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COMPARISON OF PROCEDURES FOR FITTING THE AUTOREGRESSIVE ORDER OF A VECTOR ERROR CORRECTION MODEL

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Abstract

This paper investigates the lag length selection problem of a Vector Error Correction Model (VECM) by using a convergent information criterion and tools based on the Box-Pierce methodology recently proposed in the literature. The performances of these approaches for selecting of the optimal lag length are compared via Monte Carlo experiments. The effects of misspecified deterministic trend or cointegrating rank on the lag length selection is studied. Noting that processes often exhibit nonlinearities, the cases of iid and conditionally heteroscedastic errors will be considered. Strategies which can avoid misleading situations are proposed.

Keywords: Vector error correction model; Model selection; Cointegration; Information criteria; Autocorrelation tests.

1. Introduction

The Vector Error Correction Models (VECM) are often used in the statistical analysis of nonstationary variables since they allow to describe several features. In particular the cointegration analysis of equilibrium relationships between variables is much considered in theoretical research. The dominant test for determining the number of equilibrium relationships, the cointegrating rank, is the Likelihood Ratio (LR) test developed by Johansen (1988,1991). Noting that this test depend on the specification of the deterministic part of the VECM, Johansen (1994) proposed LR tests based on his likelihood procedure for testing restrictions on the deterministic parameters. However it is well known that the likelihood inference proposed by Johansen for the analysis of the long run relationships and the deterministic terms strongly depend on the choice of the lag length. Indeed if the short run dynamics are over specified this can entail a loss of efficiency in our multivariate framework since a large number of parameters are introduced in this case. Some authors found that the LR test for the cointegrating may suffer from a substantial loss of power in such a case (see e.g. Boswijk and Franses (1992)). If the short run dynamics are under specified the residuals become autocorrelated and the asymptotic theory underlying the Johansen's procedure breaks down (Johansen (1995), Theorem B.13 p 251). Hence the LR test for the cointegrating

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rank is not valid even asymptotically in this case. One can expect the similar effects on the LR tests for deterministic parameter restrictions when the autoregressive order is misspecified. Therefore it clearly appears that the choice of the lag length of a VECM is crucial.

When a cointegration analysis is conducted the autoregressive order is usually chosen by considering an information criterion. For instance Cavaliere, Rahbek and Taylor (2010) studied long run relationships between interest rates and used the Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC) to fit an autoregressive order to the data. Several papers have been devoted to the study of the performances of information criteria to find the optimal lag length of a VECM. Reference can be made to Ho and Sorensen (1996), Gonzalo and Pitarakis (1998) or Hacker and Hatemi (2008). These simulation investigations highlight the difficulty of choosing the autoregressive order of a VECM although the trend parameters are not taken into account in these studies. Numerous information criteria are available for the choice of the autoregressive order of VECM, as for instance the asymptotically efficient Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) or the consistent BIC. A consistent information criterion is such that the selected lag length converge to the true autoregressive order while efficiency relies on the optimal prediction error. Since in our case the main objective is to find the optimal lag length for the VECM, we restrict our attention to the commonly used BIC. Note that considering other consistent information criteria would lead to similar general conclusions.

On the other hand tests based on the autocorrelations of the residuals for checking the adequacy of the lag length in the framework of cointegrated variables have been recently proposed in the literature by Duchesne (2005), Brüggemann, Lütkepohl and Saikkonen (2006) and Raïssi (2010). Some of these tests are implemented in the software JMulTi. In this paper we compare the lag length selection properties of an consistent information criterion and of the Box-Pierce methodology with possibly misspecified cointegrating rank or the deterministic terms. We focus on the portmanteau tests since the Box-Pierce methodology is routinely used for checking the adequacy of fitted models to time series. Using the properties of each of the methods for specifying the short run dynamics of a VECM, strategies which can reduce misleading choices for the lag length are presented. These strategies are proposed taking into account of possibly misspecified long run relations or deterministic terms, and also the possible presence of nonlinearities.

The remainder of the paper is organized as follows. Section 2 outlines the framework of our study and introduces the deterministic parameters restrictions. The estimation procedure for the VECM is described in Section 3. The tools used for model selection in the Monte Carlo experiments are also presented. In Section 4 the framework of our simulation experiments is given and the results are discussed. Strategies exploiting the properties of the Box-Pierce methodology and of information criteria lag length selection procedures are presented.

The following general notation is used throughout the paper. Considering a $d \times r$ dimensional matrix A, we define the orthogonal complement A_{\perp} , which is a full column rank $d \times (d-r)$ matrix such that $A'A_{\perp} = 0$. For a given random variable a_t we define $||a_t||_q = (E||a_t||^q)^{1/q}$, where ||.|| denotes the Euclidean norm. The trace of a square matrix is denoted by Tr and the determinant by ||.||.

2. Characterization of the model

Let us consider the following VECM

$$\Delta x_t = \mu_0 + \mu_1 t + \alpha \beta' x_{t-1} + \sum_{i=1}^{p_0 - 1} \Gamma_i \Delta x_{t-i} + \epsilon_t, \tag{2.1}$$

where the process (x_t) is d-dimensional and $\Delta x_t := x_t - x_{t-1}$. The parameters α and β are of full column rank and of dimension $d \times r_0$. The Γ_i 's are $d \times d$ short run parameters, and when $p_0 = 1$ the sum in (2.1) vanishes. The error process (ϵ_t) is commonly assumed iid Gaussian with positive definite covariance matrix Σ_{ϵ} and such that $E\epsilon_{t}=0$. However the standard assumption of iid Gaussian errors cannot take into account of nonlinear dynamics which often arise in practice. This framework is then considered to be not realistic in many situations. For instance Trenkler (2003), Koutmos and Booth (1995) or Hiemstra and Jones (1994) studied financial variables and found a strong evidence of nonlinear dependence in the data. Numerous models in the literature produce processes with conditional heteroscedasticity as for instance hidden Markov models (see e.g. Amendola and Francq (2009)) or MGARCH models (see e.g. Bauwens, Laurent and Rombouts (2006)). Taking into account the dependence of the errors is important for testing the adequacy of linear models as pointed out by Francq, Roy and Zakoïan (2005) or Francq and Raïssi (2007). In addition the study of VECM in nonstandard situations has attracted much attention in the recent years. Therefore we also consider in our simulations the case of dependent but uncorrelated errors which are such that the results of the Granger representation theorem hold (see equation (2.3) below) as in Rahbek, Hansen and Dennis (2002), Raïssi (2009) or Hacker and Hatemi (2008).

The following restrictions on the deterministic parameters are considered

$$R_l: \quad \mu_1 = \alpha \tau_l$$
 $\tilde{R}_l: \quad \mu_1 = 0$
 $R_s: \quad \mu_0 = \alpha \tau_s \text{ and } \mu_1 = 0$
 $\tilde{R}_s: \quad \mu_0 = \mu_1 = 0.$
(2.2)

Note that we do not have necessarily $\tau_l \neq 0$ for R_l and $\tau_s \neq 0$ for R_s or $\mu_0 \neq 0$ for R_l , \tilde{R}_l and R_s , so that we have the relation $\tilde{R}_s \subset R_s \subset \tilde{R}_l \subset R_l$. Nested LR tests for the restrictions \tilde{R}_l , R_s and \tilde{R}_s are proposed in Johansen (1995). Now we discuss the consequences of the restrictions in (2.2) on the behaviour of (x_t) . Suppose that $\alpha'_{\perp}\Gamma\beta_{\perp}$ has full rank, where $\Gamma = I_d - \sum_{i=1}^{p_0-1} \Gamma_i$. We also assume that the autoregressive polynomial $A(z) = (1-z)I_d - \alpha\beta'z - \sum_{i=1}^{p_0-1} \Gamma_i(1-z)z^i$ is such that $\det A(z) = 0$ implies that |z| > 1 or z = 1. Under these assumptions, it follows from Granger's representation theorem (Johansen (1995), p 49) that

$$x_{t} = C \sum_{i=1}^{t} (\epsilon_{i} + \mu_{0} + \mu_{1}t) + D(L)(\epsilon_{t} + \mu_{0} + \mu_{1}t) + A$$

$$= C \sum_{i=1}^{t} \epsilon_{i} + \rho_{1}t + \rho_{0} + Y_{t} + A,$$
(2.3)

where $C = \beta_{\perp} (\alpha'_{\perp} \Gamma \beta_{\perp})^{-1} \alpha'_{\perp}$ and L is the usual lag operator. The vector A depends on initial values and verifies $\beta' A = 0$. The process (Y_t) is linear and such that

$$y_t = \sum_{i=0}^{\infty} \phi_i \epsilon_{t-i},$$

where the power series $D(z) = \sum_{i=0}^{\infty} \phi_i z^i$ is convergent for $|z| \le 1 + \kappa$ for some $\kappa > 0$. The vectors ρ_1 , ρ_0 are functions of the parameters in (2.1). If we suppose that R_l hold, we may have $\rho_1 \neq 0$ and $\rho_0 \neq 0$ and in this case $(\beta' x_t)$ can be composed of a stationary process plus a linear trend. We say in this case that $(\beta' x_t)$ is trend stationary. If R_l hold, again we may have $\rho_1 \neq 0$ and $\rho_0 \neq 0$, but $(\beta' x_t)$ is stationary. If R_s hold we obtain $\rho_1 = 0$ but we still may have $\rho_0 \neq 0$, and in this case it is also allowed to have $E(\beta'x_t) \neq 0$. Finally the restriction R_s does not allow for any deterministic component for $(\beta' x_t)$ and (x_t) . The number of independent linear combinations $\beta' x_t$ which are such that the random walk behaviour is vanished is the cointegrating rank. In particular when $r_0 = 0$ there is no cointegration between the variables and model (2.1) is a vector autoregressive model for the process (Δx_t). From (2.3) the process (Δx_t) is stationary for all the restrictions, so that (x_t) is I(1). Note that we do not study the unrestricted case which produce nonstationary processes with quadratic trend since it is rarely faced in applied works. Then we see that the deterministic term and the cointegrating rank are important for the data analysis and forecasting purposes. However we will see in the next section that the specification of μ_0 , μ_1 and r_0 strongly depend on the choice of the autoregressive order.

Various tests for the cointegrating rank are available in the literature (see Hubrich, Lütkepohl and Saikkonen (2001) for a review of such tests). The most commonly test for the cointegration rank is the LR test introduced by Johansen (1988,1991), which is shown to be asymptotically valid under quite general assumptions (see Rahbek *et al* (2002) or Raïssi (2009)). Using the same arguments of Raïssi (2009) and following the proofs of corollary 11.2 and theorem 11.3 of Johansen (1995) it can be shown that the LR tests for the deterministic term are also asymptotically valid when the errors are dependent but uncorrelated.

3. Determining the autoregressive order

We first briefly describe the estimation procedure of the model (2.1). The reader is referred to Johansen (1995) for more details on the maximum likelihood estimation of VECM. If the errors are not assumed Gaussian, the quasi maximum likelihood is used. Let us assume that the observations x_1, \ldots, x_n are available. Note that α and β are not identified in (2.1), and in case of R_l and R_s the parameters τ_l and τ_s are also not identified. In the sequel we suppose that these parameters are normalized in some appropriate way. Let us rewrite (2.1) as follow

$$\Delta x_t = \theta \xi_{t-1} + \epsilon_t, \tag{3.1}$$

where $\xi_{t-1} = ((B'z_{t-1})', \Delta X'_{t-1}, \dots, \Delta X'_{t-p_0+1})'$. We set $B = (\beta', \tau_l)'$ and $z_{t-1} = (x'_{t-1}, t)'$ if we suppose that R_l hold but not \tilde{R}_l in (3.1). If \tilde{R}_l is hold but not R_s we set $B = \beta$ and $z_{t-1} = x_{t-1}$. We consider $B = (\beta', \tau_s)'$ and $z_{t-1} = (x'_{t-1}, 1)'$ if R_s is hold but not \tilde{R}_s . Finally we set $B = \beta$ and $z_{t-1} = x_{t-1}$ if the deterministic

parameters are assumed to be equal to zero. The parameters in B can be estimated using Reduced Rank (RR) regression. The super-consistency of the parameters in B can be obtained under quite general assumptions on the error terms (see e.g. Rahbek et al (2002) or Raïssi (2009)). It is important to note that in the RR estimation method the process (ξ_t) is used so that the resulting estimators strongly depend on the fitted autoregressive order p > 0 which can be such that $p \neq p_0$. As a consequence the computation of the LR tests statistics for the cointegrating rank and the deterministic terms depend on p. Therefore the choice of the autoregressive order is crucial for the cointegration analysis and the specification of the deterministic part of the model. Let us set $\theta = [\alpha, \Gamma_1, \dots, \Gamma_{p_0-1}, \mu_0]$ if R_l hold but not R_s and $\theta = [\alpha, \Gamma_1, \dots, \Gamma_{p_0-1}]$ if R_s hold. Once the parameter B is replaced by its estimator in (3.1) we can compute a least squares estimator for θ . However it is clear that the estimator of the short run parameters we obtain depend on the specification of cointegrating rank and of the deterministic parameters. If we suppose that the VECM is well specified, it can be shown that these estimators are asymptotically normally distributed (see Brüggemann, Lütkepohl and Saikkonen (2006) in the iid Gaussian case and Raïssi (2010) when the errors are dependent but uncorrelated).

Now we introduce the tests used in the Box-Pierce methodology. Let us denote by $\hat{\epsilon}_t$ the residuals obtained from the estimation stage. We define the residual autocovariances

$$\hat{\Gamma}_{\epsilon}(h) := n^{-1} \sum_{t=h+1}^{n} \hat{\epsilon}_{t} \hat{\epsilon}'_{t-h}.$$

The commonly used portmanteau statistic based on the first m autocovariances is given by

$$Q = n \sum_{h=1}^{m} \operatorname{Tr} \left(\hat{\Gamma}_{\epsilon}(h)' \hat{\Gamma}_{\epsilon}(0)^{-1} \hat{\Gamma}_{\epsilon}(h) \hat{\Gamma}_{\epsilon}(0)^{-1} \right). \tag{3.2}$$

This statistic corresponds to the generalization of the Box and Pierce (1970) portmanteau statistic in the multivariate case proposed by Chitturi (1974). One can alternatively use the Ljung and Box (1978) portmanteau statistic proposed in the multivariate framework by Hosking (1980) for potential improvements when the errors are Gaussian. Nevertheless the use of the Ljung-Box statistic lead to the same general conclusion for our study, so that we focus on the Box-Pierce (BP hereafter) portmanteau test in the sequel. The tested hypotheses for checking the adequacy of the autoregressive order are given by

$$H_0: E(\epsilon_t \epsilon_{t-i}) = 0$$
 vs $H_1: \exists i \text{ such that } E(\epsilon_t \epsilon_{t-i}) \neq 0$,

 $i \in \{\dots, -1, 0, 1, \dots\}$ are commonly considered for the portmanteau tests, although the test statistics are only based on the m first residual autocorrelations. Assuming that the error process is iid Gaussian and such that $\|\epsilon_t\|_4 < \infty$, Brüggemann, Lütkepohl and Saikkonen (2006) showed that the asymptotic distribution of the statistic in (3.2) can be approximated by a $\chi^2(d^2(m-p_0+1)-dr_0)$ distribution when $m \to \infty$ as $n \to \infty$. Using this result they proposed a portmanteau test in the case of cointegrated variables.

This test will be denoted as BP_S in the sequel. If we suppose that the errors are only uncorrelated and $\|\epsilon_t\|_{4+\nu} < \infty$ for some $\nu > 0$ and under other technical assumptions, it is shown in the framework of \tilde{R}_s in Raïssi (2010), that the asymptotic distribution of the test statistic Q is a weighted sum of chi-squares. Starting from this result a portmanteau test which is robust to the possible presence of nonlinearities in the error terms is proposed. The extension to the other restrictions considered in this paper is straightforward and is described in an extended version of Raïssi (2010) available under request. This test will be denoted as BP_W . In practice the RR estimators are derived for given $0 \le r < d$ which can be such that $r \ne r_0$. It is clear from the estimation stage that the statistic Q depend on the specified deterministic term and the fitted cointegrating rank. The effects of such possible misspecifications will be studied in the next section.

To determine the number of short run dynamics to include in the model information criteria of the form

$$IC = \log |\hat{\Gamma}_{\epsilon}(0)| + (p+1)c_n/n.$$

are often used for a given specification of the deterministic parameters and cointegrating rank r. Paulsen (1984) showed that the information criterion provide a consistent estimator of p_0 if and only if c_n is such that $c_n \to \infty$ and $c_n/n \to 0$. We have $c_n = d^2 \log n$ for the BIC and $c_n = 2d^2$ for the AIC, so that the BIC gives a consistent estimator of the lag length on the contrary to the AIC. Then we focus on the BIC in the sequel, noting that any other convergent information criterion will lead to the same general result. The BIC is computed for a set of possible values of p and the lag length which minimizes the BIC is selected. In general the residual empirical variance $\hat{\Gamma}_{\epsilon}(0)$ is often used for the computation of information criteria. Then similarly to the portmanteau test statistics, we see that well specifying the cointegrating rank and/or the deterministic term is important. We also note from the BIC expressions that this approach for choosing p is not intended to detect a serial correlation of the residuals or to control any error of first kind. However we can remark that the existence of the fourth moments is not needed to compute these information criteria. In the next section we compare the two approaches for the choice of p.

4. Monte Carlo experiments

The performances of the BIC and of the tests based on the residual autocorrelations for selecting the autoregressive order is studied. Using these results we propose strategies which combine the use of the BP methodology and information criteria for selecting the lag length, taking into account for possibly misspecified deterministic terms or fitted cointegrating rank. In a first time the framework of the experiments is described. In each of the experiments we simulated N=1000 independent trajectories of lengths n=100 and n=1000 using a Data Generating Process (DGP) inspired by the canonical form of Toda (1994)

$$x_{t} = \begin{pmatrix} \psi I_{r_{0}} & 0 \\ 0 & I_{d-r_{0}} \end{pmatrix} x_{t-1} + \Gamma_{01} \Delta x_{t-1} + \mu_{0} + \mu_{1} t + \epsilon_{t},$$

where ψ is a scalar and d=4. The parameters are taken $\psi=0.5$, $\Gamma_{01}=-0.3I_4$ and the cointegrating rank is $r_0=2$. We set $\mu_1=(-0.05,-0.05,0,0)'$ and $\mu_0=(0.1,0.1,0.1,0.1)'$ if R_l is hold but not \tilde{R}_l . The results for the case of simulated processes such that R_s is hold but not \tilde{R}_s are not displayed since they are similar to the case $\mu_0=\mu_1=0$. In the sake of conciseness the results for the restriction \tilde{R}_l is hold but not R_s are not displayed since they lead to similar conclusions to the cases presented here. This kind of DGP is used in numerous studies (e.g. Hubrich et al (2001) or Demetrescu et al (2009)). In addition the results concerning the information criteria are corroborated by previous studies. In the experiments the cointegrating rank and the deterministic terms are not necessarily well fitted, so that the consequences of such situations is analyzed. Since the number of parameters is high, a relatively large samples are taken in our experiments. Two cases are considered for the error process in the sequel. In case of iid innovations we take $\epsilon_t \sim \mathcal{N}(0, I_d)$. To illustrate the case where the errors are dependent, we use the following ARCH model with constant correlation of Jeantheau (1998)

$$\begin{pmatrix} \epsilon_{1t} \\ \vdots \\ \epsilon_{dt} \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} \sigma_{1t} & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & \ddots & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & \sigma_{dt} \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} \eta_{1t} \\ \vdots \\ \eta_{dt} \end{pmatrix}$$
(4.1)

where

$$\begin{pmatrix} \sigma_{1t}^2 \\ \vdots \\ \sigma_{dt}^2 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 0.1 \\ \vdots \\ 0.1 \end{pmatrix} + \begin{pmatrix} 0.2 & 0 & 0 & 0.1 \\ 0.1 & 0.2 & 0 & 0.1 \\ 0.1 & 0 & 0.2 & 0.1 \\ 0.1 & 0 & 0 & 0.2 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} \epsilon_{1t-1}^2 \\ \vdots \\ \epsilon_{dt-1}^2 \end{pmatrix},$$

and the process $\eta_t = (\eta_{1t}, \dots, \eta_{dt})'$ is iid, such that $\eta_t \sim \mathcal{N}(0, I_d)$.

The autoregressive order selection strategy correspond to the case where the practitioner have no prior knowledge on p_0 . More precisely for the portmanteau tests $p=1,2,\ldots$ are successively tested until the null hypothesis is not rejected. However we assume that when the autoregressive order adequacy is rejected for all $p \leq 5$, the model specification is suspected to be not reliable and one stop the procedure. Indeed when p takes large values the number of parameters become high beside the available observations. In such case the analysis of the linear dynamics is not reliable. In our experiments we used the asymptotic nominal level 5% for the different portmanteau tests considered in this paper. In the sequel note that if the portmanteau tests perform well, the selected $p=p_0$ is often around 95% since this selection procedure is based on the control of the error of first kind. Note that the BP_W test is available for fixed m, while for the BP_S it is assumed that $m \to \infty$ as $T \to \infty$. Therefore m=5 is taken for the BP_W test for T=100 and T=1000, while we take T=1000 and T=1000 and T=1000 and T=1000 are taken as T=1000 and T=1000 for the T=1000 for the T=1000 and T=1000 are given in Tables 1-12.

We first analyze the results for small samples (T = 100) given in Tables 1-6. It appears that the performances of the BP_W test is rather disappointing. This can be explained by the fact that about 40 parameters are estimated when p = 2 and thus the number of observations is relatively small for the elaborated BP_W test. In such situation the more simple BP_S test provide satisfactory results. It seems that the results for the portmanteau tests are not much affected when the deterministic terms

or the cointegrating are misspecified in small samples. We only remark that when a deterministic trend present in the data is not taken into account by the practitioner (Tables 4-6), the BP_S test tends to select a too large lag length. From Tables 1-6 we see that the BIC selects a too small p. When $r < r_0$ is taken the BIC is likely to choose a larger autoregressive order. Therefore it seems that the use of the parsimonious BIC when the sample is small can be misleading for the analysis of VECM.

Now we consider the results for large samples (T = 1000). It is found from Tables 7-12 that the BP tests perform well when the long run relations and the deterministic terms are well specified. However we note that when $r < r_0$ is taken, the BP tests tend to select too large autoregressive orders. If $r < r_0$ the estimators of the short run parameters are biased and the residual autocorrelations may appear too large as the sample increase even if $p = p_0$. When $r > r_0$ is taken we note that the BP tests are not much affected. A possible explanation is that in this case the effect of non stationary components introduced in the model are limited by the fact that the corresponding adjustment parameters are close to zero. It is important to note that overspecified deterministic terms seems not entail a significant loss of efficiency in selecting the autoregressive order using the BP methodology. However from Tables 10-12 we see that the BP tests are clearly likely to select a too large autoregressive order when a deterministic trend is present in the observed process and is not taken into account in the model. Similarly we also found from Tables 10-12 that when deterministic trends are spuriously assumed to not enter the cointegrating relations the BP tests select too large p. When the BP tests are used and in case of doubt, it seems preferable to consider the restriction R_l only for fitting the autoregressive order. In such situations the unnecessary parameters introduced in the model are few. Actually we noted no major loss of efficiency and considering such restriction allow to avoid misspecified autoregressive order. Of course as pointed out by several studies (e.g. Johansen (1994)) it is important to remove any misspecification of the deterministic term when determining the cointegrating rank. Finally it emerges that in general the BP_W test is not affected by the presence of dependent errors. In some cases the BP_S test tends to select too large p when the errors follow an ARCH model. This can be explained by the fact that the BP_S is not intended to take into account such situations. In accordance with the theoretical, we found that the BIC choose successfully the optimal lag length when the sample is large in both standard and dependent cases. It also appears that the selected autoregressive orders do not depend much on the specification of the deterministic terms or on the fitted cointegrating rank. Nevertheless it is important to note that the use of information criteria for fitting the lag length can be quite misleading even when the sample is large. For instance we give the autoregressive order selected by the AIC criterion for the case given in Table 10. Despite the VECM is well specified, the AIC select a too large p. Results not reported here show that the AIC almost always choose a lag length p=5 in many of the situations presented here. This is not surprising since for the AIC the more complicated models are not so penalized. Thereby this confirms that the BIC perform better than the AIC for the lag selection (see e.g. Cheung and Lai (1993) or Ho and Sorensen (1996)).

5. Conclusion

In this paper we studied the problem of the fit of the autoregressive order by comparing tools based on the Box-Pierce methodology recently proposed in the literature and information criteria commonly used in practice. Fitting an adequate autoregressive order is important for the analysis of VECM, but this task is carried out using information criteria only in general. It emerges from our study that underspecified deterministic trend or cointegrating rank can be quite misleading when using the Box-Pierce methodology for the choice of the autoregressive order p. We also found that the selection of p using information criteria does not depend much on the specification of the other parts of the model. However the use of these information criteria can be quite misleading in some cases. In general we recommend to use the information criteria together with the portmanteau tests when choosing the lag length of a VECM. When the selected autoregressive orders are close and small, then one should take the p proposed by the portmanteau tests. It is advisable to choose the p selected by the portmanteau tests since they are able to detect residual autocorrelations which can strongly affect the cointegration analysis. If the lag lengths selected by the two approaches presented in this paper are both large, it is important that the chosen information criterion is parsimonious to conclude on the reliability of the selected lag length. If the p retained by an information criterion is much larger than the p retained by the portmanteau tests, then one can suspect that the more complicated model is not penalized enough by the information criterion. On the other hand if the p selected using the portmanteau tests is much larger than the p selected by using an information criterion, one can suspect that the deterministic trend is underspecified or the fitted cointegrating rank is smaller the true cointegrating rank.

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Tables

Table 1: Frequency (in %) of selected lag length using the portmanteau tests. The simulated processes are of length T=100, such that \tilde{R}_s hold and $r_0=2$.

	Case	iid errors						ARC	H err	ors	
r=2	p	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
R_l but	BP_W	0.2	98.5	1.1	0.0	0.2	1.4	97.6	0.9	0.0	0.1
not \tilde{R}_l	BP_S	0.0	97.2	2.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	96.1	3.9	0.0	0.0
\tilde{R}_l but	BP_W	0.2	98.6	1.0	0.1	0.1	1.4	97.7	0.6	0.0	0.3
not R_s	BP_S	0.0	97.0	3.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	96.3	3.7	0.0	0.0
R_s but	BP_W	48.1	50.9	0.8	0.1	0.1	55.2	44.1	0.6	0.0	0.1
not \tilde{R}_s	BP_S	4.7	92.9	2.4	0.0	0.0	5.3	91.7	3.0	0.0	0.0
$\mu_0 = \mu_1 = 0$	BP_W	45.8	53.2	0.8	0.1	0.1	52.8	46.4	0.7	0.0	0.1
	BP_S	3.7	93.6	2.7	0.0	0.0	4.0	92.6	3.4	0.0	0.0
R_l but not \tilde{R}_l	BIC	96.6	3.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	95.1	4.9	0.0	0.0	0.0
\tilde{R}_l but not R_s	BIC	96.4	3.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	94.9	5.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
R_s but not \tilde{R}_s	BIC	97.0	3.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	95.3	4.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
$\mu_0 = \mu_1 = 0$	BIC	96.4	3.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	94.9	5.1	0.0	0.0	0.0

Table 2: Frequency (in %) of selected lag length using the portmanteau tests. The simulated processes are of length T = 100, such that \tilde{R}_s hold and $r_0 = 2$.

	Case		iid	error	S			ARC	H err	ors	
r = 1	p	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
R_l but	BP_W	0.2	98.2	1.2	0.1	0.3	1.4	97.2	1.0	0.0	0.4
not \tilde{R}_l	BP_S	0.0	96.0	4.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	94.1	5.9	0.0	0.0
\tilde{R}_l but	BP_W	0.2	98.0	1.5	0.1	0.2	1.4	97.0	1.2	0.1	0.3
not R_s	BP_S	0.0	95.4	4.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	93.5	6.5	0.0	0.0
R_s but	BP_W	12.7	86.1	0.8	0.1	0.3	19.5	79.3	0.8	0.1	0.3
not \tilde{R}_s	BP_S	0.2	96.0	3.8	0.0	0.0	0.3	94.4	5.3	0.0	0.0
$\mu_0 = \mu_1 = 0$	BP_W	12.6	85.9	1.1	0.1	0.3	19.8	79.2	0.6	0.1	0.3
	BP_S	0.2	95.3	4.5	0.0	0.0	0.3	94.3	5.4	0.0	0.0
R_l but not \tilde{R}_l	BIC	57.7	43.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	56.6	43.4	0.0	0.0	0.0
\tilde{R}_l but not R_s	BIC	56.8	43.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	55.2	44.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
R_s but not \tilde{R}_s	BIC	59.4	40.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	57.6	42.4	0.0	0.0	0.0
$\mu_0 = \mu_1 = 0$	BIC	58.0	42.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	55.7	44.3	0.0	0.0	0.0

Table 3: Frequency (in %) of selected lag length using the portmanteau tests. The simulated processes are of length T=100, such that \tilde{R}_s hold and $r_0=2$.

	Case		iid	error	S		ARCH error				
r = 3	p	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
R_l but	BP_W	0.0	98.7	0.9	0.1	0.3	0.0	98.8	0.8	0.0	0.4
not \tilde{R}_l	BP_S	0.0	94.6	5.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	93.0	7.0	0.0	0.0
\tilde{R}_l but	BP_l^W	0.0	98.6	1.1	0.1	0.2	0.0	98.7	0.9	0.0	0.4
not R_s	BP_S	0.0	94.9	5.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	91.9	8.1	0.0	0.0
R_s but	BP_W	51.3	47.5	0.9	0.1	0.2	59.2	40.0	0.6	0.0	0.2
not \tilde{R}_s	BP_S	3.5	91.3	5.2	0.0	0.0	4.0	88.6	7.4	0.0	0.0
$\mu_0 = \mu_1 = 0$	BP_W	47.1	51.8	0.9	0.1	0.1	53.7	45.6	0.6	0.0	0.1
	BP_S	2.4	90.9	6.7	0.0	0.0	2.2	89.2	8.6	0.0	0.0
R_l but not \tilde{R}_l	BIC	98.8	1.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	98.0	2.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
\tilde{R}_l but not R_s	BIC	97.9	2.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	96.2	3.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
R_s but not \tilde{R}_s	BIC	98.1	1.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	96.5	3.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
$\mu_0 = \mu_1 = 0$	BIC	97.1	2.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	95.8	4.2	0.0	0.0	0.0

Table 4: Frequency (in %) of selected lag length using the portmanteau tests. The simulated processes are of length T=100, such that R_l hold but not \tilde{R}_l and $r_0=2$.

	Case		iid	error	S			ARG	CH erro	ors	
r=2	p	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
R_l but	BP_l^W	0.2	98.5	1.1	0.1	0.1	2.7	94.3	2.1	0.7	0.2
not \tilde{R}_l	BP_l^S	0.0	94.4	5.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	89.4	10.5	0.1	0.0
\tilde{R}_l but	BP_l^W	0.2	97.4	1.7	0.2	0.5	2.7	94.6	1.7	0.3	0.7
not R_s	BP_l^S	0.0	90.9	9.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	87.6	12.3	0.1	0.0
R_s but	BP_W	21.3	76.7	1.6	0.1	0.3	26.3	71.6	1.5	0.3	0.3
not \tilde{R}_s	BP_S	0.5	92.6	6.9	0.0	0.0	0.3	82.6	16.9	0.2	0.0
$\mu_0 = \mu_1 = 0$	BP_W	16.6	81.6	1.4	0.2	0.2	21.7	76.4	1.4	0.3	0.2
	BP_S	0.4	91.6	7.9	0.1	0.0	0.2	83.5	16.1	0.2	0.0
R_l but not \tilde{R}_l	BIC	89.0	11.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	67.1	32.9	0.0	0.0	0.0
\tilde{R}_l but not R_s	BIC	67.0	33.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	61.3	38.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
R_s but not \tilde{R}_s	BIC	71.4	28.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	52.2	47.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
$\mu_0 = \mu_1 = 0$	BIC	65.6	34.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	50.8	49.2	0.0	0.0	0.0

Table 5: Frequency (in %) of selected lag length using the portmanteau tests. The simulated processes are of length T=100, such that R_l hold but not \tilde{R}_l and $r_0=2$.

	Case		iid	error	S		ARCH errors					
r = 1	p	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	
R_l but	BP_W	0.2	97.4	1.8	0.3	0.3	2.7	95.1	1.8	0.4	0.0	
not \tilde{R}_l	BP_S	0.0	94.1	5.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	91.8	8.2	0.0	0.0	
\tilde{R}_l but	BP_W	0.2	96.8	2.1	0.4	0.5	2.7	95.0	1.6	0.3	0.4	
not R_s	BP_S	0.0	93.0	7.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	91.2	8.7	0.1	0.0	
R_s but	BP_W	10.0	88.6	1.1	0.1	0.2	21.0	77.0	1.1	0.4	0.5	
not \tilde{R}_s	BP_S	0.1	95.9	4.0	0.0	0.0	0.3	82.8	16.6	0.3	0.0	
$\mu_0 = \mu_1 = 0$	BP_W	9.5	89.0	1.1	0.2	0.2	20.1	77.8	1.3	0.4	0.4	
	BP_S	0.1	95.7	4.2	0.0	0.0	0.3	83.2	16.2	0.3	0.0	
R_l but not \tilde{R}_l	BIC	48.6	51.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	44.2	55.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	
\tilde{R}_l but not R_s	BIC	45.1	54.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	43.8	56.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	
R_s but not \tilde{R}_s	BIC	55.5	44.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	57.1	42.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	
$\mu_0 = \mu_1 = 0$	BIC	54.3	45.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	$0 \parallel 56.9 \mid 43.1 \mid 0.0 \mid 0.0 \mid 0$					

Table 6: Frequency (in %) of selected lag length using the portmanteau tests. The simulated processes are of length T=100, such that R_l hold but not \tilde{R}_l and $r_0=2$.

	Case	iid errors						ARG	CH erro	ors	
r = 3	p	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
R_l but	BP_W	0.0	98.3	1.0	0.4	0.3	5.5	91.6	1.6	0.7	0.6
not \tilde{R}_l	BP_S	0.0	90.0	10.0	0.0	0.0	3.1	79.5	17.2	0.2	0.0
\tilde{R}_l but	BP_W	0.0	96.9	2.0	0.3	0.8	5.5	91.3	1.8	0.2	1.2
not R_s	BP_S	0.0	82.4	17.1	0.5	0.0	3.1	76.0	20.5	0.4	0.0
R_s but	BP_W	21.5	76.2	1.7	0.3	0.3	21.4	75.8	2.1	0.4	0.3
not \tilde{R}_s	BP_S	0.3	82.6	17.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	76.4	23.2	0.4	0.0
$\mu_0 = \mu_1 = 0$	BP_W	15.0	82.3	2.1	0.3	0.3	19.0	78.6	1.7	0.2	0.5
	BP_S	0.2	80.0	19.3	0.5	0.0	0.1	76.3	23.1	0.5	0.0
R_l but not \tilde{R}_l	BIC	94.3	5.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	75.1	24.9	0.0	0.0	0.0
\tilde{R}_l but not R_s	BIC	71.7	28.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	66.0	34.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
R_s but not \tilde{R}_s	BIC	73.4	26.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	61.6	38.4	0.0	0.0	0.0
$\mu_0 = \mu_1 = 0$	BIC	65.9	34.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	58.4	41.6	0.0	0.0	0.0

Table 7: Frequency (in %) of selected lag length using the portmanteau tests. The simulated processes are of length T=1000, such that \tilde{R}_s hold and $r_0=2$.

	Case		iid	error	S			ARC	H err	ors	
r=2	p	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
R_l but	BP_l^W	0.0	95.8	1.3	0.7	2.2	0.0	96.2	1.7	0.6	1.5
not \tilde{R}_l	BP_l^S	0.0	95.4	3.9	0.7	0.0	0.0	94.5	4.7	0.7	0.1
\tilde{R}_l but	BP_l^W	0.0	95.7	1.4	0.7	2.2	0.0	96.1	1.7	0.8	1.4
not R_s	BP_l^S	0.0	95.6	3.5	0.9	0.0	0.0	94.6	4.6	0.7	0.1
R_s but	BP_W	0.0	95.7	1.4	0.8	2.1	0.0	96.2	1.6	0.7	1.5
not \tilde{R}_s	BP_S	0.0	95.7	3.6	0.7	0.0	0.0	94.7	4.5	0.7	0.1
$\mu_0 = \mu_1 = 0$	BP_W	0.0	95.8	1.4	0.9	1.9	0.0	96.2	1.6	0.7	1.5
	BP_S	0.0	95.7	3.5	0.8	0.0	0.0	94.8	4.4	0.7	0.1
R_l but not \tilde{R}_l	BIC	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
\tilde{R}_l but not R_s	BIC	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
R_s but not \tilde{R}_s	BIC	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
$\mu_0 = \mu_1 = 0$	BIC	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Table 8: Frequency (in %) of selected lag length using the portmanteau tests. The simulated processes are of length T=1000, such that \tilde{R}_s hold and $r_0=2$.

	Case		ii	d error	S			AR	CH err	ors	
r = 1	p	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
R_l but	BP_W	0.0	1.7	2.5	3.3	92.5	0.0	3.7	2.2	3.0	91.1
not \tilde{R}_l	BP_S	0.0	35.8	39.4	18.5	6.3	0.0	32.6	41.7	19.1	6.6
\tilde{R}_l but	BP_W	0.0	1.9	2.4	3.3	92.4	0.0	3.6	2.3	3.0	91.1
not R_s	BP_S	0.0	35.4	39.7	18.5	6.4	0.0	32.5	42.0	19.0	6.5
R_s but	BP_W	0.0	1.9	2.4	3.3	92.4	0.0	3.7	2.2	3.0	91.1
not \tilde{R}_s	BP_S	0.0	36.0	39.6	17.9	6.5	0.0	32.7	42.3	18.8	6.2
$\mu_0 = \mu_1 = 0$	BP_W	0.0	1.6	2.6	3.1	92.7	0.0	3.6	2.1	3.2	91.1
	BP_S	0.0	35.8	39.7	18.2	6.3	0.0	32.8	42.5	18.2	6.5
R_l but not \tilde{R}_l	BIC	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
\tilde{R}_l but not R_s	BIC	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
R_s but not \tilde{R}_s	BIC	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
$\mu_0 = \mu_1 = 0$	BIC	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Table 9: Frequency (in %) of selected lag length using the portmanteau tests. The simulated processes are of length T=1000, such that \tilde{R}_s hold and $r_0=2$.

	Case		iid	error	S			ARC	H err	ors	
r = 3	p	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
R_l but	BP_W	0.0	95.7	1.4	0.9	2.0	0.0	96.5	1.4	0.7	1.4
not \tilde{R}_l	BP_S	0.0	94.3	4.6	1.1	0.0	0.0	93.2	5.7	1.0	0.1
\tilde{R}_l but	BP_W	0.0	95.8	1.4	0.7	2.1	0.0	96.2	1.2	1.0	1.6
not R_s	BP_S	0.0	94.4	4.5	1.0	0.1	0.0	92.7	6.2	1.0	0.1
R_s but	BP_W	0.0	95.8	1.4	0.7	2.1	0.0	96.0	1.5	0.9	1.6
not \tilde{R}_s	BP_S	0.0	94.4	4.5	1.1	0.0	0.0	92.7	6.2	1.0	0.1
$\mu_0 = \mu_1 = 0$	BP_W	0.0	95.8	1.4	0.8	2.0	0.0	96.1	1.4	0.8	1.7
	BP_S	0.0	94.0	5.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	93.0	5.9	1.0	0.1
R_l but not \tilde{R}_l	BIC	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	99.9	0.0	0.0	0.0
\tilde{R}_l but not R_s	BIC	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
R_s but not \tilde{R}_s	BIC	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
$\mu_0 = \mu_1 = 0$	BIC	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Table 10: Frequency (in %) of selected lag length using the portmanteau tests. The simulated processes are of length T=1000, such that R_l hold but not \tilde{R}_l and $r_0=2$.

	Case		i	id erro	rs			AF	RCH er	rors	
r=2	p	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
R_l but	BP_l^W	0.0	96.0	1.7	0.7	1.6	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
not \tilde{R}_l	BP_l^S	0.0	95.0	4.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	82.9	12.2	3.9	1.0
\tilde{R}_l but	BP_l^W	0.0	1.4	1.3	1.5	95.8	0.0	2.1	0.9	1.7	95.3
not R_s	BP_l^S	0.0	23.8	41.0	24.7	10.5	0.0	21.4	42.7	26.0	9.9
R_s but	BP_W	0.3	1.4	1.4	1.9	95.0	0.5	2.6	1.8	2.0	93.1
not \tilde{R}_s	BP_S	0.3	19.5	40.2	27.4	12.6	0.1	17.1	37.5	29.6	15.7
$\mu_0 = \mu_1 = 0$	BP_W	0.0	2.2	3.4	5.1	89.3	0.1	18.3	14.8	20.8	46.0
	BP_S	0.0	27.0	43.9	21.8	7.3	0.1	29.0	38.4	23.4	9.1
R_l but	AIC	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
not \tilde{R}_l	BIC	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
\tilde{R}_l but	AIC	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
not R_s	BIC	0.0	99.8	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
R_s but not	AIC	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	99.9	0.7	0.1	0.1	0.7	98.4
$ ilde{R}_s$	BIC	0.0	98.2	1.7	0.0	0.0	0.7	93.9	4.5	0.7	0.2
$\mu_0 = \mu_1 = 0$	AIC	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	99.9
	BIC	0.0	99.9	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1	99.4	0.5	0.0	0.0

Table 11: Frequency (in %) of selected lag length using the portmanteau tests. The simulated processes are of length T=1000, such that R_l hold but not \tilde{R}_l and $r_0=2$.

	Case		ii	d error	s			AF	RCH er	rors	
r = 1	p	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
R_l but	BP_W	0.0	2.0	2.0	2.9	93.1	0.0	1.7	0.9	1.9	95.5
not \tilde{R}_l	BP_S	0.0	35.0	38.1	19.8	7.1	0.0	27.1	41.2	23.8	7.9
\tilde{R}_l but	BP_W	0.0	0.8	1.0	1.4	96.8	0.0	1.7	1.0	1.5	95.8
not R_s	BP_S	0.0	27.7	40.7	22.3	9.3	0.0	24.9	42.3	24.5	8.3
R_s but	BP_W	0.0	27.8	24.9	20.2	27.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
not \tilde{R}_s	BP_S	0.0	30.7	33.5	26.4	9.4	0.0	0.0	3.7	22.8	73.5
$\mu_0 = \mu_1 = 0$	BP_W	0.0	27.7	25.0	20.4	26.9	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.8	99.1
	BP_S	0.0	30.5	33.4	26.3	9.8	0.0	0.2	8.1	38.1	53.6
R_l but not \tilde{R}_l	BIC	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
\tilde{R}_l but not R_s	BIC	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
R_s but not \tilde{R}_s	BIC	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	98.7	1.3	0.0	0.0
$\mu_0 = \mu_1 = 0$	BIC	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	99.8	0.2	0.0	0.0

Table 12: Frequency (in %) of selected lag length using the portmanteau tests. The simulated processes are of length T=1000, such that R_l hold but not \tilde{R}_l and $r_0=2$.

	Case	iid errors						AR	CH err	ors	
r = 3	p	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
R_l but	BP_l^W	0.0	95.8	1.5	0.8	1.9	0.7	99.3	0.0	0.0	0.0
not \tilde{R}_l	BP_l^S	0.0	94.0	4.6	1.4	0.0	1.2	78.4	14.4	4.9	1.1
\tilde{R}_l but	BP_l^W	0.0	1.3	1.1	1.3	96.3	0.7	2.1	0.7	1.8	94.7
not R_s	BP_l^S	0.0	18.7	38.4	29.8	13.1	1.2	17.1	40.1	29.5	12.1
R_s but	BP_W	0.1	1.7	2.0	2.7	93.5	1.1	3.2	1.7	2.5	91.5
not \tilde{R}_s	BP_S	0.1	17.4	36.8	29.8	15.9	0.7	15.4	36.1	30.6	17.2
$\mu_0 = \mu_1 = 0$	BP_W	0.0	2.7	3.6	4.7	89.0	0.0	20.6	15.1	20.5	43.8
	BP_S	0.0	22.8	43.0	25.8	8.4	0.0	25.9	37.8	25.9	10.4
R_l but not \tilde{R}_l	BIC	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
R_s but not \tilde{R}_s	BIC	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	99.9	0.1	0.0	0.0
\tilde{R}_l but not R_s	BIC	0.0	98.7	1.2	0.0	0.1	1.1	94.5	3.4	0.8	0.2
$\mu_0 = \mu_1 = 0$	BIC	0.0	99.6	0.3	0.1	0.0	0.0	99.9	0.1	0.0	0.0