

Deep Hedging: from Theory to Practice

From Greeks to Hedging under Market Frictions

Imperial Frontiers in Quantitative Finance

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Summary

- **Greek Hedging** is a legacy approach once justified by lack of data and computational power
- **Statistical Hedging** brings data-driven risk management but still relies on classic models for pricing
- **Deep Hedging** defines a new data-driven “AI” reinforcement learning risk and pricing concept for derivatives.

Its challenges are

- Realistic and robust simulation of markets
- Efficient modern Reinforcement Learning techniques for rapid evolution

Portfolio

- We are given an portfolio Z of securities and derivatives, all of which are assumed to expire before some terminal maturity T . Negative values represent losses.
 - We assume interest rates are deterministic, hence we may consider discounted variables.
 - We assume that FX transactions are cost-free, hence we may assume w.l.g. that all assets are denominated in the same currency.
 - The portfolio and all subsequent instruments are considered as “total return” assets. The total return of Z , i.e. the sum of all cash flows of Z at T is denoted by Z_T .
- We set $T=t_m>0$ and denote by $0=t_0<\dots<t_{m-1}<T$ possible intermediate hedging days.

Mark-to-Model

- At each t we observe relevant market data such as spots, implied vols, rates, etc. We denote this set of market data by $\mathbf{X}=(X^1, \dots, X^K)$.
- We assume that for each element of our portfolio we have a way to compute a “mark-to-model” value from \mathbf{X} .
 - Volume-weighted mid-prices for equity, FX
 - Classic derivative pricing models such as Stochastic-Local Vol for derivatives.
- Combined, this yields a (mark-to-) **model value** Z_t for our portfolio.
 - This is not a tradable quantity.
 - This meta model will yield a range of classic Greeks in the form of first or higher order derivatives.

Quant Finance as an Interpolation Problem

- Classic derivative models are neither equivalent to the statistical measure Q , nor have they been designed to behave realistically. Their primary objective is **interpolation** between observable market data in \mathbf{X} .
A “good” model is measured by:
 - Quality of fit to reference market data in \mathbf{X} , e.g. implied volatilities.
 - Speed of calibration and execution
 - Stylized dynamics such as stochastic volatility or stochastic interest rates.

Hedging

- We are given a range of liquid **hedging instruments** $H=H^1, \dots, H^n$ such as options, swaps, futures, ETFs, stocks, FX etc.
- The **mid-price** at time t is denoted by H_t , which is a **model value** computed from X_t , for example the volume-weighted mid-price for an equity. It is not a tradable quantity.
- The actual price for trading $\mathbf{a}=(a^1, \dots, a^n)$ is given by

$$H_t(\mathbf{a}) := \mathbf{a} H_t + c_t(\mathbf{a})$$

in terms of a non-negative and normalized cost function c_t . We usually assume c_t is convex, but there are valid examples it is *not*, e.g. fixed fees per trade.

- Cost can depend on past trading activity to model impact.
Research topic: consistent impact model for option prices.
- The formal mark-to-model P&L over the period dt due to trading a in t is given as

$$\mathbf{a} dH_t - c_t(\mathbf{a}) .$$

We note that this does not take into account unwind cost.

Liquidity

- Not all instruments are tradable at all times:
 - An exchange traded option $(S_r - k S_t)^+$ for $r > t$ may only be traded at times $u \in [t, r)$, i.e. when S_i is known and therefore the strike is fixed.
- We denote by A_t the convex, non-empty set of **admissible actions** at time t .
 - The set A_t may depend all observable market data and our historic trading decisions. For example,
 - Short-sell restrictions
 - Available liquidity as a function of past trading activity
 - Risk limits for our overall position (e.g. maximum Vega exposure)
 - We call $\pi = (\mathbf{a}_0, \dots, \mathbf{a}_{m-1})$ with $\mathbf{a}_t \in A_t$ a **trading policy**; we will usually omit the “ $\in A_t$ ” unless necessarily.
 - $\delta_t := \mathbf{a}_0 + \dots + \mathbf{a}_{t-1}$ is our current position in H .
 - At time t our mark-to-market is $M_t := Z_t + \delta_t \mathbf{H}_t$.

The End of the Greek Era

From Greeks to Statistical Hedging

- Before we focus on Deep Hedging, we discuss alternative approaches.
- Each of these will hedge only over a given period dt .

Risk-Neutral Hedging

- We denote by $\delta^\$:= (X_1 \cdot \partial_{X_1}, \dots, X_K \cdot \partial_{X_K})$ the first order “Cash Delta” derivative operator to relevant observable market parameters. We denote by $\Gamma^\$$ the respective second order “cash Gamma” derivatives and by Θ “Theta”.
- The risk-neutral paradigm stipulates to reduce all Delta exposure to zero, i.e. to minimize regardless of cost in each t

$$\sup_{a_t} - \|\delta^\$ M_t + a_t \delta^\$ H_t\| \quad (M_t := Z_t + \Delta_t H_t)$$

NB: for the L^2 norm this can be solved using the Pseudo-inverse of $\delta^\$ H_t$.

- This formulation does not take into account trading cost.
Ad-hoc heuristics

$$\sup_{a_t} - \lambda \|\delta^\$ M_t + a_t \delta^\$ H_t\|_2 - c_t(a_t)$$

Pros

- Fast
- Needs only today’s market data.

Cons

- Inconsistent:
 - No sense of carry
 - Difficult to add cost to this approach as the “Cash Deltas” have only nominally a \$ interpretation: how do we know whether spending 100k\$ to hedge a nominal 1m\$ vega position is worth it?
- Unrealistic: does not account for “Skew Delta”.

Parameter Hedging

- We assume that we are estimating a simple normal model

$$\frac{d\mathbf{X}_t}{\mathbf{X}_t} = \boldsymbol{\mu}_t(\mathbf{X}_t)dt + \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_t(\mathbf{X}_t)d\mathbf{W}_t$$

for our market parameters, e.g. simply by replaying historic data.

This model gives rise to the operator

$$d(\cdot) = \Delta^{\$}\boldsymbol{\Sigma}_t d\mathbf{W}_t + \left\{ \Delta^{\$}\boldsymbol{\mu}_t + \frac{1}{2}\boldsymbol{\Sigma}_t \Gamma^{\$}\boldsymbol{\Sigma}_t + \Theta \right\} dt$$

- Applying Markoviz' mean-variance approach to $M_t := Z_t + \Delta_t \mathbf{H}_t$ yields the intuitive “carry” expression

$$\sup_{\mathbf{a}_t} \left\{ \mathbf{a}_t \Delta^{\$}\boldsymbol{\mu}_t + \frac{1}{2}(\mathbf{a}_t \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_t)' \Gamma^{\$}(\mathbf{a}_t \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_t) + \Theta \right\} dt - \frac{\lambda}{2}(\mathbf{a}_t \Delta^{\$}\boldsymbol{\Sigma}_t)'(\mathbf{a}_t \Delta^{\$}\boldsymbol{\Sigma}_t) dt - c_t(\mathbf{a}_t)$$

Carry term combined both of Gamma-Theta carry and drift

Risk term driven by the covariance matrix of \mathbf{X}

Implementation cost

Parameter Hedging

$$\sup_{a_t} \left\{ a_t \delta^\$ \mu_t + \frac{1}{2} (a_t \Sigma_t)' \Gamma^\$ (a_t \Sigma_t) + \Theta \right\} dt - \frac{\lambda}{2} (a_t \delta^\$ \Sigma_t)' (a_t \delta^\$ \Sigma_t) dt - c_t(a_t)$$

Carry term combined both of Gamma-Theta carry and drift

Risk term driven by the covariance matrix of X

Implementation cost

Pros

- Data-driven combination of carry and risk
- Captures well-known effects such as “skew delta”
- Fast

Cons

- Normal Approximation:
 - Does not capture strong non-linearities such as short-term barriers
 - I.e. can lead to strictly worse “hedged” portfolios
- Hedges are only locally optimal / what is the optimal horizon dt vs. the absolute cost term
- Still requires mark-to-model values for Greeks and pricing

Statistical Hedging I – quadratic case

- In our previous example, we effectively approximated the return of a derivative over dt as a normal.
- In *Statistical Hedging* [2013] we proposed replacing this approximation with genuine historic returns of “the same” derivatives.
 - For each historic day, use a derivative with the *then*-same moneyness and time-to-maturity, and compute that derivative’s return over *then*- dt .
 - Do not use today’s fixed derivative terms.
 - Compute returns of fixed instruments.
 - For path-dependent options, keep past states consistent (e.g. past barrier breaches).
 - This yields genuine historic returns of both Z and H from t to $t+dt$.
- In practise, we will want to adjust the drift term to take into account views on relevant carry: e.g. just because the S&P went up for the last years does not mean we wish to capture this with our model → topic of model uncertainty

Statistical Hedging I – quadratic case

- Given returns dM_t and dH_t we may now solve the Markoviz problem

$$\sup_{\mathbf{a}_t} E[dM_t + \mathbf{a}_t dH_t] dt - \frac{\lambda}{2} \text{Var}[dM_t + \mathbf{a}_t dH_t] - c_t(\mathbf{a}_t)$$

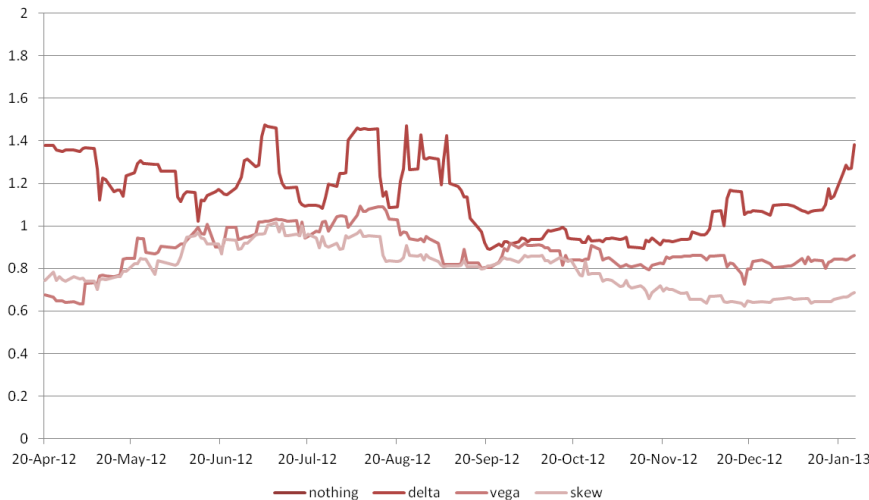
Carry term derived from historical performance

Risk term driven by the covariance matrix of \mathbf{X}

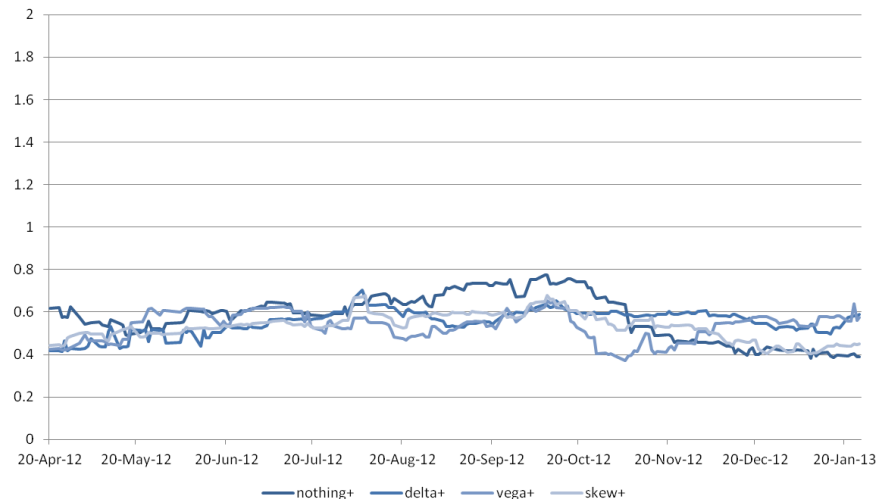
Implementation cost

- We note that if all variables are well approximated by our previous normal representation, then the two approaches coincide.

STOXX50E DBLBR_PUT_100_DKI_80D_UKO_120D_2Y_1
Greeks Hedging: Robust Vol



STOXX50E DBLBR_PUT_100_DKI_80D_UKO_120D_2Y_1
Statistical Hedging: Robust Vol



What is wrong with Markoviz for Derivatives?

Mean-Dispersion measures are not monotone

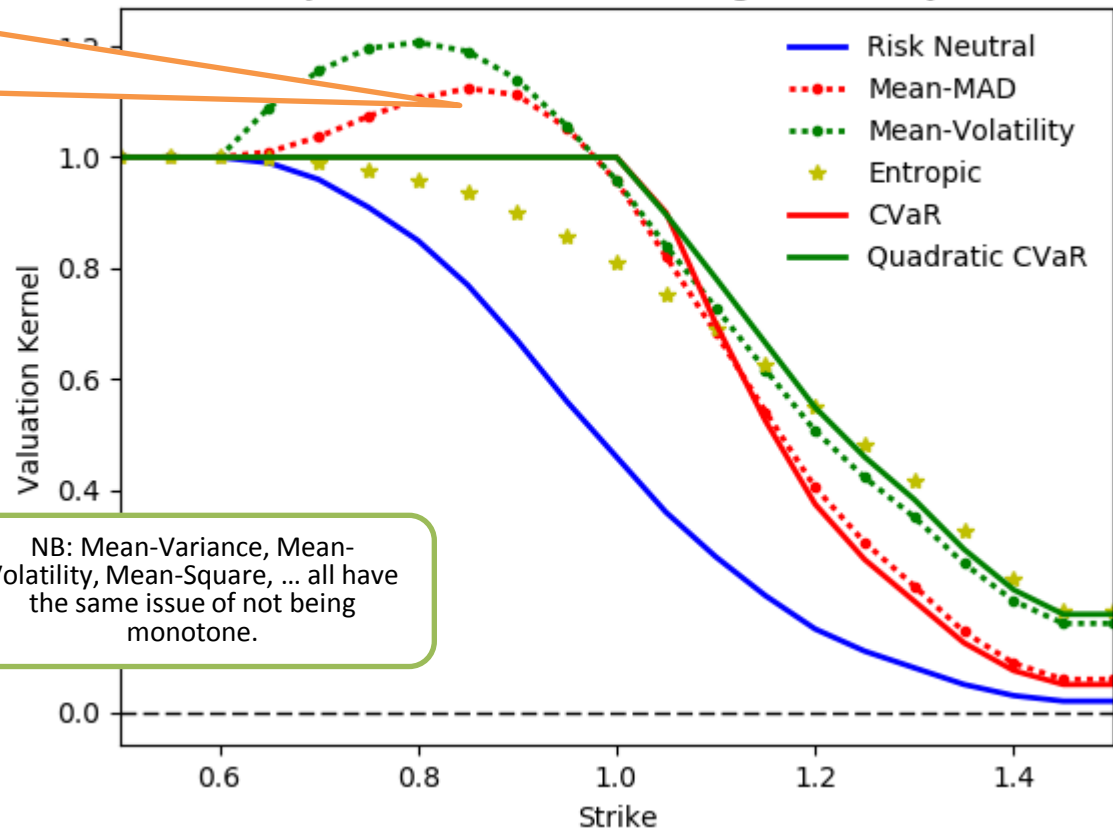
$$U(A) := E[A] - \frac{\lambda}{2} \|A - E[A]\|_p$$

... it makes very little sense to optimize over a non-monotonic objective.

Graph shows the fair risk-adjusted price for taking on a short position in a digital call.

The lower the strike, the higher the required compensation.

Risk-Adjusted Price for a short Digital Calls by Strike



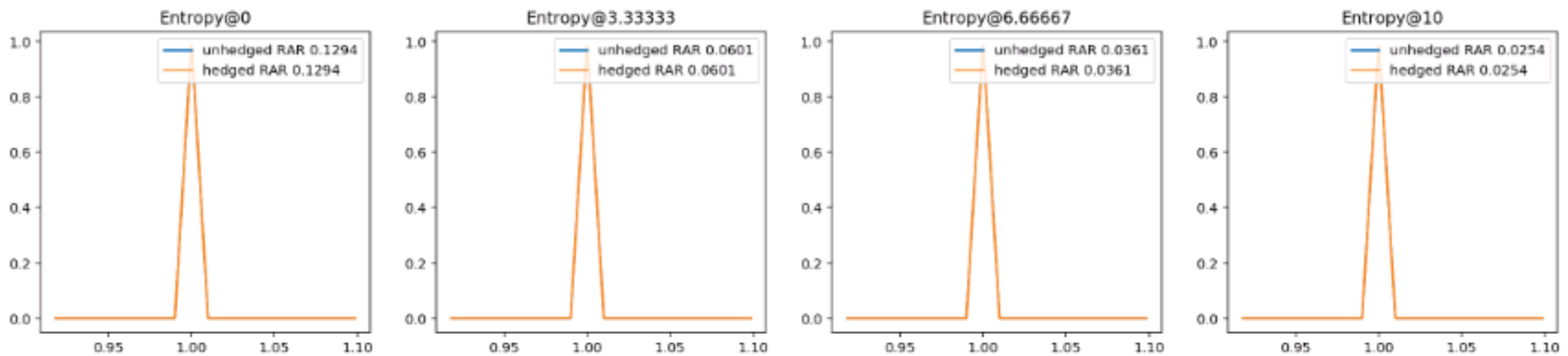
NB: Mean-Variance, Mean-Volatility, Mean-Square, ... all have the same issue of not being monotone.

Risk aversion levels manually calibrated to roughly fit between CVaR and Mean-Dispersion measure: Mean-MAD 1, Mean-Vol 1, CVaR 1.5, Quadratic VaR 0.5.

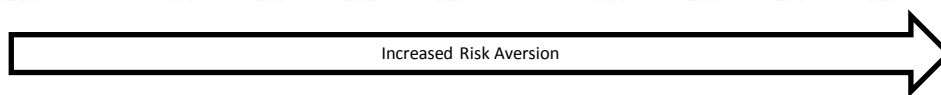
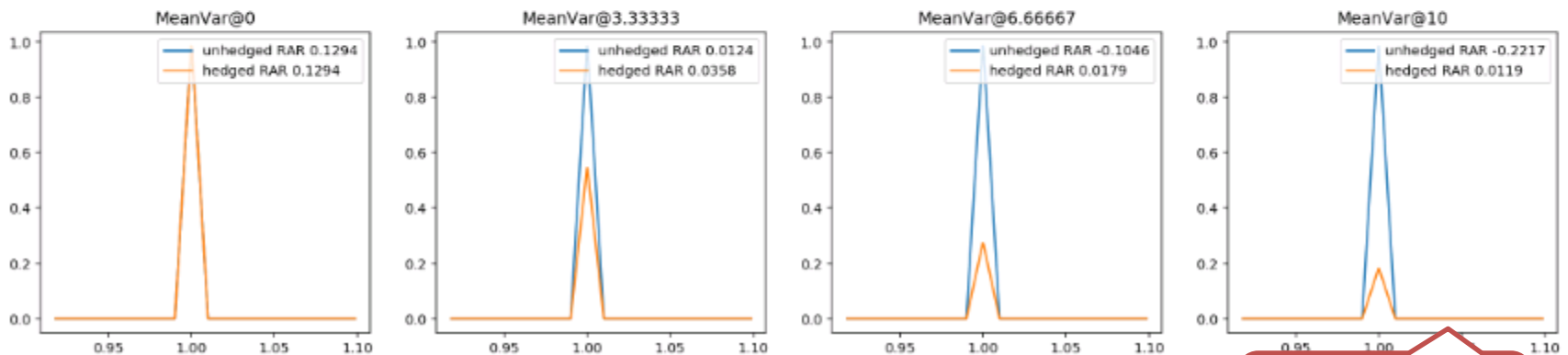
What is wrong with Markoviz for Derivatives?

Using entropy vs. mean-variance to hedge a net long butterfly position maturing tomorrow. Data generated with BS model, 50% vol. The same vanillas which compose the butterfly are available to trade for free.

Entropy



MeanVar



Mean-variance sells a net long position for positive cost to reduce perceived "variance" risk

Statistical Hedging II – Convex Risk Measures

- Mean-Variance is not monotone; we therefore move to a systematic approach to measure carry/risk: we call U a **risk-adjusted return** if
 - U is normalized to $U(0) = 0$.
 - U is monotone, i.e. $A \geq B$ then $U(A) \geq U(B)$.
 - U is concave.
 - U is cash-invariant, $U(A+c) = U(A) + c$ for all constants c .
- We note $-U$ is a **convex risk measure**.
- A classic example is the **entropy** risk-adjusted return $U(A) := -\frac{1}{\lambda} \log E[\exp(-\lambda A)]$. Another important example is (the negative of) CVaR.
- Boundary cases for most reasonable U 's: $E[A] \geq U(A) \geq -\inf(A)$
- We now solve the local problem

$$\sup_{\mathbf{a}_t} U(dM_t + \mathbf{a}_t d\mathbf{H}_t) - c_t(\mathbf{a}_t)$$

which we may also write in terms of the associated dispersion risk measure $\rho(A) := -U(A - E[A])$ as

$$\sup_{\mathbf{a}_t} E[dM_t + \mathbf{a}_t d\mathbf{H}_t] - \rho(dM_t + \mathbf{a}_t d\mathbf{H}_t) - c_t(\mathbf{a}_t)$$

This resembles the previous carry-risk-cost representation.

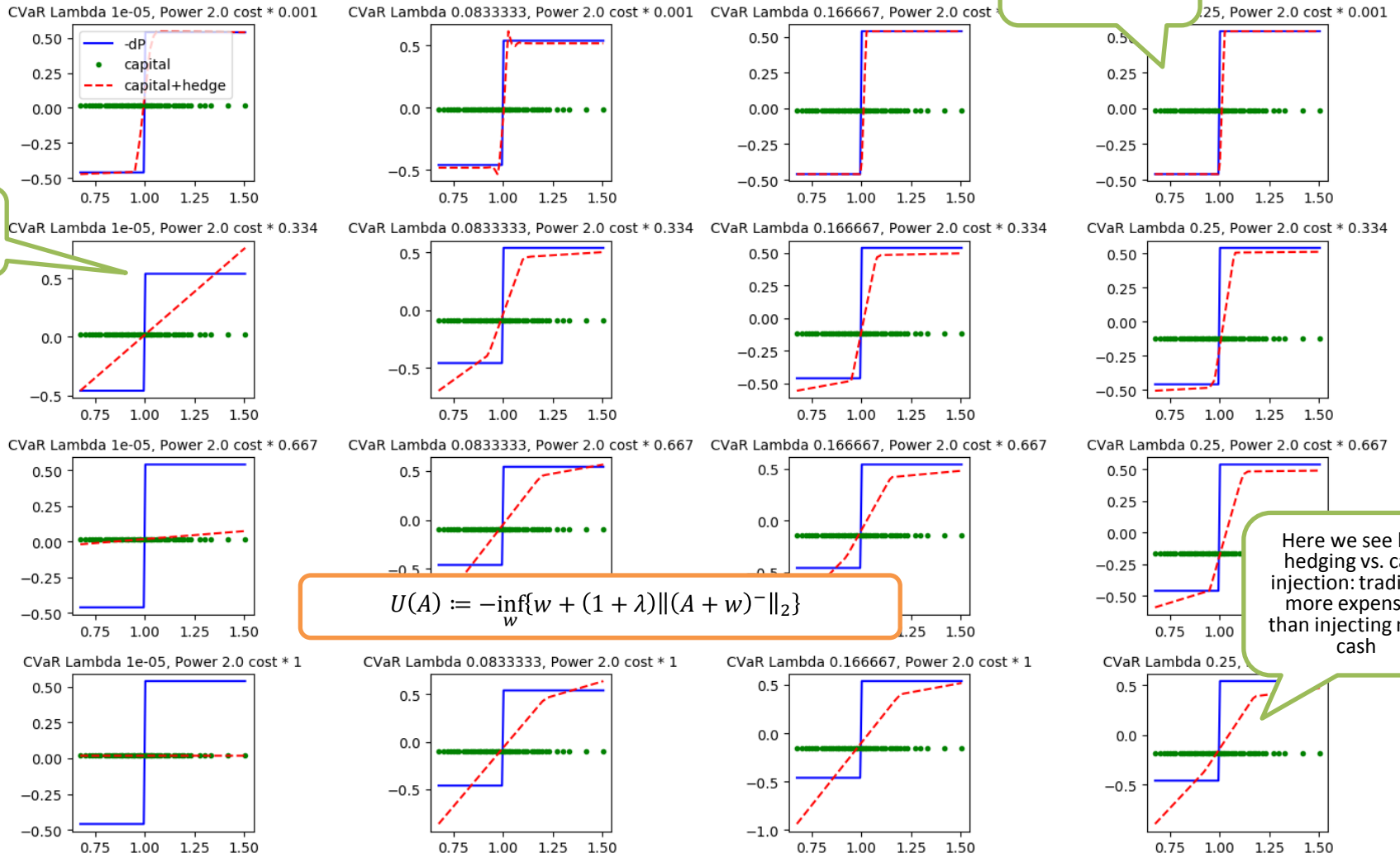
Beyond Greeks

Cost vs. Risk Aversion – Quadratic CVaR Example

Super-Hedging under extreme risk aversion

Hedge only spot

Increased Cost



$$U(A) := -\inf_w \{w + (1 + \lambda) \| (A + w)^-\|_2\}$$

Here we see less hedging vs. cash injection: trading is more expensive than injecting more cash

Increased Risk Aversion

Statistical Hedging

$$\sup_{\mathbf{a}_t} U(dM_t + \mathbf{a}_t d\mathbf{H}_t) - c_t(\mathbf{a}_t)$$

Pros

- Data-driven combination of carry and risk which captures non-linearities
- Captures well-known effects such as “skew delta”
- Monotone, convex hedged portfolios.

Cons

- Hedges are only locally optimal / what is the optimal horizon dt vs. the absolute cost term
- Still requires mark-to-model values for return computation and pricing
- Compute intensive

Summary

- **Classic Greek Hedging** is unsuitable for data-driven risk management
- **Parametric Hedging** works for very smooth portfolios
- **Statistical Hedging** expands this to strong non-linear features

Challenges

- Future hedging cost for the now-optimal portfolio are not taken into account: tomorrow's mark-to-model value is assumed to be realizable.
- Pricing relies on classic model prices, possibly with some ad-hoc adjustment due to immediate hedging cost.

Deep Hedging

- Simulate the market to maturity and then solve the generic problem

$$\sup_{\mathbf{a}_0 \dots \mathbf{a}_{T-1}} : U \left(Z_T + \sum_{t=0}^{T-1} \delta_t d\mathbf{H}_t - \sum_{t=0}^{T-1} c_t(\mathbf{a}_t) \right)$$

Deep Hedging

Deep Hedging

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- Classic “hedging under market frictions” problem.

Challenges

- Theory
- Numerical implementation
- Market dynamics

Deep Hedging

$$v^*(Z) := \sup_{\pi = \mathbf{a}_0 \dots \mathbf{a}_{T-1}} : U \left(Z_T + \sum_{t=0}^{T-1} \delta_t d\mathbf{H}_t - \sum_{t=0}^{T-1} c_t(\mathbf{a}_t) \right)$$

Statistical Arbitrage

- We say the market has **statistical arbitrage** if $v^*(0) > 0$.
 - This *does not imply* presence of strict arbitrage.
Example: Black & Scholes model with positive drift.
 - Strictly speaking, presence of strict arbitrage also does not imply presence of statistical arbitrage.
Example: market has 100 scenarios, in 6 of which the asset returns 0%. In all other scenarios the asset returns 1%. Under CVaR@95%, $v^*(0) = 0$.
- Statistical Arbitrage is real – it means there are opportunities in the market, depending on one's risk aversion.
 - Example: realized-implied vol carry; rates curve carry etc.
- However, it can pollute the question of risk management: just as in classic cash portfolio optimization the estimation of "alpha" is much more involved.
 - We may therefore separate the estimation of carry from the estimation of the higher moments of the distribution of our instruments.
- We call a trade a **static arbitrage** opportunity if the return is non-negative under *any* market dynamics (e.g. violation of butterfly or calendar arb).

Deep Hedging

$$v^*(Z) := \sup_{\pi = \mathbf{a}_0 \dots \mathbf{a}_{T-1}} : U \left(Z_T + \sum_{t=0}^{T-1} \delta_t d\mathbf{H}_t - \sum_{t=0}^{T-1} c_t(\mathbf{a}_t) \right)$$

Pricing

- Consider a current position of Z .
The price of selling a derivative Y to a customer is given by the marginal cost

$$p(Y) := v^*(Z - Y) - v^*(Z)$$

- Of course, $v^*(Z - Y + p(Y)) = 0$.
- Reflects naturally a bid/ask spread.
- The model-price is no longer used.

Deep Hedging

$$v^*(Z) := \sup_{\pi = \mathbf{a}_0 \dots \mathbf{a}_{T-1}} : U \left(Z_T + \sum_{t=0}^{T-1} \delta_t d\mathbf{H}_t - \sum_{t=0}^{T-1} c_t(\mathbf{a}_t) \right)$$

Hamilton-Jacobi-Bellman

- One of the biggest short comings of the approach presented here is that Z is fixed and not a part of the “state” of the market.
- The Bellman form of the problem can be written as follows:
 - Denote by M^t all future cash flows of our portfolio on and after t , and by m_t the cashflow arising from holding M^t at t .
This gives the classic HJB reward form

$$V^*(M^t | \mathcal{S}_t) = \sup_{a_t} : U(V^*(M^{t+1} + \mathbf{a}_t H^{t+1}) | \mathcal{S}_t) - c(\mathbf{a}_t | \mathcal{S}_t) + m_t$$

- Research topics:
 - Find a representation for a portfolio of derivatives which is efficient for this to be applicable.
 - Under what conditions does this equation have a fixed point for all combined states (M^t, \mathcal{S}_t) .

Deep Hedging

$$v^*(Z) := \sup_{\pi = \mathbf{a}_0 \dots \mathbf{a}_{T-1}} : U \left(Z_T + \sum_{t=0}^{T-1} \delta_t d\mathbf{H}_t - \sum_{t=0}^{T-1} c_t(\mathbf{a}_t) \right)$$

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Structure of the Problem

- The problem above is convex in π .
- We will solve this over a fixed set of paths, and therefore fixed set of terminal payoffs.
- Path-dependency of the problem enters due to transaction cost and from path-dependent restrictions on liquidity.

Reinforcement Learning

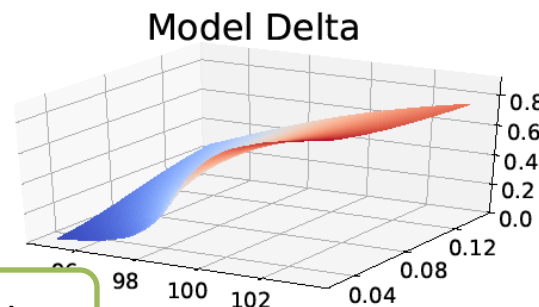
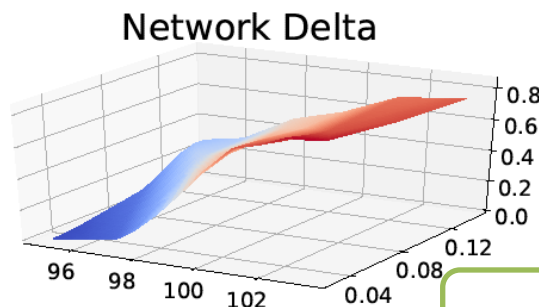
- Parameterize \mathbf{a}_t as a neural network, with the result of the previous step feeding into the next step.
- This is called “model-based policy search” in the ML literature.
- Theoretical result [DH’18]: neural networks approximate any policy arbitrarily well with increasing depth and width.
- Practical choices:
 - Each \mathbf{a}_t has its own network \rightarrow rather deep network
 - Share network across $t \rightarrow$ LSTM to capture path
- Example code in Karas is just about a page of code
https://people.math.ethz.ch/~jteichma/deep_portfolio_optimization_keras.html
- Efficient, scalable, model-independent implementation.

Deep Hedging

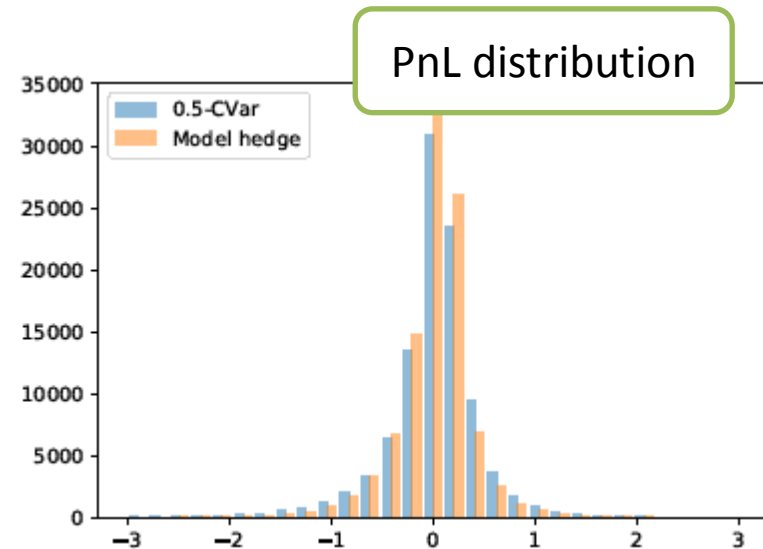
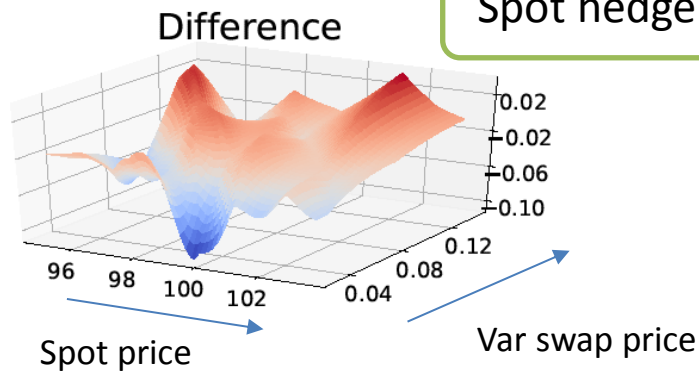
- We show the efficiency and impact of the algorithm for classic derivative model dynamics.
- Used to validate convergence of the numerical scheme against (the few) analytically available results.
- Even here, we are able to compute previously inaccessible problems for entire portfolios of derivatives

Comparison with theory: vanilla option with Heston dynamics

- Hedge an ATM 30-day call with spot and var swap
- No costs, no limits, 50% CVaR value function

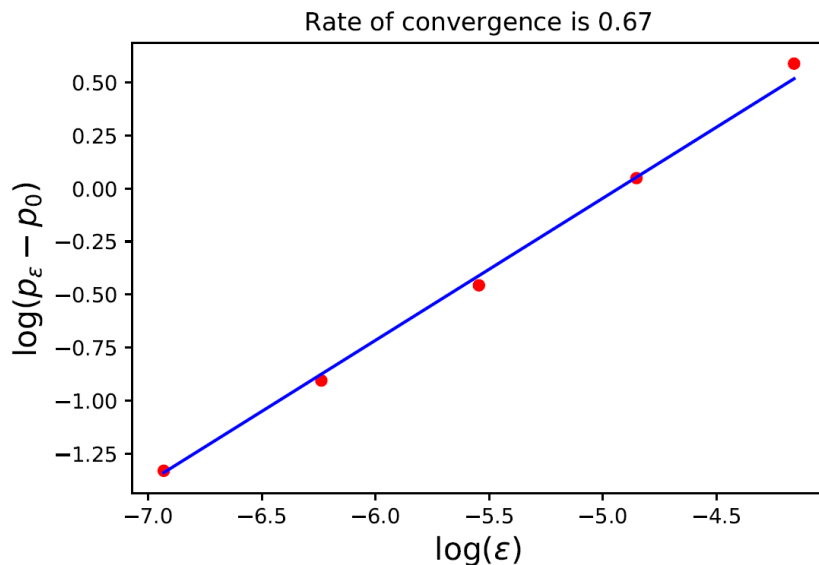


Spot hedge

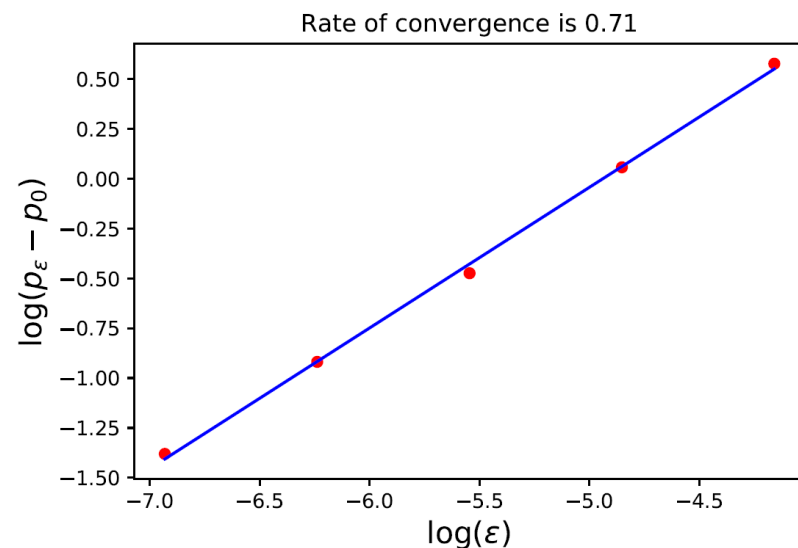


Comparison with theory: Heston dynamics with cost

- We have asymptotic results for small transaction cost for classic one-factor models such as Black Scholes.
- There are no analytic results for higher order models. We show that the same asymptotics hold using our numerical scheme



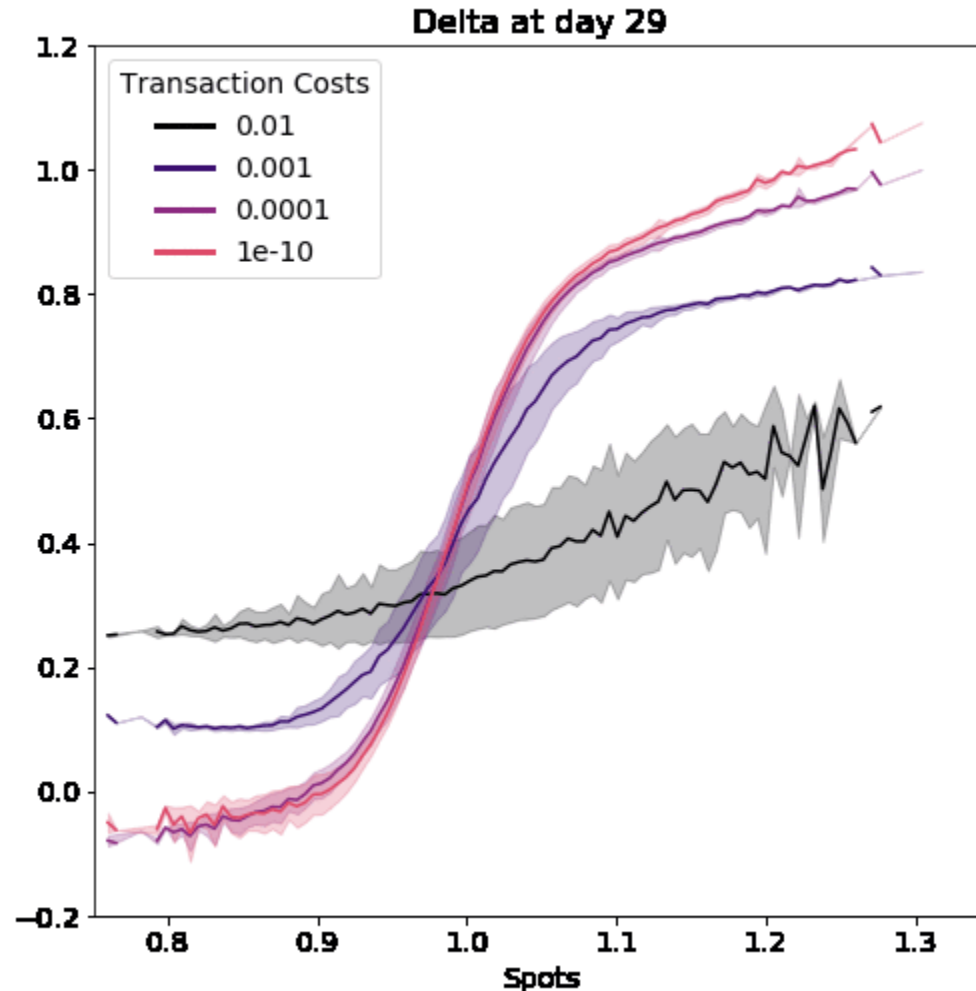
Black-Scholes for which we know theoretical results



Heston
No theoretical results but we plot the 1-factor expected behaviour

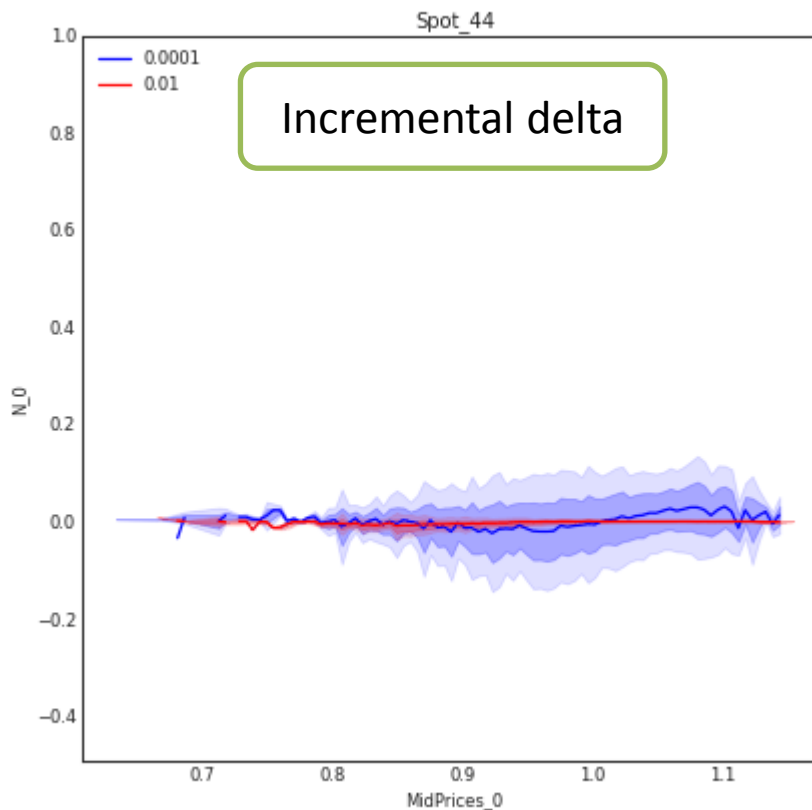
Vanilla option: impact of transaction costs

- 30-day ATM call option
- Plot shows spot hedge (“Delta”)
- No limits
- Entropic value
- Risk aversion 10
- Black-Scholes simulator



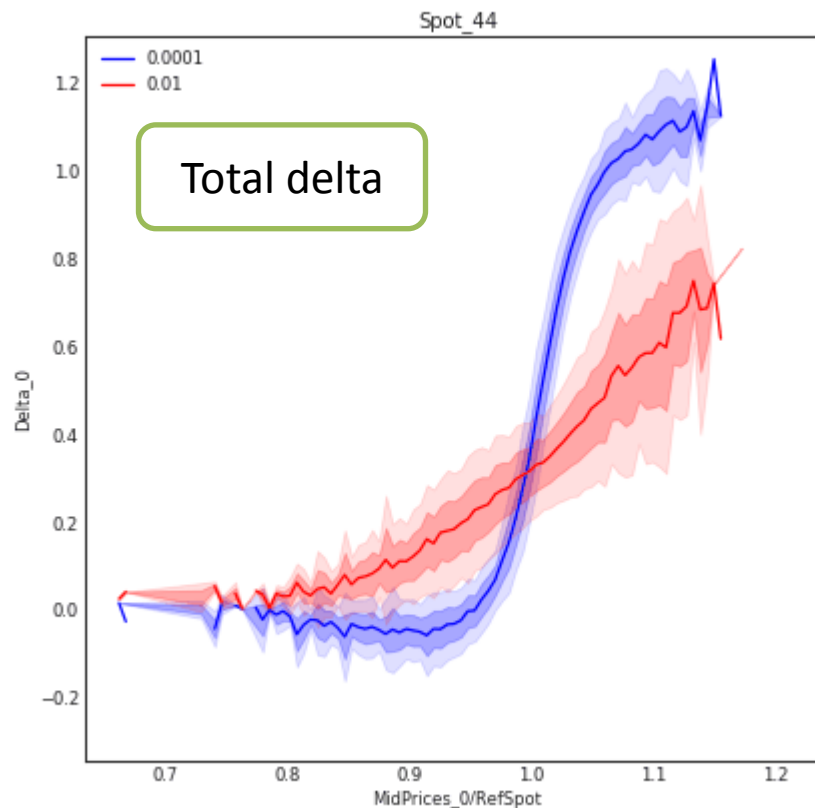
Forward starting option: impact of transaction costs

- 30-day ATM call starting in 15 days
- Heston simulator, no limits, entropic value, risk aversion 50
- Hedge with spot only



Forward starting option: impact of transaction costs

- 30-day ATM call starting in 15 days
- Heston simulator, no limits, entropic value, risk aversion 50
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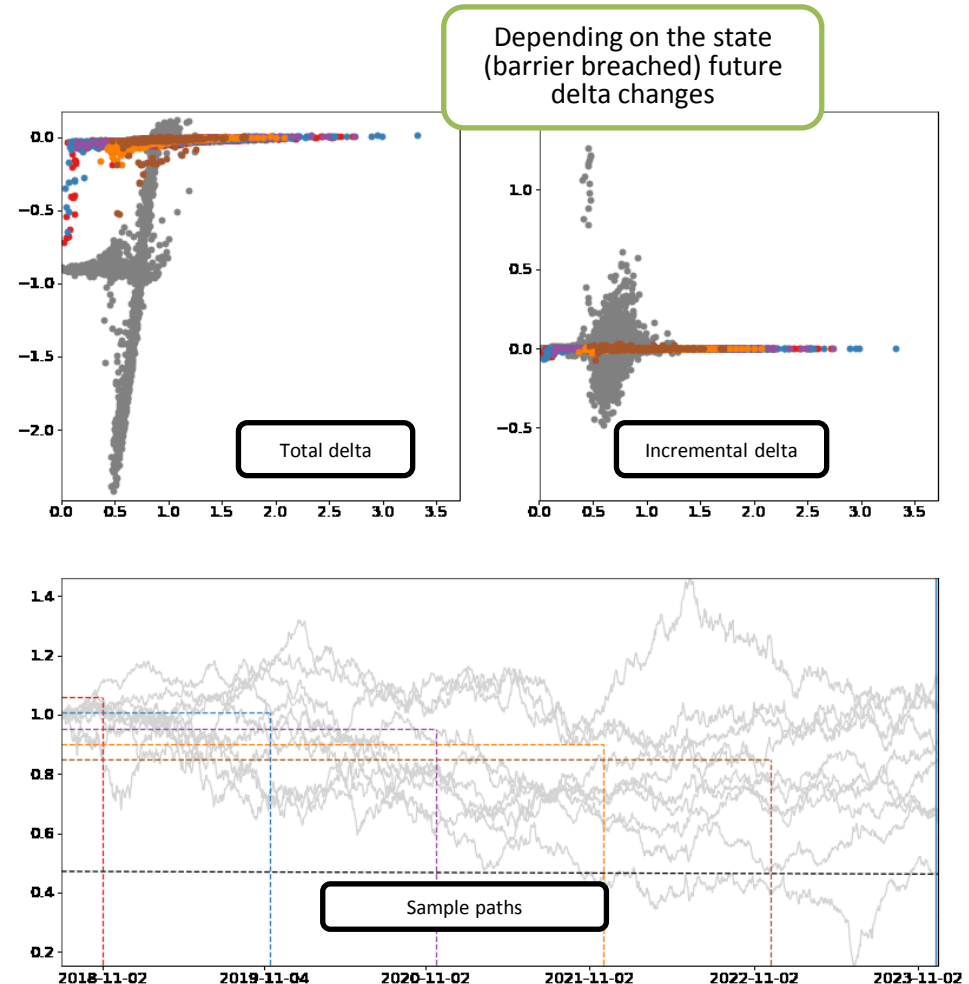


Popular retail payoff:

- Client is short a down-and-in put paid at maturity
- Upper knockout barrier
- Fixed coupons until KO

Market

- 0.1% transaction costs
- No limits
- Risk aversion 20
- Entropic value
- Monthly hedging
- Local volatility simulator



Deep Hedging with Classic Derivatives Generators

- Useful for assessing liquidity and cost impact at scale
 - Straightforward with TensorFlow
 - Inherently parallelizable since risk-adjusted returns tend to be expectation based.
 - Speed independent of number of instruments in portfolio
 - Asset-class agnostic: discounting, FX, own callability etc all no problem
 - Client-callability: master thesis under way @ ETH

.... shouldn't we use the real market to train our model?

Market Dynamics

Challenges

- Sparse data set vs. large number of instruments.
 - Non-stationarity and robustness
- Idea: solve a robust version of our problem,

$$\inf_Q \sup_{\pi = \mathbf{a}_0 \dots \mathbf{a}_{T-1}} : U_Q \left[Z_T + \sum_{t=0}^{T-1} \boldsymbol{\delta}_t d\mathbf{H}_t - \sum_{t=0}^{T-1} c_t(\mathbf{a}_t) \right]$$

- Avoid static arbitrage
- A possible approach is parameterizing the implied vol in “discrete local vol” (see also Wissel) which is an arb-free parameterization.

Model Challenges

- Statistical arbitrage.
 - Robustify the estimator.
 - Find the closest risk-neutral measure without drift.

Generative Adversarial Market Dynamics

- We want to solve

$$p_Q(Z) := \sup_{\pi = \mathbf{a}_0 \dots \mathbf{a}_{T-1}} : U_Q \left[Z_T + \sum_{t=0}^{T-1} \delta_t d\mathbf{H}_t - \sum_{t=0}^{T-1} c_t(\mathbf{a}_t) \right]$$

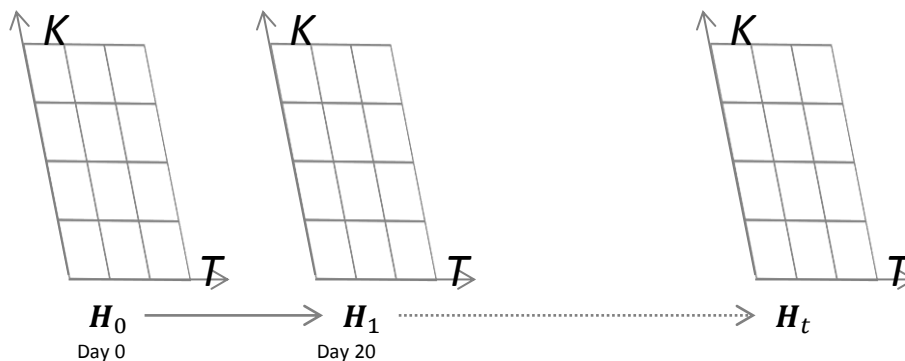
- However, we are not sure about Q since we only observe samples \hat{Q} .
Classic robust approach [Follmer, Schied: Stochastic Finance: An Introduction in Discrete Time, 2011]: define set of reasonable measures “close” to \hat{Q} and a distance d to \hat{Q} and solve for $\alpha \uparrow \infty$:

$$\hat{p}_F(Z) := \sup_{\pi} \inf_Q \{ \alpha U_Q[G(\pi_t; Z_T)]^+ + d(Q, \hat{Q}) \}$$

- Machine Learning interpretation [Generative Adversarial Networks, Goodfellow 2014]:
 - **Generator** Q tries to fit the target distribution and take away money
 - **Adversary** π tries to make money
- We use **unconditional** Wasserstein distance W_1 as our metric using a fast stochastic algorithm c.f, [Stochastic Optimization for Large-scale Optimal Transport, 2016, Genevay / Cuturi / Peyré / Bach]

STOXX50 Dataset

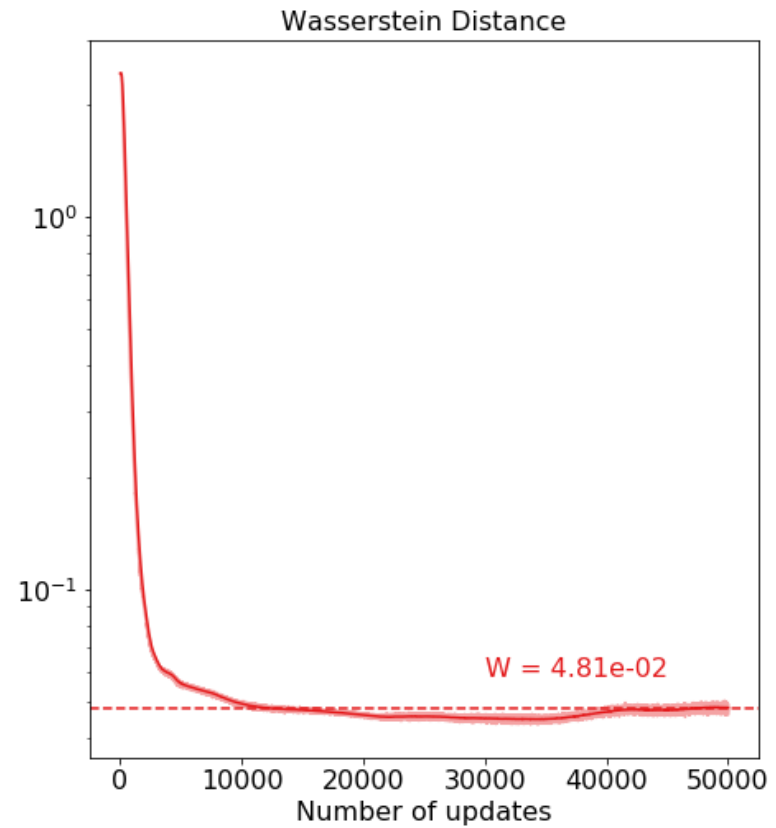
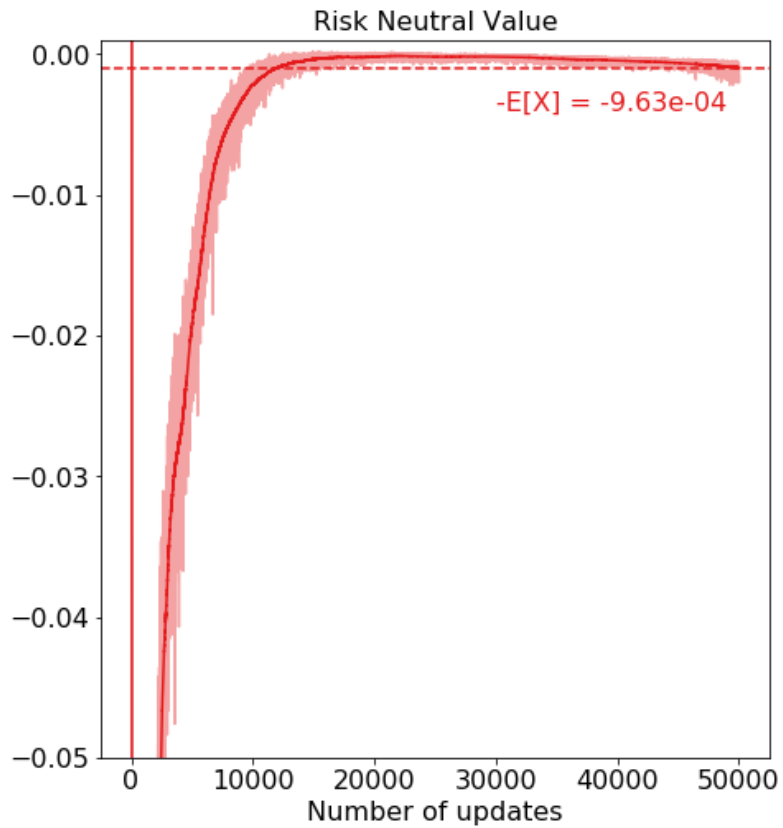
- We obtain historical spot and option prices for last 10 years of data ~ 2000 historical data points
- Option Grid with relative strikes
 $K = \{0.8, 0.85, 0.9, 0.95, 1.0, 1.05, 1.1, 1.15, 1.2\}$, and maturities of
 $T = \{20, 40, 60, 80, 100, 120\}$ days
- $H_t = 109$ -dimensional vector = 1 Spot + 54 Calls + 54 Puts
- At every time step, $H_t =$ generated prices for the grid of options + spot
- Each simulation time step = 20 days to match the maturities



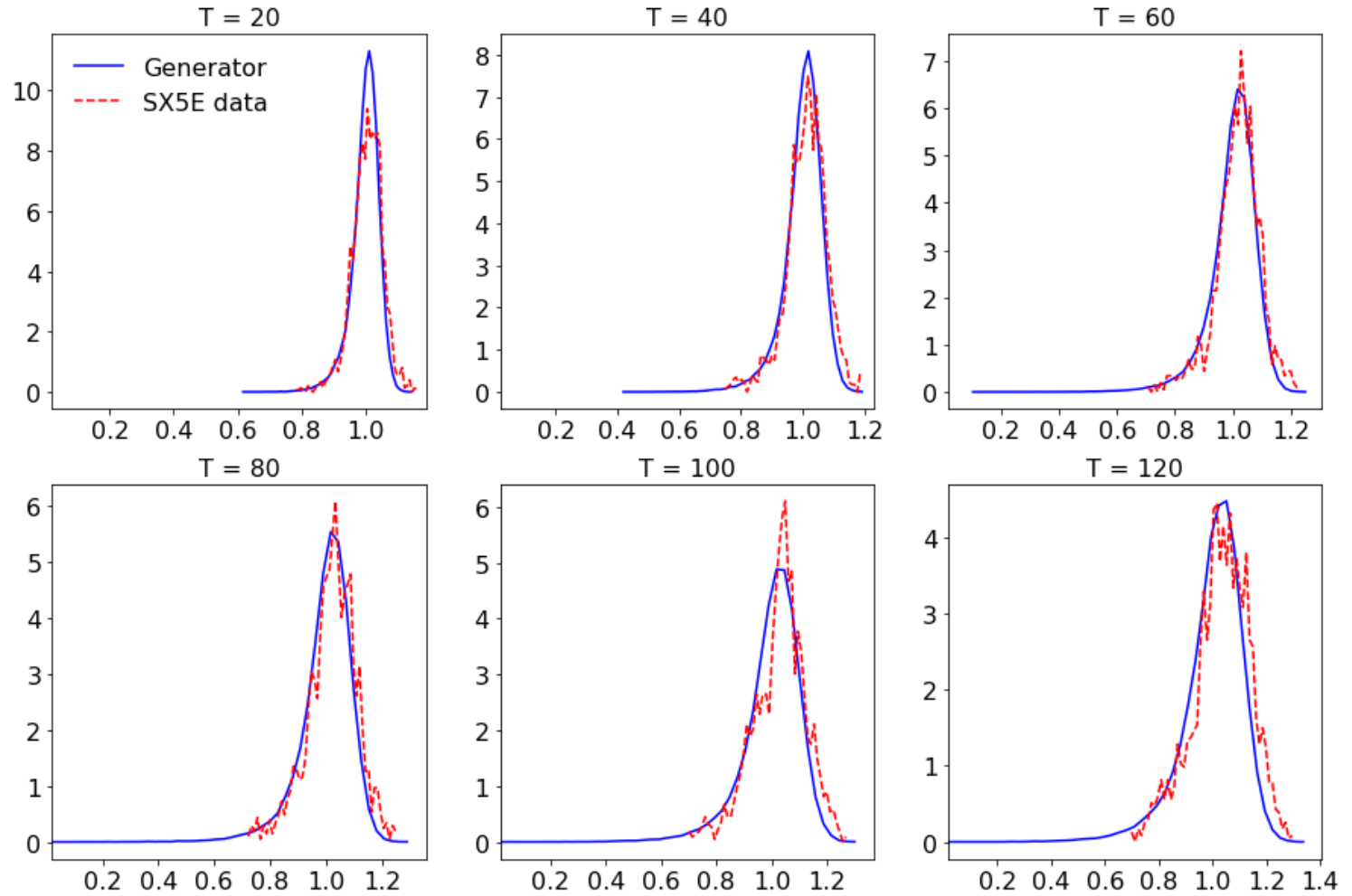
Setup and Training

- Generator network: 2 layer LSTM of size 64, $f \sim 62\text{K}$ parameters
- Hedger network: 2 layer LSTM of size 64, $\pi \sim 112\text{K}$ parameters
- Use 2% transaction costs to regularize the hedger network
- Training:
 - Train with batch sizes of 32K to minimize noise, RMS Prop with a learning rate of $1\text{e-}4$
 - Dropout of 25% between state-to-state LSTM connections to regularize training
 - 50 K updates with a batch size of 32K takes 10hrs to train on Tesla V100 GPU

Results



Results

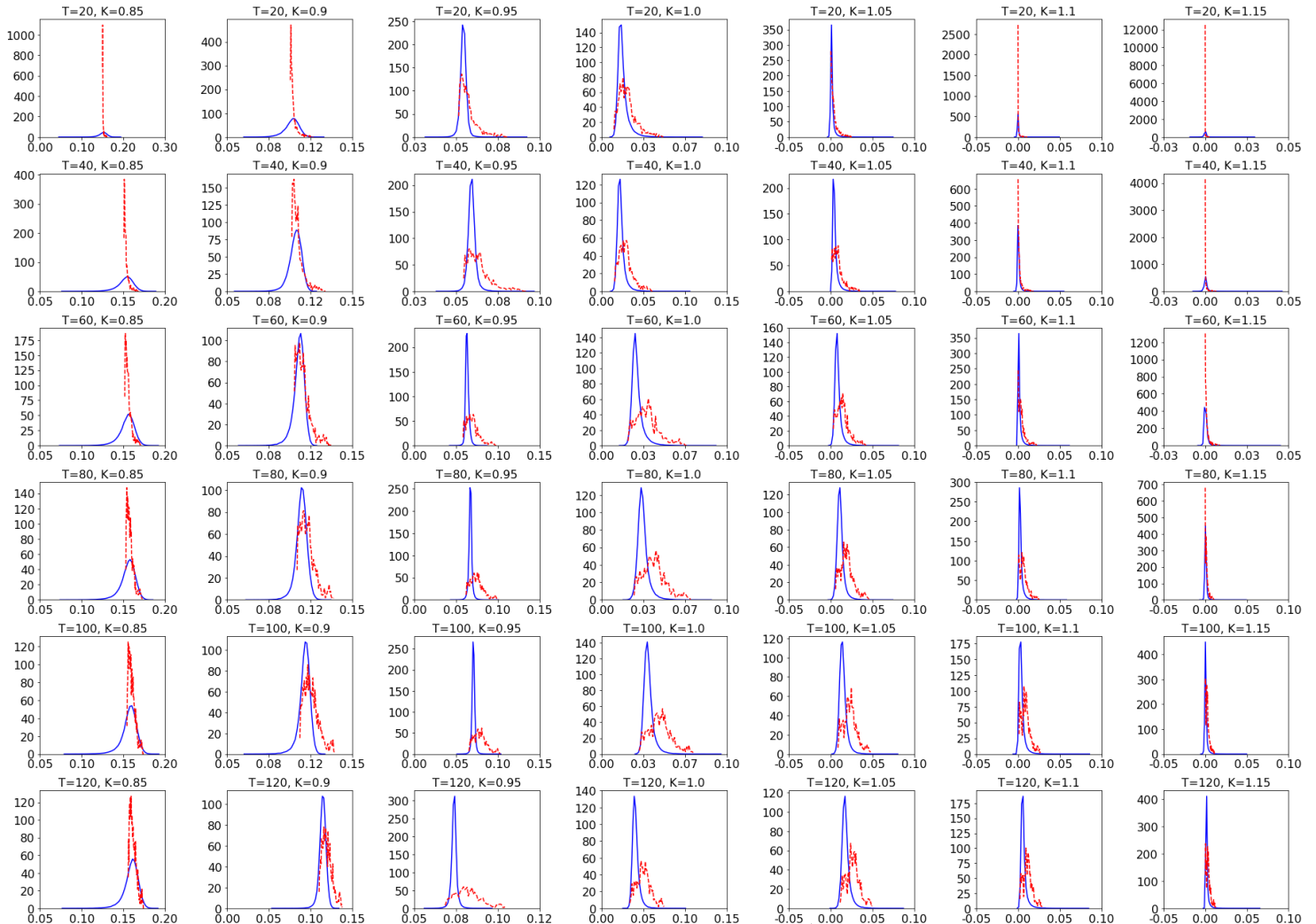
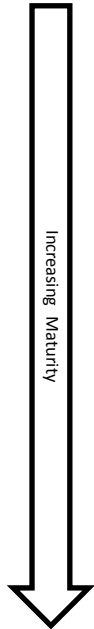


Histogram of generated spot prices compared to historical data

Results

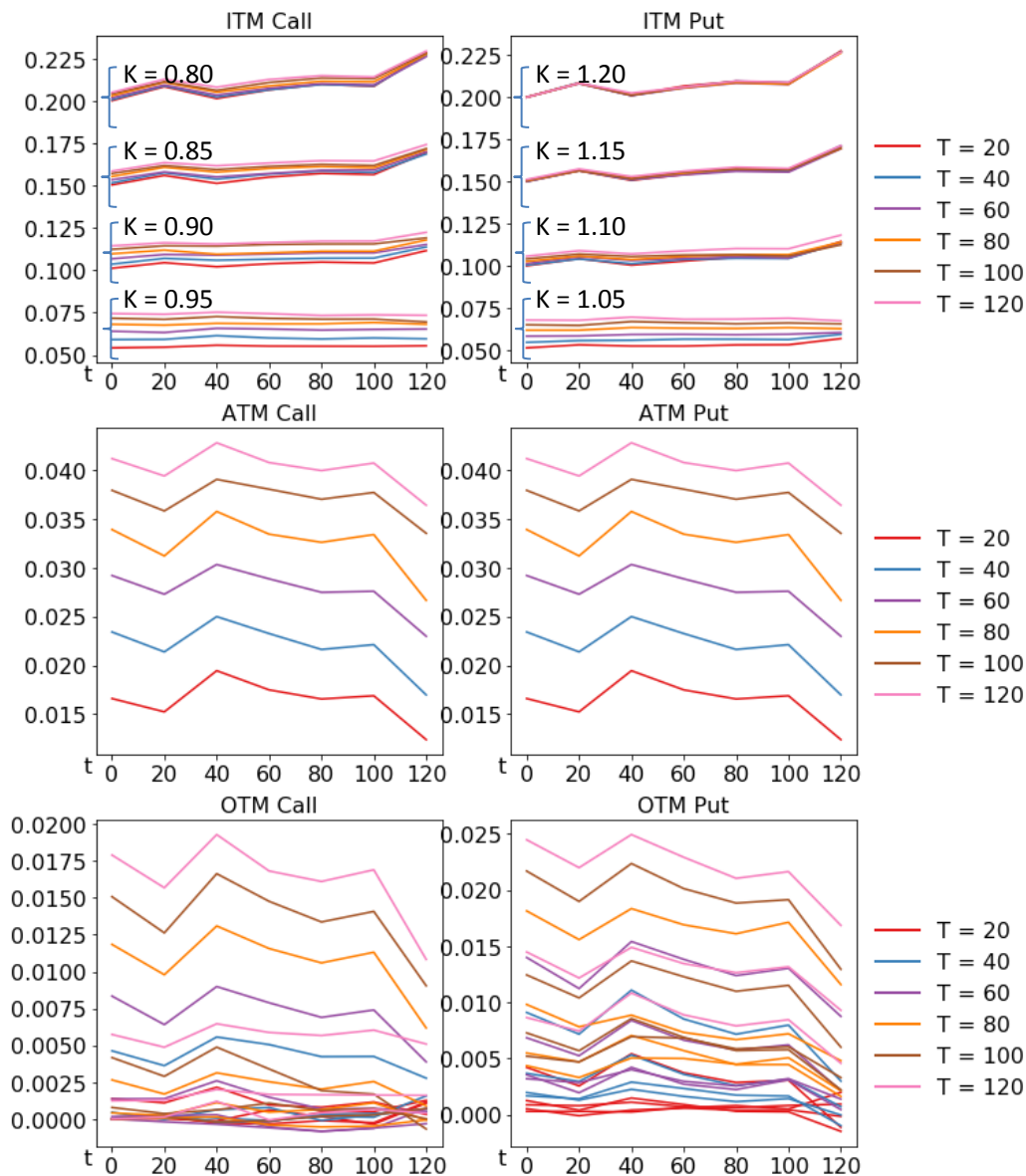
— Generator
 - - - SX5E data

Histogram of generated call option prices at $t = 3$ compared to historical data



Results

Graphs show the time series of option prices from simulated by LSTM based generator



Next steps

- Define conditional version of GAMeD
- Use distance metric which reflects use case, i.e. DH itself
- Move to recursive version of DH.
- Formalize theoretical relationship between adversarial learning and robust statistics

Thank you very much for your attention