi}$ is **non-decreasing**. When φ is continuous, there exists such a maximizing coupling.
- (ii) If μ and φ are continuous, there exists a unique **non-decreasing** martingale coupling $\tilde{\pi}$ that maximizes $\int \varphi(|x - y|)\pi(dx, dy)$.

For $\rho \in (0, 1]$,

- since $\mathbb{R}_+ \ni z \mapsto z^\rho$ is concave and increasing, a martingale coupling that maximizes $\int |x - y|^\rho \pi(dx, dy)$ is **non-decreasing**;
- we can construct an example such that any martingale coupling is **non-decreasing** and the maximizing coupling actually depends on ρ .

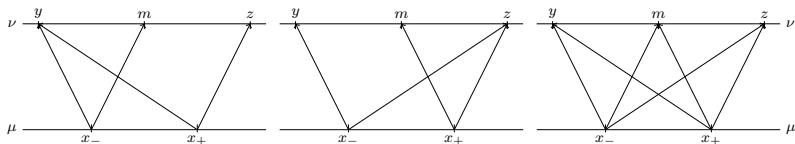


Figure: Different non-decreasing martingale couplings for $\rho \in (0, 1]$

The nested supports condition

Definition 2 (Nested supports condition)

We say that $\mu, \nu \in \mathcal{P}_1(\mathbb{R})$ satisfy the nested supports condition if there exist $-\infty < a \leq b < +\infty$ such that $\mu([a, b]) = 1$ and $\nu((a, b)) = 0$.

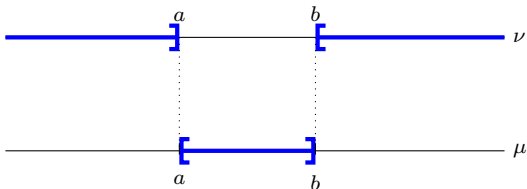


Figure: The nested supports condition

Proposition 2

Let $\mu, \nu \in \mathcal{P}_1(\mathbb{R})$ be such that $\mu \leq_{cx} \nu$. Under the nested supports condition, there exists a unique **non-decreasing** martingale coupling $\pi^\uparrow \in \Pi_M(\mu, \nu)$.

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Since the set $\{\eta \in \mathcal{P}_1(\mathbb{R}) : \int_{\mathbb{R}} z\eta(dz) = \int_{\mathbb{R}} y^2\nu(dy) - \int_{\mathbb{R}} x^2\mu(dx)\}$ is a complete lattice with minimal element $\delta_{\int_{\mathbb{R}} y^2\nu(dy) - \int_{\mathbb{R}} x^2\mu(dx)}$ by Kertz and Rölér [5],

Proposition 3

Let $\mu, \nu \in \mathcal{P}_2(\mathbb{R})$ be such that $\mu \leq_{cx} \nu$. Then, the set $\{|x - y|^2 \# \pi : \pi \in \Pi_M(\mu, \nu)\}$ admits an infimum for the convex order.

Infimum for the convex order

Since the set $\{\eta \in \mathcal{P}_1(\mathbb{R}) : \int_{\mathbb{R}} z\eta(dz) = \int_{\mathbb{R}} y^2\nu(dy) - \int_{\mathbb{R}} x^2\mu(dx)\}$ is a complete lattice with minimal element $\delta_{\int_{\mathbb{R}} y^2\nu(dy) - \int_{\mathbb{R}} x^2\mu(dx)}$ by Kertz and Rölér [5],

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When there exists $\underline{\pi} \in \Pi_M(\mu, \nu)$ such that $|x - y|^2 \# \underline{\pi}$ is equal to the **infimum** for the convex order,

$$\int_{\mathbb{R}^2} |x - y|^\rho \underline{\pi}(dx, dy) = \begin{cases} \overline{\mathcal{M}}_\rho^\rho(\mu, \nu) & \text{when } \rho \in (0, 2), \\ \underline{\mathcal{M}}_\rho^\rho(\mu, \nu) & \text{when } \rho > 2. \end{cases}$$

In particular, when $\nu(dy) = \int_{x \in \mathbb{R}} \frac{1}{2} (\delta_{x-a}(dy) + \delta_{x+a}(dy)) \mu(dx)$ for some $a \in \mathbb{R}$, the **infimum** is equal to δ_{a^2} and

$$\underline{\pi}(dx, dy) = \frac{1}{2} (\delta_{x-a}(dy) + \delta_{x+a}(dy)) \mu(dx).$$

Infimum for the convex order

Since the set $\{\eta \in \mathcal{P}_1(\mathbb{R}) : \int_{\mathbb{R}} z\eta(dz) = \int_{\mathbb{R}} y^2\nu(dy) - \int_{\mathbb{R}} x^2\mu(dx)\}$ is a complete lattice with minimal element $\delta_{\int_{\mathbb{R}} y^2\nu(dy) - \int_{\mathbb{R}} x^2\mu(dx)}$ by Kertsz and Rölér [5],

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When there exists $\underline{\pi} \in \Pi_M(\mu, \nu)$ such that $|x - y|^2 \# \underline{\pi}$ is equal to the **infimum** for the convex order,

$$\int_{\mathbb{R}^2} |x - y|^\rho \underline{\pi}(dx, dy) = \begin{cases} \overline{\mathcal{M}}_\rho^\rho(\mu, \nu) & \text{when } \rho \in (0, 2), \\ \underline{\mathcal{M}}_\rho^\rho(\mu, \nu) & \text{when } \rho > 2. \end{cases}$$

In particular, when $\nu(dy) = \int_{x \in \mathbb{R}} \frac{1}{2} (\delta_{x-a}(dy) + \delta_{x+a}(dy)) \mu(dx)$ for some $a \in \mathbb{R}$, the **infimum** is equal to $\delta_{a,2}$ and

$$\underline{\pi}(dx, dy) = \frac{1}{2} (\delta_{x-a}(dy) + \delta_{x+a}(dy)) \mu(dx).$$

When μ is continuous, the uniqueness [2] of the maximizing couplings for $\rho = 1$ implies that the non-decreasing coupling π^{HN} is the only possible value for $\underline{\pi}$.

[2] Beiglböck and Juillet [2, Theorems 7.3]

Example of inf for the convex order

For $p \in (0, 1)$, $y_- < y_+ < x_- < x_+ < z_- < z_+$, we set $\mu = p\delta_{x_-} + (1-p)\delta_{x_+}$,

$$\nu = p \frac{z_- - x_-}{z_- - y_-} \delta_{y_-} + p \frac{x_- - y_-}{z_- - y_-} \delta_{z_-} + (1-p) \frac{z_+ - x_+}{z_+ - y_+} \delta_{y_+} + (1-p) \frac{x_+ - y_+}{z_+ - y_+} \delta_{z_+}.$$

Let

$$x_+ - y_- \geq z_- - x_-, \quad z_+ - x_- \geq x_+ - y_+ \text{ and}$$

$$(x_- - y_-) \wedge (x_+ - y_+) \wedge (z_- - x_-) \wedge (z_+ - x_+) \geq (x_- - y_+) \vee (z_- - x_+),$$

note that this setting is under the nested supports condition. There exists π^\uparrow with

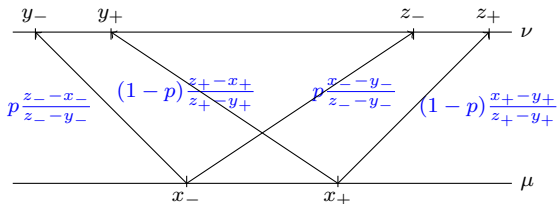


Figure: A natural non-decreasing martingale coupling $\pi^\uparrow \in \Pi_M(\mu, \nu)$

and we have $|x - y|^2 \# \pi^\uparrow(dx, dy) = \inf_{c_x} \{|x - y|^2 \# \pi : \pi \in \Pi_M(\mu, \nu)\}$.

Proposition 3

Let $\mu \leq_{cx} \nu$ be such that there exist $\underline{y} < \bar{y} < \underline{x} < \bar{x} < \underline{z} < \bar{z}$ with $\mu([\underline{x}, \bar{x}]) = 1$ and $\nu([\underline{y}, \bar{y}] \cup [\underline{z}, \bar{z}]) = 1$. If

$$\underline{x} - \bar{y} \geq \alpha_\rho(\bar{z} - \bar{y}),$$

$$\underline{z} - \bar{x} \geq \alpha_\rho(\underline{z} - \underline{y}),$$

where $\alpha_\rho \in (0, \frac{1}{2})$ is the unique solution of $\psi_\rho(\alpha) = 0$ with $\psi_\rho : (0, 1] \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ defined by

$$\psi_\rho(\alpha) = \alpha + \alpha^{2-\rho}(1-\alpha)^{\rho-1} + 1 - \rho.$$

Then, the unique non-decreasing coupling π^\uparrow in $\Pi_M(\mu, \nu)$ is the unique optimal coupling in $\Pi_M(\mu, \nu)$ that attains $\overline{\mathcal{M}}_\rho(\mu, \nu)$ when $\rho \in (1, 2)$ and $\underline{\mathcal{M}}_\rho(\mu, \nu)$ when $\rho > 2$.

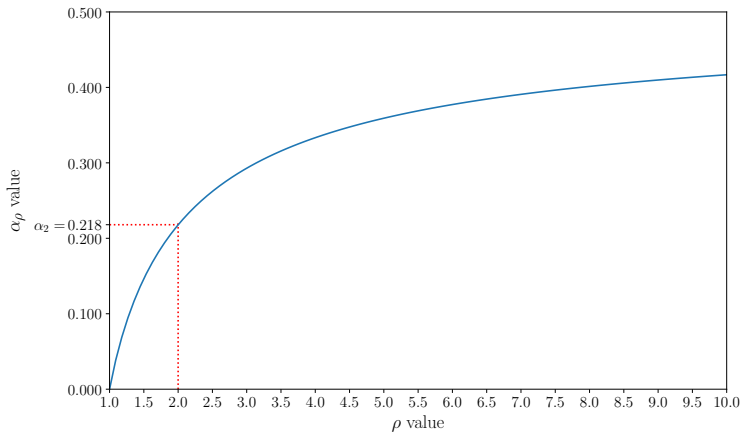


Figure: The function $\rho \mapsto \alpha_\rho$ (with α_ρ computed by a root finding algorithm).

Non-preservation of the optimality

For $p \in (0, 1)$ and $y_- < y_+ < x_- < x_+ < z_- < z_+$, we set $\mu = p\delta_{x_-} + (1-p)\delta_{x_+}$

$$\nu = p \frac{z_+ - x_-}{z_+ - y_-} \delta_{y_-} + p \frac{x_- - y_-}{z_+ - y_-} \delta_{z_+} + (1-p) \frac{z_- - x_+}{z_- - y_+} \delta_{y_+} + (1-p) \frac{x_+ - y_+}{z_- - y_+} \delta_{z_-}.$$

The couplings

$$\begin{aligned} \pi^* = & p \left(\frac{z_+ - x_-}{z_+ - y_-} \delta_{(x_-, y_-)} + \frac{x_- - y_-}{z_+ - y_-} \delta_{(x_-, z_+)} \right) \\ & + (1-p) \left(\frac{z_- - x_+}{z_- - y_+} \delta_{(x_+, y_+)} + \frac{x_+ - y_+}{z_- - y_+} \delta_{(x_+, z_-)} \right). \end{aligned}$$

belong to $\Pi_M(\mu, \nu)$.

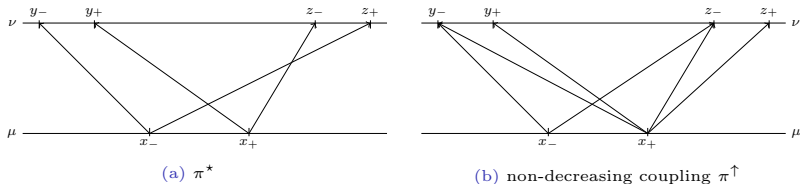


Figure: Comparison between π^* and π^\uparrow

Non-preservation of the optimality

Proposition 4

Let $\rho \in (1, 2) \cup (2, +\infty)$ and $y_- < y_+ < z_- < z_+$ be such that $z_- - y_- > z_+ - z_-$ and $z_- - y_+ \geq (\rho - 1)^{\frac{1}{2-\rho}} (z_+ - z_-)$. For $\rho \in (1, 2)$ (resp. $\rho > 2$), there exists $x_\rho \in (y_+, z_-)$ such that for $x_\rho < x_- < x_+ < z_-$, π^* is the unique optimal coupling that attains $\overline{\mathcal{M}}_\rho(\mu, \nu)$ (resp. $\underline{\mathcal{M}}_\rho(\mu, \nu)$).

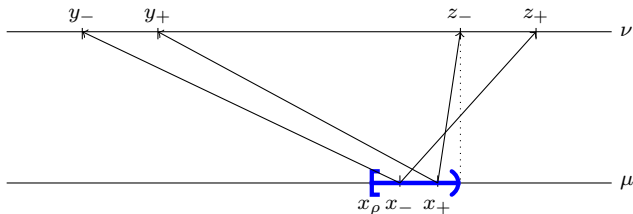


Figure: The x_ρ condition on π^*

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- 3.2 Preservation of the optimality for a given ρ
- 3.3 Non-preservation of the optimality

4. Directionally decomposed non-decreasing martingale couplings

Decomposition of martingale couplings

For $\pi \in \Pi_M(\mu, \nu)$, we denote by

$$\nu_l^\pi(dy) = \int_{x \in \mathbb{R}} \mathbb{1}_{\{y < x\}} \pi(dx, dy),$$

$$\nu_0^\pi(dy) = \int_{x \in \mathbb{R}} \mathbb{1}_{\{y = x\}} \pi(dx, dy),$$

$$\nu_r^\pi(dy) = \int_{x \in \mathbb{R}} \mathbb{1}_{\{y > x\}} \pi(dx, dy).$$

Note that $\nu_l^\pi + \nu_0^\pi + \nu_r^\pi = \nu$. For (ν_l, ν_r) a couple of non-negative measures such that $\nu_l + \nu_r \leq \nu$, we denote

$$\Pi_M(\mu, \nu, \nu_l, \nu_r) = \{\pi \in \Pi_M(\mu, \nu) : (\nu_l^\pi, \nu_0^\pi, \nu_r^\pi) = (\nu_l, \nu - \nu_l - \nu_r, \nu_r)\}.$$

Theorem 1

Let $\mu, \nu \in \mathcal{P}_1(\mathbb{R})$ be such that $\mu \leq_{cx} \nu$ and $\mu \neq \nu$. Let (ν_l, ν_r) a couple of non-negative measures such that $\nu_l + \nu_r = \nu$. We have

$$\Pi_M(\mu, \nu, \nu_l, \nu_r) \neq \emptyset \iff \exists! \pi^\uparrow \in \Pi_M(\mu, \nu, \nu_l, \nu_r) \text{ non-increasing,}$$

and then, for each continuous increasing concave function $\varphi : \mathbb{R}_+ \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$,

$$\forall \pi \in \Pi_M(\mu, \nu, \nu_l, \nu_r) \setminus \{\pi^\uparrow\}, \int_{\mathbb{R}^2} \varphi(|y-x|) \pi(dx, dy) < \int_{\mathbb{R}^2} \varphi(|y-x|) \pi^\uparrow(dx, dy). \quad (1)$$

Corollary

For (ν_l, ν_r) a couple of non-negative measures such that $\nu_l + \nu_r \leq \nu$, we have

$$\Pi_M(\mu, \nu, \nu_l, \nu_r) \neq \emptyset \iff \exists! \pi^\uparrow \in \Pi_M(\mu, \nu, \nu_l, \nu_r)$$

such that $\frac{\pi^\uparrow(dx, dy) + (\nu_l + \nu_r - \nu)(dx)\delta_x(dy)}{\nu_l(\mathbb{R}) + \nu_r(\mathbb{R})}$ is non-decreasing and for all $\pi \in \Pi_M(\mu, \nu, \nu_l, \nu_r) \setminus \{\pi^\uparrow\}$, equation (1) above still holds.

Sketch of proof

Let $\phi_\pi : [0, 1] \rightarrow [0, \nu_l(\mathbb{R})]$ be such that

$$\phi_\pi(F_\mu(x)) = \int_{\mathbb{R}^2} \mathbb{1}_{\{z < y \leq x\}} \pi(dy, dz) \in [0, \nu_l(\mathbb{R})].$$

and we also have

$$F_\mu(x) - \phi_\pi(F_\mu(x)) = \int_{\mathbb{R}^2} \mathbb{1}_{\{y \leq x, y < z\}} \pi(dy, dz) \in [\nu_r(\mathbb{R}), 1].$$

Let $\tilde{\nu}_l = \frac{\nu_l}{\nu_l(\mathbb{R})}$, $\tilde{\nu}_r = \frac{\nu_r}{\nu_r(\mathbb{R})}$ and for $u \in [0, 1]$ and $v \in [(u - \nu_r(\mathbb{R}))^+, u \wedge \nu_l(\mathbb{R})]$,

$$G(u, v) = \int_0^v F_{\tilde{\nu}_l}^{-1}\left(\frac{w}{\nu_l(\mathbb{R})}\right) dw + \int_0^{u-v} F_{\tilde{\nu}_r}^{-1}\left(\frac{w}{\nu_r(\mathbb{R})}\right) dw.$$

Let $\phi_\uparrow : [0, 1] \rightarrow [0, \nu_l(\mathbb{R})]$ be a non-decreasing function such that $u \mapsto u - \phi_\uparrow(u)$ is also non-decreasing and we need to show

$$\forall u \in [0, 1], \phi_\uparrow(u) \in [(u - \nu_r(\mathbb{R}))^+, u \wedge \nu_l(\mathbb{R})] \text{ and } \int_0^u F_\mu^{-1}(w) dw = G(u, \phi_\uparrow(u)). \quad (2)$$

Steps:

1. The existence of $\phi_\uparrow(F_\mu(x)) \in [(F_\mu(x) - \nu_r(\mathbb{R}))^+, \phi_\pi(F_\mu(x))]$ for $x \in \mathbb{R}$.
2. The monotonicity of $x \mapsto \phi_\uparrow(F_\mu(x))$ and $x \mapsto F_\mu(x) - \phi_\uparrow(F_\mu(x))$.
3. The monotonicity of $u \mapsto \phi_\uparrow(u)$ and $u \mapsto u - \phi_\uparrow(u)$ on $(0, 1)$.
4. The existence of $\pi^\uparrow \in \Pi_M(\mu, \nu, \nu_l, \nu_r)$ such that $\phi_{\pi^\uparrow} = \phi_\uparrow$; the uniqueness of π^\uparrow .
5. The optimality of π^\uparrow for $\varphi : \mathbb{R}_+ \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ continuous increasing and concave.

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