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**Time Series and Data Clustering with
Evolutionary Approaches**

by

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Time Series and Data Clustering with Evolutionary Approaches

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Abstract. Clustering methods can extract relevant information from big dataset by determining homogeneous groups. Different evolutionary approaches are proposed as partitional clustering tools both for data and time series. Not only can they converge to the optimal grouping solution but they also give additional information about the characterizing features of each single group and the degree of membership of each object. Moreover, their flexibility has allowed us to validate different aggregating criteria. Results from the analysis of simulated, well known datasets (e.g.: Fisher's Iris) and Italian mutual funds returns series are reported. They support the validity of such evolutionary clustering approaches in defining an alternative way to deal with the classification problem of data and time series.

Key-words. cluster analysis, evolutionary approaches, genetic algorithms, time series and data analysis.

Introduction

Today, the availability of new electronic resources and huge datasets requires the development of new tools capable of extracting the relevant information for supporting decision processes. Data mining can be considered a new broad research field where one of the research aims is to discover patterns and relationships in the data by developing new methodological tools. We propose two new computational algorithms, GAME (*Genetic Algorithms for Medoids Evolution*) and GAPE (*Genetic Algorithms for Parameters Estimation*), to detect similarity among data and to identify the composition of the most homogeneous groups. Cluster analysis principles and evolutionary algorithms are merged together to solve the grouping problem. GAME and GAPE exploit the global convergence and parameter estimation properties of genetic algorithms to determine automatically, through the optimization of clustering criteria, the best number of natural groups, their composition, a relevant

point for each group and a measure of the degree of membership of each single observation to a specific group.

GAME uses the genetic encoding to determine a characterizing point, which we call medoid, for each group. Then, the procedure of allocation of each observation to a specific group is inspired to classical k-means partitioning algorithm (Forgy 1965). The algorithm works in a deterministic framework where different statistical criteria, directed to minimize the scatter variability *within* the group and/or to maximize the scatter variability *between* the groups, can be used to determine the optimal grouping solution. A measure of the degree of membership of each observation is quantified as inversely proportional to the Euclidean distance with respect to the groups' centroids coordinates.

GAPE exploits genetic algorithms to estimate the parameters of the probabilistic model from which data are supposed to be drawn. The optimal grouping solution is determined in a probabilistic framework through the optimization of the likelihood function. Moreover, GAPE allows to compute membership probabilities for each single observation to a specific group.

The algorithms have been modified to allow an automatic procedure for reducing the dataset size by extracting only the most relevant features for each observation to be considered in solving the grouping problem. Correlated or noise measurements referred to a single object could in fact bias the analysis and the identification of the optimal grouping solution. Furthermore, to consider smaller dataset decreases the computational time required to perform the cluster analysis.

GAME and GAPE have outperformed standard classical partitioning algorithms in the analysis of simulated and well-known real datasets (Fisher's Iris dataset). They allow to extract relevant information and to converge to the unique global optimal grouping solution, without falling in local optima as standard cluster algorithms do. The analysis has been extended to consider time series dataset. A sample of 442 Italian mutual funds monthly return series have been considered to show how such approaches could be helpful in extracting significant information both for investors and managers. In fact, the rapid development of the funds industry has shown how an objective, representative and empirically testable classification scheme is highly desired for informative, performance evaluation and forecasting purposes. GAME and GAPE are a possible solution to the mutual fund classification problem. Comparison with the Assogestioni institutional classification shows how a posteriori analysis of the returns series does not always agree with the a priori classification scheme. Return-based style analysis can improve the information offered by the institutional classification scheme.

Genetic Clustering Algorithms

Genetic algorithms are stochastic randomized algorithms driven by the Darwinian evolutionary principle of the survival of the fittest individual of a population. Holland, recognizing the presence of the *building blocks* in the high level structures of objects, proposed in 1975 to look at the evolutionary and innovative processes as an effect of the recombination of objects and schema which characterize the low level structures.

Since then, genetic algorithms have been used successfully in different fields such as biology, finance, statistics, computer science, mathematics. Their capability of exploring the whole search space and their global convergence properties within an elitistic schema (Rudolph 1994) have lead to use them mainly as parameter estimation and optimizing tools.

A genetic algorithm is composed by a population of individuals, where each individual represents the mathematical encoding of a solution of the problem of interest. A single individual is composed by some genes, which can usually assume binary or real allelic values. In order to use them properly and efficiently it is extremely important that the codification adopted is not redundant and could map all the possible solutions. A fitness value, indicating the degree of optimality of the solution mapped by the string, is associated to each individual. The population is then evolved through operators modeled on the biological processes of selection, crossover and mutation to identify the fittest individual of the population. The algorithm stops when the optimality criterion is satisfied. Then, the best individual, that is the one with the highest fitness value, of the last generation identifies the optimal solution.

Different genetic encoding have been already proposed in literature to solve clustering problems. Research has been two-fold: some authors have proposed to use genetic algorithms to tackle directly the clustering problem (Raghavan and Birchand 1979, Bandyopadhyay, Murthy and Pal 1995 1998, Baragona, Calzini and Battaglia 2000) while others have exploit their properties in building hybrid algorithms in order to improve the performance of classical clustering algorithms such as k-means and fuzzy c-means (Babu and Murthy 1994, Khrishna e Murthy 1999, Tseng 2001).

GAME and GAPE use the genetic algorithms to determine some relevant measurements for each single group and then to identify the optimal grouping structure of the data. They differ in the encoding adopted but they use the same evolutionary operators. They assume no a priori information is available. The optimal grouping solution is determined in an unsupervised learning mechanism.

Given a dataset of n objects with p measurements for each object, the aim is to determine the best composition of the g groups in which the dataset could be partitioned.

GAME (*Genetic Algorithms for Medoids Evolution*) chromosome is formed by g groups of p cells, which can assume a real value in the R^p space of measurements. (see Figure 1 Appendix 1). They represent the g medoids coordinates of each single group. The genetic algorithm determines the optimal grouping solution and the coordinates of the medoid of each single group. The first individual of the chromosome is considered. The euclidean distances between each single observation and the g different medoids coordinates, identified by the allelic real values, are computed. Each observation is then attributed to the group whose euclidean distance is minimal among all the g distances computed with respect to the different medoids. Once each observation is allocated to a specific group, a fitness value is computed. The procedure is repeated for each individual. Then, the population is evolved through selection, crossover, mutation and elitist operators, driven by the fitness criteria, until the stopping criterion is satisfied.

Different fitness criteria have been tested. They aim at minimizing a transformation (function) (trace/determinant) of the pooled-*within* groups scatter matrix and/or at maximizing that (trace/determinant) of the *between* group scatter matrix.

If we assume the number of groups is known a priori, the best grouping solution can be determined for each of the fitness criteria reported in the first column of Table 1. The second and the third columns report respectively the admissible data transformations and some properties these criteria have shown.

Fitness Functions	Admissible Transformations	Properties
1. Max tr(B) Min tr(W)	Orthogonal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Work well when there are natural clusters ◆ Tend to create hyper spherical cluster. ◆ Assume implicitly that inside the groups the features have low correlation.
2. Max tr(BT ⁻¹)	Linear not singular	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Considers the inter-correlation between the variables
3. Max tr(BW ⁻¹)	Linear not singular	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Considers the inter-correlation between the variables.
4. Max T / W	Linear not singular	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Since T is constant is equivalent to minimize W . ◆ Tends to create groups with strong interconnections between variables. ◆ Assumes implicitly that groups have the same covariance structure.

Table 1. Fitness criteria used by GAME algorithm when the number of groups is known a priori (Ricolfi 1992).

If the number of groups is not known a priori, the third and fourth criteria, reported in Table 1 have been modified to include a penalization factor depending on the number of groups. $\min(g^2 \det(W) / \det(T))$ (MC, *Marriott's criterion*, 1982) and $\max(\{tr(B)/(g-1)\} / \{tr(W)/(n-g)\})$ (VRC, *Variance Ratio Criterion*, Calinski T., Harabasz J., 1974) have then been used within an iterative approach not only to determine the best grouping solution but also the best number of groups in the dataset. The algorithm stops when the optimal value of the criterion function to be minimized does not decrease when the number of groups increase. Then, the exploration of disjoint solution subspaces where the number of groups is fixed leads to the identification of the optimal number of groups.

GAPE (*Genetic Algorithms for Parameters Estimation*) algorithm introduces the clustering problem in a probabilistic and inferential framework. Data are considered to be realizations of random variables. GAPE codification is directed to estimate the parameters of the fixed-classification model (Bock H.H. 1996) which is supposed to generate the data. This model assumes, for a fixed number of groups g , (G_1, G_2, \dots, G_g), a known parametric density family $f(\cdot, \theta)$ such that $X_k \sim f(\cdot, \theta_i)$ for all $k \in G_i$, $i=1, \dots, g$ where g is unknown and a parameters vector $\Theta = (\theta_1, \dots, \theta_g)$. It has been assumed that data are drawn from multivariate normal distributions, which are completely characterized by the vector of the mean values and the covariance matrix. Therefore, GAPE string maps the parameters $\theta_k = (\mu_k, \Sigma_k)$.

The covariance matrix could be factored as $\Sigma_k = \lambda_k D_k A_k A_k^T$, where D_k indicates the orthogonal matrix of the eigenvectors and determines the orientation of the principal components, A_k is a diagonal matrix with elements proportional to the eigenvalues of Σ_k and determines the contours of the density functions and λ_k is a scalar that determines the volume of the ellipsoids (Banfield and Raftery 1993). The genetic codification of the GAPE algorithm allows to estimate the parameters of three different possible structure of the covariance matrix which is assumed to be specified as $\Sigma_{kj} = \lambda_{kj} I$, $k=1, \dots, g$, $j=1, \dots, p$. In the first case the covariance matrix is constant among the groups and the measurements ($\Sigma = \lambda I$), in the second case it is constant just among the measurements ($\Sigma_k = \lambda_k I$) and in the third case each group could have a different variance among the groups and the measurements ($\Sigma_{kj} = \lambda_{kj} I$) (see Figures 2, 3, 4 Appendix 1).

Each observation is attributed to the group whose respective density value is higher among all the density values computed in correspondence of the different, genetically specified, models underlying each groups. The best grouping solution is then determined by minimizing the following negative form of the log-likelihood of the fixed classification model:

$$F(g, \Theta) = - \sum_{i=1}^n \sum_{k=1}^g z_{ik} \log(f_{\gamma_i}(x_i | \theta_k)) \quad (1)$$

where z_{ik} is equal to one if observation i belongs to group k or zero otherwise and where $\gamma = (\gamma_1, \dots, \gamma_n)$ are labels such that $\gamma_i = k$ if x_i belong to the k -th group. After processing each individual, genetic operator are applied to evolve the population to determine the best individual with associated minimum fitness value.

Finally, GAME and GAPE encoding have been modified to select automatically the most relevant $k \leq p$ features to be used in determining the optimal grouping solution. p binary cells have been added to each string: if the i -th cell ($i=1, \dots, p$) contains unitary value the i -th feature will be considered in the dataset used in the cluster analysis, otherwise it will be ignored (see Figure 5 Appendix 1). Reducing the size of the dataset allows not only to speed up the convergence of the algorithms but also to consider the possible presence of correlated variables which could mislead the analysis. Hidden structure could also be more easily detected.

Data Evolutionary Clustering

GAME and GAPE algorithms have been tested at first on simulated datasets drawn from multivariate normal distributions with variable location and covariance structure. The analysis has shown that GAME and GAPE are capable of detecting easily and with a high degree of membership the correct belonging of each observation when the dataset has no overlapping clusters. The average error increases when the clusters can overlap. Table 2 shows in the first ten columns the average error on 500 runs of standard partitional algorithms and GAME/GAPE algorithms on ten different dataset generated from multivariate normal with parameters:

$\mu_1=[1,1,1,1]$, $\Sigma_1=I$; $\mu_2=[5,5,5,5]$, $\Sigma_2=2I$; $\mu_3=[9,9,9,9]$, $\Sigma_3=3I$; $\mu_4=[13,13,13,13]$, $\Sigma_4=4I$. Clusters can overlap. The last column reports the average error over the ten datasets. On average, GAME and GAPE algorithms outperform both the classical k-means and the EM algorithm for full and diagonal covariance specification. They have been chosen for comparison since they start, as GAME and GAPE do, with the random choice of groups seeds. It can also be noticed that the average error on some dataset is equal or less than the one determined by the more efficient fuzzy c-means and EM with spherical covariance structure (see for example columns 1, 2 and 3).

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Mean Error
GAPE	2.00%	2.50%	1.50%	2.00%	3.50%	2.50%	3.00%	3.50%	2.00%	1.00%	2.35%
GAME MC	1.50%	1.50%	1.50%	7.00%	1.50%	1.50%	1.00%	1.00%	1.50%	1.50%	1.95%
GAME VRC	1.50%	1.50%	1.50%	2.00%	2.50%	0.50%	1.00%	1.00%	2.00%	1.50%	1.50%
K-means	9.41%	10.55%	9.59%	8.86%	2.34%	13.01%	9.88%	9.64%	5.94%	8.46%	4.38%
Fuzzy c-means	2.50%	2.50%	1.50%	4.00%	1.00%	0.50%	1.00%	1.50%	2.00%	1.00%	0.88%
EM diag	11.17%	11.37%	11.39%	10.00%	1.00%	11.34%	11.32%	8.73%	9.53%	5.14%	4.55%
EM full	12.22%	13.33%	12.45%	16.74%	1.00%	13.95%	12.44%	10.50%	11.90%	13.93%	5.92%
EM spherical	2.06%	2.00%	1.50%	2.50%	1.00%	0.55%	1.00%	1.00%	1.50%	1.00%	0.71%

Table 2. Cluster algorithms performance when data are generated from multivariate normal with parameters: $\mu_1=[1,1,1,1]$, $\Sigma_1=I$; $\mu_2=[5,5,5,5]$, $\Sigma_2=2I$; $\mu_3=[9,9,9,9]$, $\Sigma_3=3I$; $\mu_4=[13,13,13,13]$, $\Sigma_4=4I$. The first ten columns report the average errors on 500 runs on 10 different simulated datasets. The last column reports the average errors on the 10 simulated dataset (average on 5000 different runs). Fitness criteria used are reported in italics.

Furthermore, the analysis has shown that parameters estimations determined by the GAPE algorithms are very near to the real values used in generating the data, supporting the validity of the evolutionary approaches not only as optimizing tools but also as estimation tools.

Results from the analysis of real datasets, such as the Fisher's Iris data, common benchmark for validating clustering algorithms, has improved the confidence in such approaches. Table 3 shows a comparison between the GAME and GAPE algorithms for different fitness functions with results reported in the literature and with standard partitional cluster algorithms (k-means, fuzzy c-means, Expectation Maximization). Looking at the first column, it can be noticed that the evolutionary approach correctly identifies all but three items: this is the best result reported up to now. Standard partitional algorithms lead at most to correctly classify all but five items and also, as the second column shows, can easily fall in local minima. Moreover, the number of misclassified items decreases or is equal when automatic data mining is allowed (3rd column). The last two columns report the fitness values associated to the best individual of the genetic algorithms and the ones of the real classification. As it can be noticed comparing the two values, the algorithms determine fitness values smaller than the fitness values associated to the real classification. Therefore, the choice of the fitness function is crucial. Looking at the data, we noticed that the three misclassified

items are more homogeneous with respect to the group they are associated with the GAME algorithms than the real one. Tests about the possible presence of anomalous data or possible errors in collecting the data should be performed to complete the analysis.

Finally, using the MC or the VRC criterions it is also possible to determine the optimal number of groups. The VRC criterion has identified as optimal the number of iris species from which data are collected.

	Minimum number of misclassified items	Average number of misclassified items on 500 runs	Misclassified items with Automatic data-mining	Best Fitness Value	Real Fitness Value
GAME 10 (EM)	3	3	3	0.029	0.0308
GAME MC	3	3	3	0.198357	0.210948
GAME VRC	16	16	8	0.001805	0.0021
GAME FW	16	16	6	7885.144	8.930
GAPE 10 (EM)	16	24.5	6	1635.6	1693.4
GAPE EM	15	23.7	4	1626.3	9229.3
GAPE VRC	6	20.2	6	1547.3	2428
K-means	16	25.954	--	--	--
Fuzzy c-means	16	16	--	--	--
EM spherical	16	16	--	--	--
EM diag	9	23.68	--	--	--
EM full	5	17.232	--	--	--
Friedman, Rubin 1967 (W)	16	--	--	--	--
Friedman, Rubin 1967 (WE)	3	--	--	--	--
Baragona-Catizini, Battaglia 2000 VRC	16	--	--	0.0018	0.0021
Baragona-Catizini, Battaglia 2000 MC	3	--	--	0.1984	0.210948
Friley-Rafferty 1999 EM	5	--	--	--	--

Table 3. Fisher's Iris data (150x4). Comparison among the evolutionary GAME and GAPE algorithms, the standard partitional algorithms (k-means, fuzzy c-means, Expectation Maximization) and results reported in literature. The minimum number of misclassified items with and without automatic data-mining, the average number of misclassified items, the best fitness values and the fitness values in correspondence of the real classification are reported. (the fitness functions used are reported in italics).

Time Series Evolutionary Clustering

The application of GAME and GAPE to benchmark data sets has ascertained their performance advantage with respect to existing clustering algorithms: our genetic algorithms achieve low misclassification rates and provide reliable estimates of the number of groups and the relevant population parameters.

In this section we present some results from the application of GAME and GAPE to a "real world" problem. As a part of an on going research project on quantitative models for portfolio management decisions, we have tested how our genetic algorithms perform in classifying a sample of Italian mutual funds from their returns time series.

As is common practice in most countries, the Italian association of money managers (Assogestioni) classifies mutual funds on the basis of a periodical screening of their portfolio holdings. Assogestioni's scheme is made of five major categories that are defined according to the type of financial assets a fund is most (or totally) invested in. They are: "Azionari" (Equity), "Obbligazionari" (Fixed Income), "Bilanciati" (Balanced, *i.e.* both equity and fixed income), "Liquidità" (Money Market Assets) and "Flessibili" (which have no asset class limit). This scheme, augmented by its finer partitions by currency or geographical exposure and time to maturity, provides investors with a loose picture of the kind of risks they are likely to bear when investing in a particular fund, but suffers from some drawbacks. First of all, fund managers with very different grades of risk tolerance may end up in the same class, irrespectively of how much their strategies are aggressive or conservative, provided that they invest in the same asset classes. Therefore, a different classification based on the risk vs. return profile of funds may give further useful information to investors. This would also serve the purpose of forming meaningful peer groups within which to compare and benchmark the performances achieved by different money managers. Furthermore, although Assogestioni's monitoring is quite careful, it is not possible to exclude that some managers perform window dressing in order to boost their track record relatively to direct competitors (*i.e.* those managers whose funds belong to the same category).

Statistical classification procedures based on funds' return history are a low cost solution to these issues. Contrary to portfolio holdings, returns time series can be easily and cheaply gathered and updated on daily basis from public sources and cannot be made up. Two main contributions in this direction have been proposed in the existing literature on mutual fund styles. Sharpe (1992) estimates a linear asset class factor model by regressing fund's returns on those of a set of given market or style indices. The fund's investment policy is determined by looking at the combination of those indices with the highest loadings, which are also commonly used to infer risk and to form peer groups (Lucas and Riepe 1996, Cucurachi 2000). As new returns become available, rolling regression results convey a picture of how the investment strategy changes over time. Brown and Goetzmann (1997) propose a second approach based on clustering time series of monthly returns with the k-means algorithm. Their procedure does not rely on the specification of a factor model and

therefore the analyst is not committed to the choice of a set of indices as in Sharpe's regression. Funds clusters are ready to use peer groups and their centroid vectors, which are in fact as many returns time series as there are clusters, can be taken as group benchmarks. Taken as it comes, the k-means output does not provide any clue of what groups are, but auxiliary qualitative information on funds' characteristics (*e.g.* their declared investment objectives) or a second step asset class regression on centroids may be exploited to gain insight.

An obvious limitation of Brown and Goetzmann procedure is that, with classical k-means, there is no way to determine the optimal number of groups for a given data set. GAME and GAPE provide a viable solution to this issue. Also, due to their genetic nature, they are known to converge to global optima, whereas k-means does not. We have run both algorithms on a sample of 442 out of 457 mutual Italian funds that were active at the end of year 1995, for which complete five year time series of monthly returns are available on the Datastream™ database. The funds' list has been compiled from the Assogestioni archive. Fifteen funds have been excluded because return data were unavailable although they are still active. According to the Assogestioni classification 186 funds were Azionari, 50 Bilanciati, 7 Flessibili, 17 Liquidità and 182 Obbligazionari at the end of year 2000.

Two different approaches have been followed. The first one consists in describing each fund by its average monthly return and standard deviation, which is taken as a measure for risk. Different normality tests have been performed on each funds series. Table 4 shows that, assuming returns are independently and identically distributed in time, normality is rejected at most in 38.9% of cases at the 5% significance level (20.6% at the 1% significance level). This provides some support to our choice of using the mean and the standard deviation to summarize each time series.

Normality Tests Results

Test procedure	Normality rejected	Significance level	
		5%	1%
Bowman-Shenton	Cases	118	91
	Percentage	26.7	20.6
D'Agostino-Tietjen	Cases	172	83
	Percentage	38.9	18.8
Shapiro-Wilks	Cases	138	73
	Percentage	31.2	16.5
Lilliefors	Cases	94	37
	Percentage	21.3	8.4
Total number of cases		442	

Table 4. Normality Tests Result for the sample of 442 Italian mutual funds monthly returns series. Period: 31/12/1995-31/12/2000.

Then, the data passed to our algorithms are a matrix of 442 objects with 2 measurements for each object. GAME and GAPE algorithms have been run for the different fitness criteria displayed in Table 1. All the criteria have lead to group data in a similar way. The MC and the VRC criterion identify 5 and 4 optimal groups

respectively. In Appendix 2 Table I we report summary statistics for the solutions obtained by using each criterion with the number of groups fixed to five. Moreover, tables in correspondence of different numbers of groups for the MC and VRC criterion are reported (see Appendix 2 Table V and VI).

Table 5 below reports a comparison between the groups composition identified by GAME when the MC criterion is used and the Assogestioni classification at the end of year 2000. The scatter matrix shows how Equity funds are split in three different classes (Table 5, 1st, 3rd, 4th rows), which we may define as "medium return, medium risk", "high return, high risk" and "low return, high risk". Fixed Income Funds, characterized by low return and low risk, are almost all grouped in a single class (Table 5: 5th row) together with the Money Market Funds. Finally, the last group is composed mainly by Balanced funds together with some Fixed Income (Table 5: 2nd row). The Flessibili funds, possibly because of their heterogeneous asset allocation, tend to be put in different groups.

Marriott's Criterion					Groups Mean Values		
Value	Count	Percent	scatter matrix		differences	mean return	mean std.dev
1	109	24.66%	93	11 4 0 1	146	1.360%	4.740%
2	56	12.67%	3	37 1 0 15		1.000%	2.970%
3	60	13.57%	58	1 1 0 0		2.110%	6.950%
4	33	7.47%	32	0 0 0 1		0.350%	6.150%
5	184	41.63%	0	1 1 17 165		0.450%	0.770%

Table 5. GAME mutual funds classification (MC criterion) vs Assogestioni Classification. The dataset is composed by the mean monthly returns and the standard deviations. In the first column the group composition is reported, in the second the scatter matrix between GAME and Assogestioni classification, in the third the total number of funds with different classification w.r.t. Assogestioni scheme and in the fourth and fifth the groups mean values of the returns and of the standard deviations.

Figure 6, reported Appendix 1, shows the scatterplot of the grouping solution identified by the GAME algorithm when the MC criterion is used. Groups are clearly shaped by their risk vs. return profiles, thus providing further information which may be usefully exploited together with Assogestioni's institutional classification. Furthermore, the use of the GAPE algorithm not only allows us to estimate the optimal grouping solution and the parameters of the different distributions from which the data are supposed to be drawn, but also supplies group membership probabilities for each single fund.

The second approach we tested does not pre-process data to reduce the size of the dataset, but considers each time series as an object with p measurement, much in the spirit of Brown and Goetzmann (1997). Each measurement corresponds to the monthly return on a specific date. We have used GAME but not GAPE because of the larger computational time required to process the whole dataset with the latter. Tables II, VII and VIII in Appendix 2 display the optimal grouping solutions for different fitness criteria. Table 6 below shows the GAME classification when the Marriott's Criterion is used. As before, Obbligazionari and Flessibili funds are allocated to the

same group (5th row). Bilanciati funds tend to be allocated to the same group but, contrary to the previous results, they are not the majority (1st row). Azionari funds tend to be scattered among four out of the five groups (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th rows). Looking at the groups mean values reported in the last column, two groups may still be labelled as "average return, average risk", "high return, high risk", but the previous group "low return, high risk" is now split in two classes containing a smaller number Azionari funds only.

Marriott's Criterion					Groups Mean Values		
Value	Count	Percent	scatter matrix		differences	mean return	mean std.dev
1	177	40.05%	122	47 5 0 3	139	1.200%	4.500%
2	51	11.54%	48	2 1 0 0		2.130%	6.980%
3	14	3.17%	14	0 0 0 0		0.490%	7.120%
4	2	0.45%	2	0 0 0 0		2.110%	8.770%
5	198	44.80%	0	1 1 17 179		0.470%	0.890%

Table 6. GAME mutual funds classification (MC criterion) vs Assogestioni Classification. The dataset is composed by the whole time series. Each series is considered as an object with p measurements. In the first column the group composition is reported, in the second the scatter matrix between GAME and Assogestioni classification, in the third the total number of funds with different classification w.r.t. Assogestioni scheme and in the fourth and fifth the groups mean values of the returns and of the standard deviations.

Table 7, in the next page, compares the optimal grouping solutions determined by the two approaches through the GAME algorithm with the MC criterion. 92 funds are allocated in a different way. We notice that the second approach, who aims at determining the optimal grouping solution through the analysis of the whole time series data, leads to identify classes which contain more correlated time series. (see Appendix 1, Figures 7 and 8). Table III in Appendix 2 show the comparison between the two approaches optimal grouping solutions when different fitness criteria are used.

Figure 8 in Appendix 1 shows that the return time series of funds which are allocated in the same classes, especially the ones allocated to group 2, 3 and 4, have almost synchronous behaviours and the same turning points over time. Comparison with Figure 7, which shows the time series plot for the GAME solution with the first approach, suggests that within group correlations are higher when the whole time series are clustered, as should be expected. Thus, although more time consuming, the second approach is desirable when one is interested in the diversification benefit that can be achieved by investing in funds from different groups.

GAME optimal grouping using the dataset composed by mean and standard deviation of the monthly returns			Scatter matrix between the optimal grouping solutions determined by using different datasets				GAME optimal grouping using the whole dataset. Consider each serie as an object with T features.				
Marriott Criterion			scatter matrix				differences	Marriott Criterion			
Value	Count	Percent						Value	Count	Percent	
1	109	24.66%	105	3	1	0	0	92	1	177	40.05%
2	60	13.57%	10	48	0	2	0		2	51	11.54%
3	33	7.47%	19	0	13	0	1		3	14	3.17%
4	56	12.67%	43	0	0	0	13		4	2	0.45%
5	184	41.63%	0	0	0	0	184		5	198	44.80%

Table 7. Comparison between the optimal grouping solutions identified by the GAME algorithm in correspondence of Marriott's Criterion. The first column shows the optimal grouping composition when the monthly return mean values and standard deviations are used as dataset. The third column shows the group composition when the whole returns time series are used as dataset. The second column shows the scatter matrix between the two optimal grouping solutions determined by GAME.

Conclusions

Two evolutionary clustering algorithms have been proposed to extract information from data by determining the presence and the composition of homogeneous groups. The analysis of simulated and real dataset has shown how they can outperform standard classical partitioning clustering algorithms by converging to the global optimal grouping solution. The analyses of time series data of a sample of Italian mutual funds supports their usefulness for increasing the information available to investors and managers and supporting their investment decisions. By comparing our results with the institutional classification we show that while for some funds, such as the Obbligazionari and Flessibili, there is substantial agreement, for the Azionari the analysis of the returns time series detects partitions of funds with different characteristics that are pooled together by the latter. Therefore, we believe that our approach can improve the information offered by the institutional classification scheme. Further research aims at characterizing the peer groups identified by the clustering algorithms by asset class models as in Sharpe (1992). Also, other clustering criteria based on correlation coefficients between time series (Bohte, Cepar and Kosmelj 1988) should be tested. Finally, the improvement in computational efficiency that might be achieved by dimensional reduction algorithms for similarity search of time series databases through discrete Fourier transforms and wavelets (Huhtala, Karkkainen, Toivonen 1999, Keogh, Chakrabarti and Pazzani 2000, Povinelli and Feng, 1998) are worth considering.

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Appendix 1 - Genetic codification

GAME genetic codification

m ₁₁	m ₁₂	m ₁₃	m ₁₄	m ₂₁	m ₂₂	m ₂₃	m ₂₄	m ₃₁	m ₃₂	m ₃₃	m ₃₄
Group 1				Group 2				Group 3			

Fig. 1. Code of a single individual in GAME algorithm

GAPE genetic codification

μ_{11}	μ_{12}	μ_{13}	μ_{14}	μ_{21}	μ_{22}	μ_{23}	μ_{24}	μ_{31}	μ_{32}	μ_{33}	μ_{34}	λ
Group 1				Group 2				Group 3				Group 1,2,3

Fig. 2. Code of a single individual in GAPE with constant covariance matrix $\Sigma = \lambda I$, when $g=3$, $p=4$.

μ_{11}	μ_{12}	μ_{13}	μ_{14}	μ_{21}	μ_{22}	μ_{23}	μ_{24}	μ_{31}	μ_{32}	μ_{33}	μ_{34}	λ_1	λ_2	λ_3
Group 1				Group 2				Group 3				Group 1	Group 2	Group 3

Fig. 3. Code of a single individual in GAPE with covariance matrix $\Sigma_k = \lambda_k I$ for $k=1, \dots, g$. when $g=3$, $p=4$.

μ_{11}	μ_{12}	μ_{13}	μ_{14}	μ_{21}	μ_{22}	μ_{23}	μ_{24}	μ_{31}	μ_{32}	μ_{33}	μ_{34}	λ_{11}	λ_{12}	λ_{13}	λ_{14}	λ_{21}	λ_{22}	λ_{23}	λ_{24}	λ_{31}	λ_{32}	λ_{33}	λ_{34}
Group 1				Group 2				Group 3				Group 1				Group 2				Group 3			

Fig. 4. Code of a single individual in GAPE with covariance matrix $\Sigma_{kj} = \lambda_{kj} I$ for $k=1, \dots, g$, $j=1, \dots, p$, when $g=3$, $p=4$.

Evolutionary Automatic Data Mining

1	0	1	0	GAME \ GAPEchromosome
1	2	3	4	

Fig. 5. Automatic data-mining when $p=4$. The first and the third features compose the dataset in correspondence of which to determine the best grouping solution.

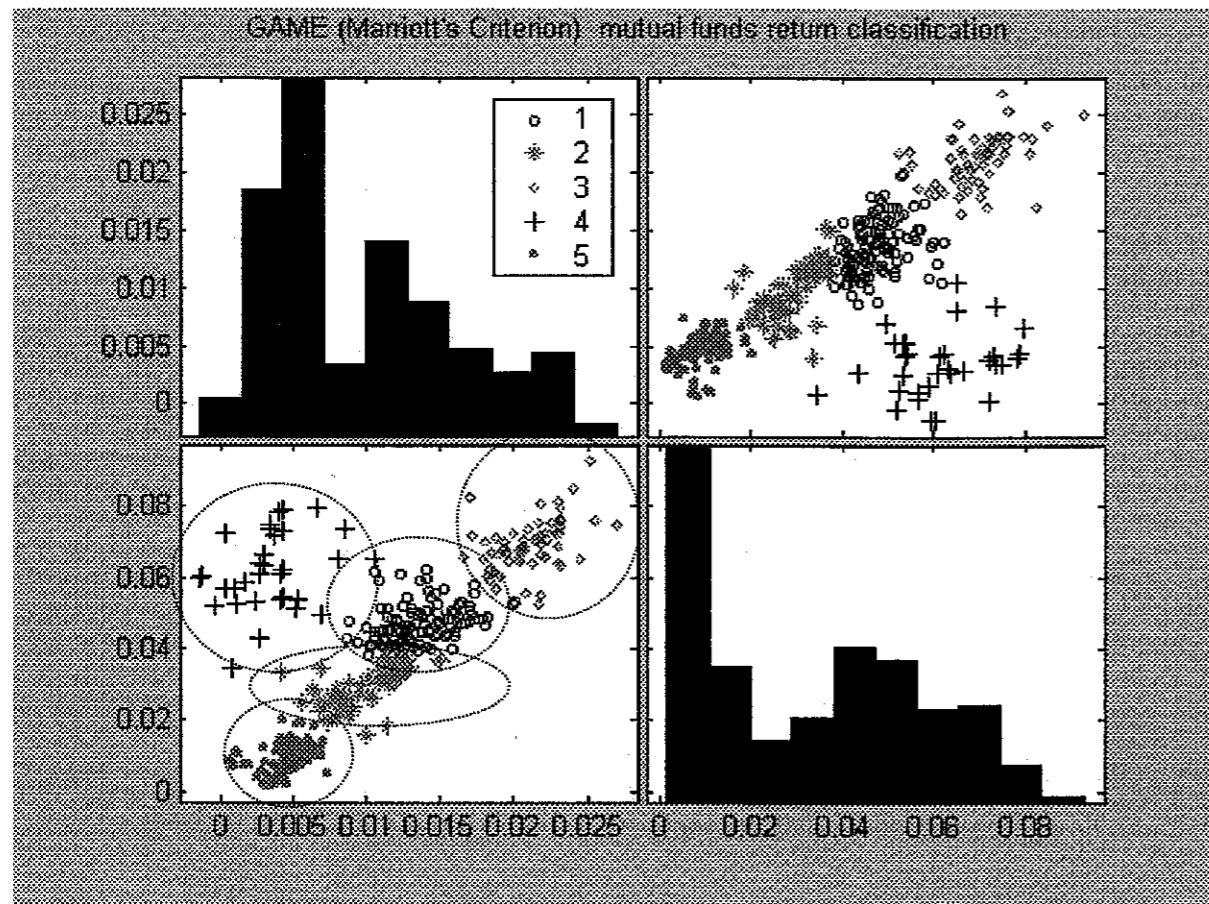


Fig. 6. Scatterplot matrix of the return mean and standard deviation. Different colours identify the different groups composition identified by the GAME algorithm in correspondence of the Marriott's Criterion.

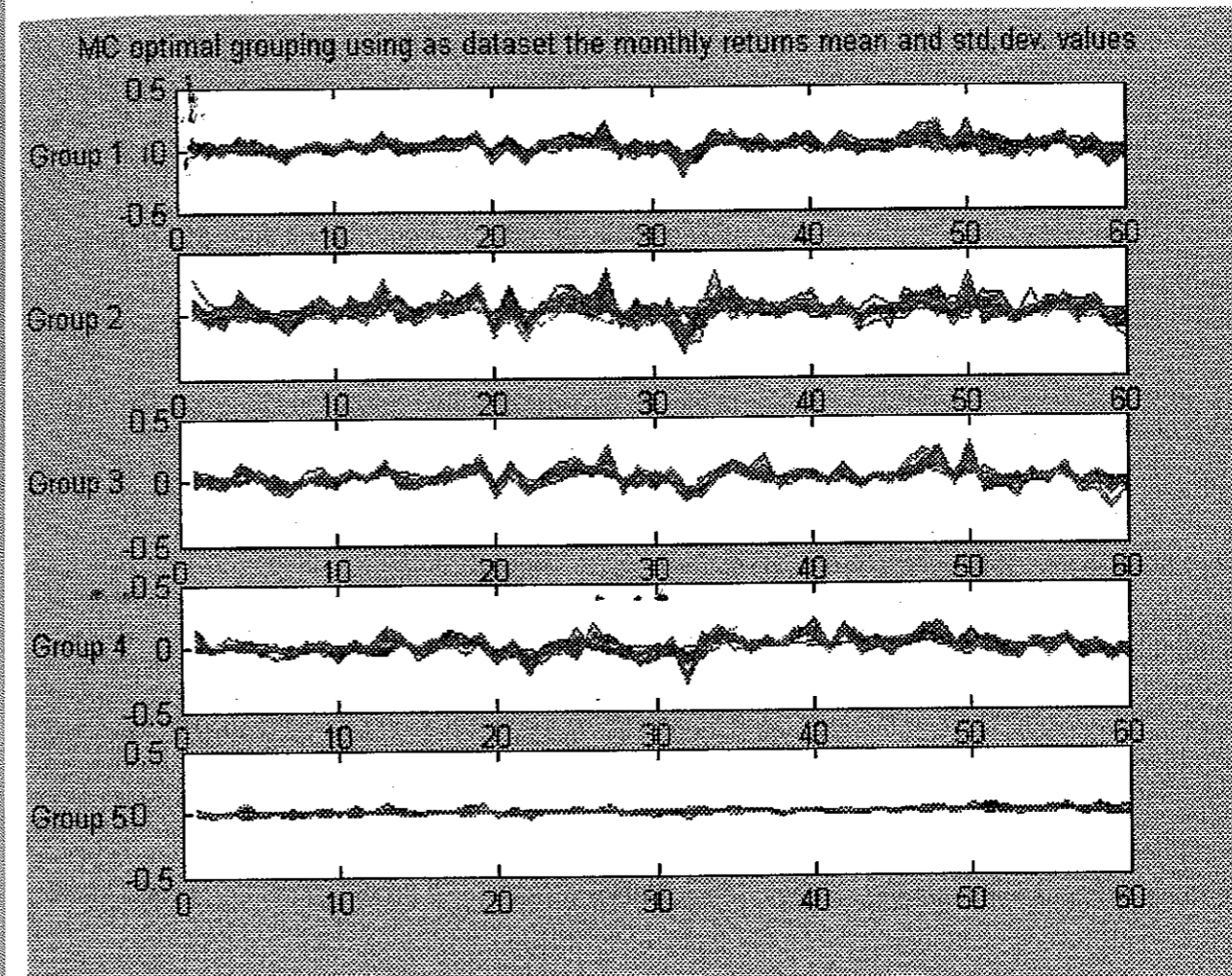


Fig. 7. Monthly return series from 31/12/95 to 31/12/00. Series are grouped by the GAME algorithm (MC criterion). The dataset used in determining the optimal grouping solution is composed by the monthly return mean and standard deviation values on the whole period.

APPENDIX 2

The sample is composed by the monthly returns time series of 442 Italian mutual funds from 12/95 up to 12/00. Comparison between Assogestioni Classification and Evolutionary algorithms classification are proposed.

Assogestioni Classification of the sample (31/12/2000)				Groups Mean Values		
Value	Count	Percent	Tipologia Fondi	Sigla	mean return	mean std.dev
AZ	186	42.08%	AZIONARI	AZ	1.420%	5.660%
BI	50	11.31%	BILANCIATI	BI	1.170%	3.530%
FL	7	1.58%	FLESSIBILI	FL	1.250%	4.470%
LI	17	3.85%	LIQUIDITA'	LI	0.350%	0.290%
OB	182	41.18%	OBBLIGAZIONARI	OB	0.490%	0.980%

Results from GAME algorithm in correspondence of the different fitness criteria reported in Table 1. The dataset is composed by the mean and the standard deviation of the mutual funds time series returns. The number of groups has been fixed equal to 5.

1st column: groups composition

2nd column: Scatter matrix between GAME and Assogestioni classifications

3rd column: total number of funds with different classification w.r.t. Assogestioni scheme

4th-5th columns: group mean value of the returns and of the standard deviation

MC							Groups Mean Values			
Value	Count	Percent	scatter matrix			differences	mean return	mean std.dev		
1	109	24.66%	93	11	4	0	1	146	1.360%	4.740%
2	56	12.67%	3	37	1	0	15		1.000%	2.970%
3	60	13.57%	58	1	1	0	0		2.110%	6.950%
4	33	7.47%	32	0	0	0	1		0.350%	6.150%
5	184	41.63%	0	1	1	17	165		0.450%	0.770%

VRC							Groups Mean Values			
Value	Count	Percent	scatter matrix			differences	mean return	mean std.dev		
1	108	24.43%	94	10	3	0	1	142	1.370%	4.710%
2	59	13.35%	3	39	2	0	15		0.980%	3.020%
3	56	12.67%	54	1	1	0	0		2.120%	7.060%
4	35	7.92%	35	0	0	0	0		0.500%	6.320%
5	184	41.63%	0	0	1	17	166		0.450%	0.770%

trW							Groups Mean Values			
Value	Count	Percent	scatter matrix			differences	mean return	mean std.dev		
1	108	24.43%	94	10	3	0	1	142	1.370%	4.710%
2	59	13.35%	3	39	2	0	15		0.980%	3.020%
3	56	12.67%	54	1	1	0	0		2.120%	7.060%
4	35	7.92%	35	0	0	0	0		0.500%	6.320%
5	184	41.63%	0	0	1	17	166		0.450%	0.770%

trBonW							Groups Mean Values			
Value	Count	Percent	scatter matrix			differences	mean return	mean std.dev		
1	77	17.42%	69	5	2	0	1	188	1.250%	5.420%
2	80	18.10%	56	22	2	0	0		1.200%	4.180%
3	43	9.73%	1	22	1	0	19		0.840%	2.640%
4	62	14.03%	60	1	1	0	0		1.880%	7.170%
5	180	40.72%	0	0	1	17	162		0.440%	0.750%

trBonT							Groups Mean Values			
Value	Count	Percent	scatter matrix			differences	mean return	mean std.dev		
1	61	13.80%	58	2	1	0	0	170	2.120%	6.840%
2	84	19.00%	48	33	2	0	1		1.370%	4.130%
3	58	13.12%	50	3	3	0	2		1.190%	4.980%
4	31	7.01%	30	0	0	0	1		0.310%	6.180%
5	208	47.06%	0	12	1	17	178		0.490%	0.960%

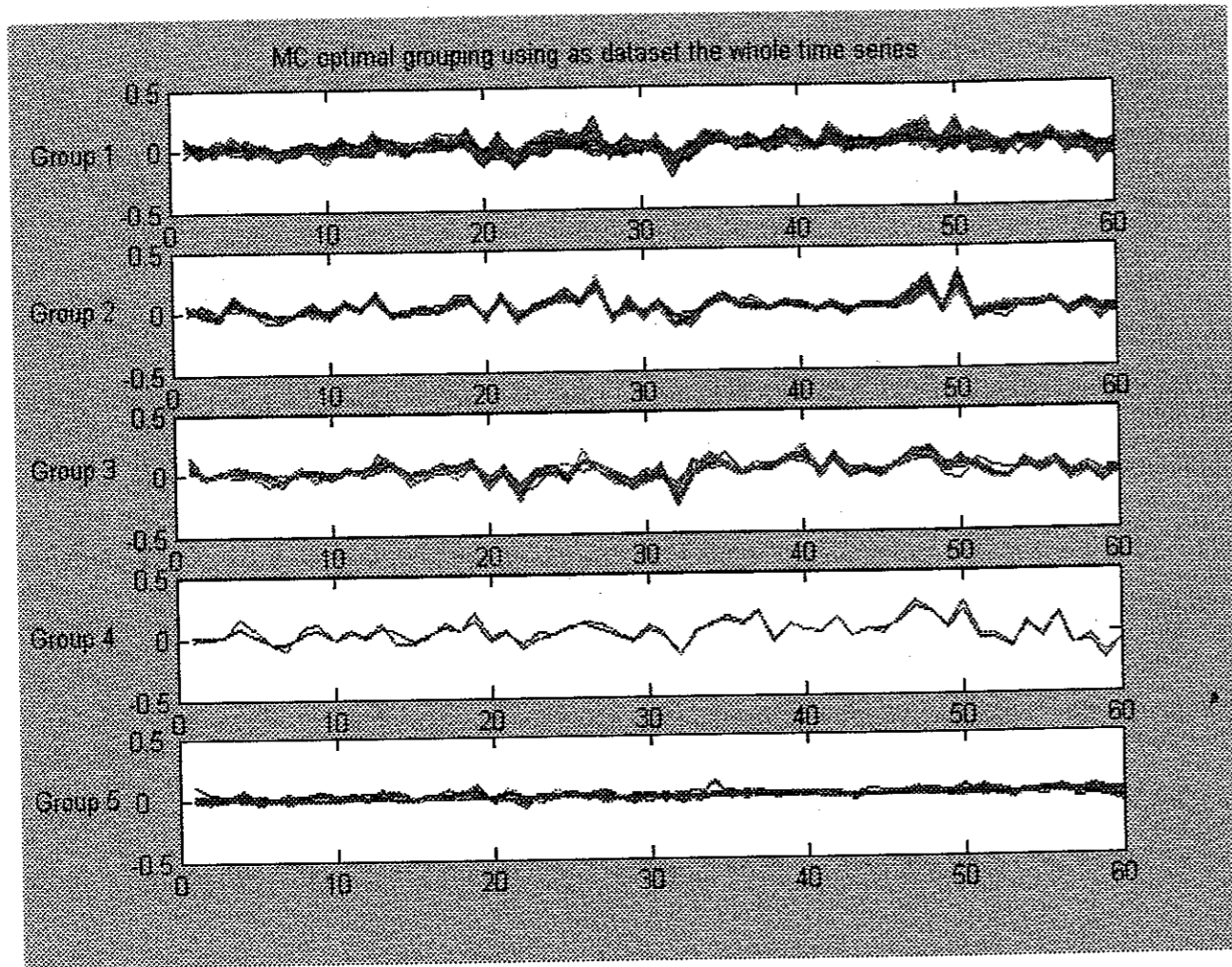


Fig. 8. Monthly return series from 31/12/95 to 31/12/00. Series are grouped by the GAME algorithm (MC criterion). The dataset used in determining the optimal grouping solution is composed by the whole time series dataset. Each series is considered as an object with p measurements, corresponding to the monthly return for each data.

Results from GAME algorithm using as dataset the whole mutual funds time series returns
 Each time serie has been considered as a single object with T features.
 T=number of dates from 12/95 up to 12/00.

The number of groups has been fixed equal to 5.
 1st column: groups composition

2nd column: Scatter matrix between GAME and Assogestioni classifications
 3rd column: total number of funds with different classification w.r.t. Assogestioni scheme
 4th-5th columns: group mean value of the returns and of the standard deviation

MC			Groups Mean Values	
Value	Count	Percent	mean return	mean std.dev
1	177	40.05%	1.200%	4.500%
2	51	11.54%	2.130%	6.980%
3	14	3.17%	0.490%	7.120%
4	2	0.45%	2.110%	8.770%
5	198	44.80%	0.470%	0.890%

VRC			Groups Mean Values	
Value	Count	Percent	mean return	mean std.dev
1	140	31.67%	1.280%	4.210%
2	66	14.93%	2.010%	6.650%
3	18	4.07%	0.810%	7.090%
4	20	4.52%	0.320%	5.680%
5	198	44.80%	0.470%	0.890%

trW			Groups Mean Values	
Value	Count	Percent	mean return	mean std.dev
1	146	33.03%	1.290%	4.270%
2	63	14.25%	2.020%	6.700%
3	21	4.75%	0.490%	5.920%
4	14	3.17%	0.490%	7.120%
5	198	44.80%	0.470%	0.890%

trBonW			Groups Mean Values	
Value	Count	Percent	mean return	mean std.dev
1	146	33.03%	1.280%	4.230%
2	62	14.03%	2.060%	6.890%
3	12	2.71%	0.640%	7.020%
4	22	4.98%	0.320%	5.780%
5	200	45.25%	0.480%	0.940%

trBonT			Groups Mean Values	
Value	Count	Percent	mean return	mean std.dev
1	120	27.15%	1.170%	4.710%
2	92	20.81%	1.790%	5.800%
3	14	3.17%	0.430%	7.120%
4	2	0.45%	2.110%	8.770%
5	214	48.42%	0.510%	1.070%

GAME optimal grouping using the whole dataset. Consider each serie as an object with T features.

MC			Groups Mean Values	
Value	Count	Percent	mean return	mean std.dev
1	177	40.05%	1.200%	4.500%
2	51	11.54%	2.130%	6.980%
3	14	3.17%	0.490%	7.120%
4	2	0.45%	2.110%	8.770%
5	198	44.80%	0.470%	0.890%

VRC			Groups Mean Values	
Value	Count	Percent	mean return	mean std.dev
1	140	31.67%	1.280%	4.210%
2	66	14.93%	2.010%	6.650%
3	18	4.07%	0.810%	7.090%
4	20	4.52%	0.320%	5.680%
5	198	44.80%	0.470%	0.890%

trW			Groups Mean Values	
Value	Count	Percent	mean return	mean std.dev
1	146	33.03%	1.290%	4.270%
2	63	14.25%	2.020%	6.700%
3	21	4.75%	0.490%	5.920%
4	14	3.17%	0.490%	7.120%
5	198	44.80%	0.470%	0.890%

trBonW			Groups Mean Values	
Value	Count	Percent	mean return	mean std.dev
1	146	33.03%	1.280%	4.230%
2	62	14.03%	2.060%	6.890%
3	12	2.71%	0.640%	7.020%
4	22	4.98%	0.320%	5.780%
5	200	45.25%	0.480%	0.940%

trBonT			Groups Mean Values	
Value	Count	Percent	mean return	mean std.dev
1	120	27.15%	1.170%	4.710%
2	92	20.81%	1.790%	5.800%
3	14	3.17%	0.430%	7.120%
4	2	0.45%	2.110%	8.770%
5	214	48.42%	0.510%	1.070%

Scatter matrix between the optimal grouping solutions determined by using different datasets

scatter matrix		differences
105	3	1 0 0 0 92
10	48	0 2 0 0
19	0	13 0 1
43	0	0 0 13
0	0	0 0 184

scatter matrix		differences
93	12	1 2 0 0 94
1	53	2 0 0 0
45	0	0 0 14
1	1	15 18 0
0	0	0 0 184

scatter matrix		differences
96	10	2 0 0 0 92
1	53	2 0 0 0
4	0	17 14 0
45	0	0 0 14
0	0	0 0 184

scatter matrix		differences
73	1	0 3 3 118
0	53	8 1 0
27	0	0 0 16
46	8	4 18 1
0	0	0 0 180

scatter matrix		differences
47	30	0 0 7 124
6	54	0 1 0
17	0	13 0 1
45	8	1 1 3
5	0	0 0 203

GAME optimal grouping using the dataset composed by mean and standard deviation of the monthly returns

MC			Groups Mean Values	
Value	Count	Percent	mean return	mean std.dev
1	109	24.66%	1.360%	4.740%
2	60	13.57%	2.110%	6.950%
3	33	7.47%	0.350%	6.150%
4	56	12.67%	1.000%	2.970%
5	184	41.63%	0.450%	0.770%

VRC			Groups Mean Values	
Value	Count	Percent	mean return	mean std.dev
1	108	24.43%	1.370%	4.710%
2	56	12.67%	2.120%	7.060%
3	59	13.35%	0.980%	3.020%
4	35	7.92%	0.500%	6.320%
5	184	41.63%	0.450%	0.770%

trW			Groups Mean Values	
Value	Count	Percent	mean return	mean std.dev
1	108	24.43%	1.370%	4.710%
2	56	12.67%	2.120%	7.060%
3	59	13.35%	0.980%	3.020%
4	35	7.92%	0.500%	6.320%
5	184	41.63%	0.450%	0.770%

trBonW			Groups Mean Values	
Value	Count	Percent	mean return	mean std.dev
1	80	18.10%	1.200%	4.180%
2	77	17.42%	1.250%	5.420%
3	43	9.73%	0.840%	2.640%
4	62	14.03%	1.880%	7.170%
5	180	40.72%	0.440%	0.750%

trBonT			Groups Mean Values	
Value	Count	Percent	mean return	mean std.dev
1	84	19.00%	1.370%	4.130%
2	61	13.80%	2.120%	6.840%
3	31	7.01%	0.310%	6.180%
4	58	13.12%	1.190%	4.980%
5	208	47.06%	0.490%	0.960%

Appendix 2 - TABLE III

Results from GAPE algorithm

The dataset is composed by the mean and the standard deviation of the mutual funds time series returns

The number of groups has been fixed equal to 5.

1st column: groups composition

2nd column: Scatter matrix between GAME and Assogestioni classifications

3rd column: total number of funds with different classification w.r.t. Assogestioni scheme

4th-5th columns: group mean value of the returns and of the standard deviation

6th-7th columns: estimated group mean value of the returns and of the standard deviation by GAPE

sigma=lambdai							Groups Mean Values		GAPE Estimated values	
Value	Count	Percent	scatter matrix	differences	mean return	mean std.dev	mean return	mean std.dev		
1	109	24.66%	94 10 4 0 1	144	1.370%	4.700%	1.270%	4.690%		
2	60	13.57%	3 39 1 0 17		0.960%	2.970%	0.910%	2.960%		
3	57	12.90%	55 1 1 0 0		2.090%	7.070%	1.980%	7.050%		
4	34	7.69%	34 0 0 0 0		0.490%	6.280%	0.480%	6.270%		
5	182	41.18%	0 0 1 17 164		0.450%	0.760%	0.440%	0.740%		

sigma(k)=lambda(k)*i, k=1,...,n.groups							Groups Mean Values		GAPE Estimated values	
Value	Count	Percent	scatter matrix	differences	mean return	mean std.dev	mean return	mean std.dev		
1	116	26.24%	101 10 4 0 1	137	1.310%	4.740%	1.270%	4.760%		
2	60	13.57%	3 39 1 0 17		0.960%	2.970%	0.890%	2.960%		
3	56	12.67%	54 1 1 0 0		2.120%	7.060%	1.980%	6.980%		
4	28	6.33%	28 0 0 0 0		0.540%	6.570%	0.570%	6.620%		
5	182	41.18%	0 0 1 17 164		0.450%	0.760%	0.440%	0.740%		

sigma(k)=lamda(kj)*i, k=1,...,n.groups, j=1,...,n.features							Groups Mean Values		GAPE Estimated values	
Value	Count	Percent	scatter matrix	differences	mean return	mean std.dev	mean return	mean std.dev		
1	61	13.80%	104 10 3 0 1	134	1.310%	4.780%	1.270%	4.760%		
2	57	12.90%	3 39 2 0 17		0.970%	2.980%	0.910%	3.040%		
3	182	41.18%	55 1 1 0 0		2.100%	7.040%	2.090%	7.050%		
4	24	5.43%	24 0 0 0 0		0.420%	6.670%	0.420%	7.050%		
5	118	26.70%	0 0 1 17 164		0.450%	0.760%	0.440%	0.740%		

Appendix 2 - TABLE IV

Results from GAME algorithm in correspondence of the Marriott's criterion
 The dataset is composed by the mean and the standard deviation of the mutual funds time series returns
 The iterative procedure has determined the optimal number of groups equal to 5.

Marriott's Criterion									
Number of Groups	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Best Fitness Value	0.8004	0.4126	0.2955	0.2792	0.3398	0.34	0.3316	0.3308	0.3241

1st column: Number of groups

2nd column: Groups composition

3rd-4th columns: group mean value of the monthly returns and of the standard deviation of the monthly returns

Number of Groups				Groups Mean Values	
Value	Count	Percent	mean return	mean std.dev	
2					
1	226	51.13%	1.400%	5.400%	
2	216	48.87%	0.500%	1.040%	
3					
1	194	43.89%	1.570%	5.240%	
2	214	48.42%	0.500%	1.020%	
3	34	7.69%	0.370%	6.150%	
4					
1	143	32.35%	1.290%	4.290%	
2	63	14.25%	2.070%	6.920%	
3	35	7.92%	0.390%	6.140%	
4	201	45.48%	0.480%	0.900%	
5					
1	109	24.66%	1.360%	4.740%	
2	56	12.67%	1.000%	2.970%	
3	60	13.57%	2.110%	6.950%	
4	33	7.47%	0.350%	6.150%	
5	184	41.63%	0.450%	0.770%	
6					
1	109	24.66%	1.390%	4.710%	
2	58	13.12%	0.980%	2.940%	
3	57	12.90%	2.100%	7.040%	
4	16	3.62%	0.450%	5.290%	
5	182	41.18%	0.450%	0.760%	
6	20	4.52%	0.380%	6.820%	
7					
1	83	18.78%	1.260%	4.180%	
2	42	9.50%	0.830%	2.620%	
3	53	11.99%	1.580%	5.340%	
4	23	5.20%	0.360%	5.710%	
5	180	40.72%	0.440%	0.750%	
6	51	11.54%	2.140%	7.150%	
7	10	2.26%	0.410%	7.430%	
8					
1	64	14.48%	1.540%	5.260%	
2	75	16.97%	1.250%	4.080%	
3	51	11.54%	2.140%	7.150%	
4	97	21.95%	0.380%	0.440%	
5	88	19.91%	0.530%	1.160%	
6	20	4.52%	0.270%	5.610%	
7	35	7.92%	0.840%	2.690%	
8	12	2.71%	0.500%	7.280%	
9					
1	56	12.67%	1.500%	4.870%	
2	60	13.57%	1.200%	4.040%	
3	38	8.60%	0.870%	2.740%	
4	98	22.17%	0.380%	0.440%	
5	87	19.68%	0.530%	1.160%	
6	17	3.85%	0.260%	5.480%	
7	14	3.17%	0.420%	7.130%	
8	23	5.20%	1.600%	5.960%	
9	49	11.09%	2.160%	7.180%	
10					
1	54	12.22%	1.210%	4.570%	
2	40	9.05%	1.220%	3.610%	
3	20	4.52%	1.520%	6.010%	
4	86	19.46%	0.400%	0.390%	
5	95	21.49%	0.490%	1.080%	
6	35	7.92%	1.690%	4.940%	
7	18	4.07%	0.350%	6.890%	
8	14	3.17%	0.290%	5.170%	
9	31	7.01%	0.780%	2.460%	
10	49	11.09%	2.160%	7.180%	

Appendix 2 - TABLE V

Results from GAME algorithm in correspondence of the Marriott's criterion
 The dataset is composed by the mean and the standard deviation of the mutual funds time series returns
 The iterative procedure has determined the optimal number of groups equal to 4.

Variance Ratio Criterion									
Number of Groups	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Best Fitness Value	0.00064	0.000514	0.0005054	0.000507	0.000515	0.000494	0.000483	0.000448	0.000428

1st column: Number of groups
 2nd column: Groups composition
 3rd-4th columns: group mean value of the monthly returns and of the standard deviation of the monthly returns

Number of groups				Groups Mean Values	
	Value	Count	Percent	mean return	mean std.dev
2	1	228	51.58%	1.390%	5.380%
	2	214	48.42%	0.500%	1.020%
	Groups Mean Values				
3	1	153	34.62%	1.190%	4.270%
	2	198	44.80%	0.470%	0.880%
	3	91	20.59%	1.640%	6.800%
Groups Mean Values					
4	1	124	28.05%	1.240%	4.830%
	2	59	13.35%	0.980%	3.020%
	3	75	16.97%	1.740%	7.010%
	4	184	41.63%	0.450%	0.770%
Groups Mean Values					
5	1	108	24.43%	1.370%	4.710%
	2	59	13.35%	0.980%	3.020%
	3	56	12.67%	2.120%	7.060%
	4	35	7.92%	0.500%	6.320%
	5	184	41.63%	0.450%	0.770%
Groups Mean Values					
6	1	70	15.84%	1.390%	5.220%
	2	73	16.52%	1.240%	4.110%
	3	53	11.99%	2.130%	7.120%
	4	23	5.20%	0.380%	6.690%
	5	181	40.95%	0.450%	0.750%
	6	42	9.50%	0.830%	2.660%
Groups Mean Values					
7	1	79	17.87%	1.270%	4.440%
	2	50	11.31%	0.990%	3.090%
	3	42	9.50%	1.610%	5.470%
	4	51	11.54%	2.140%	7.150%
	5	115	26.02%	0.400%	0.490%
	6	75	16.97%	0.540%	1.300%
	7	30	6.79%	0.370%	6.370%
Groups Mean Values					
8	1	55	12.44%	2.120%	7.080%
	2	68	15.38%	1.220%	4.080%
	3	60	13.57%	1.520%	5.060%
	4	27	6.11%	0.520%	5.880%
	5	102	23.08%	0.390%	0.450%
	6	9	2.04%	0.430%	7.520%
	7	83	18.78%	0.520%	1.180%
	8	38	8.60%	0.870%	2.740%
Groups Mean Values					
9	1	69	15.61%	1.420%	4.810%
	2	36	8.14%	0.840%	2.670%
	3	52	11.76%	1.190%	3.890%
	4	10	2.26%	0.410%	7.430%
	5	102	23.08%	0.390%	0.450%
	6	35	7.92%	1.780%	6.160%
	7	19	4.30%	0.280%	5.750%
	8	82	18.55%	0.520%	1.170%
	9	37	8.37%	2.180%	7.380%
Groups Mean Values					
10	1	63	14.25%	1.370%	4.720%
	2	49	11.09%	1.180%	3.860%
	3	28	6.33%	1.650%	5.680%
	4	99	22.40%	0.390%	0.440%
	5	85	19.23%	0.520%	1.160%
	6	36	8.14%	0.840%	2.670%
	7	16	3.62%	2.300%	7.830%
	8	21	4.75%	0.350%	5.810%
	9	10	2.26%	0.410%	7.430%
	10	35	7.92%	2.070%	6.840%

Appendix 2 - TABLE VI

Results from GAME algorithm in correspondence of the Marriott's criterion
 The dataset is composed by the whole mutual funds time series monthly returns
 Each time serie has been considered as a single object with T features. T=number of dates from 12/95 up to 12/00.
 The iterative procedure has been stopped for 10 groups.

Marriott's Criterion									
Number of Groups	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Best Fitness Value	0.18880	0.0504	0.0068	0.004	0.0013	1.21E-04	6.09E-05	3.40E-05	1.63E-05

1st column: Number of groups
 2nd column: Groups composition
 3rd-4th columns: group mean value of the monthly returns and of the standard deviation of the monthly returns

Number of groups				Groups Mean Values	
	Value	Count	Percent	mean return	mean std.dev
2	1	410	92.76%	0.0101	0.0304
	2	32	7.24%	0.0037	0.0626
Groups Mean Values					
3	1	411	92.99%	0.0101	0.0304
	2	19	4.30%	0.0032	0.0562
	3	12	2.71%	0.0046	0.0724
Groups Mean Values					
4	1	209	47.29%	0.0152	0.0507
	2	19	4.30%	0.0032	0.0562
	3	13	2.94%	0.0044	0.072
	4	201	45.48%	0.0048	0.0092
Groups Mean Values					
5	1	177	40.05%	0.012	0.045
	2	51	11.54%	0.0213	0.0698
	3	14	3.17%	0.0049	0.0712
	4	2	0.45%	0.0211	0.0877
	5	198	44.80%	0.0047	0.0089
Groups Mean Values					
6	1	126	28.51%	0.0124	0.0443
	2	65	14.71%	0.0203	0.0669
	3	12	2.71%	0.0046	0.0724
	4	22	4.98%	0.0155	0.0528
	5	216	48.87%	0.0045	0.013
	6	1	0.23%	0.0029	0.0666
Groups Mean Values					
7	1	149	33.71%	0.0127	0.0423
	2	62	14.03%	0.0205	0.0679
	3	10	2.26%	0.0048	0.0732
	4	2	0.45%	0.0211	0.0877
	5	197	44.57%	0.0047	0.009
	6	21	4.75%	0.0032	0.0574
	7	1	0.23%	0.0029	0.0666
Groups Mean Values					
8	1	75	16.97%	0.0123	0.0433
	2	78	17.65%	0.0135	0.0437
	3	57	12.90%	0.0209	0.0677
	4	2	0.45%	0.0211	0.0877
	5	196	44.34%	0.0047	0.0086
	6	21	4.75%	0.0031	0.0541
	7	12	2.71%	0.0046	0.0724
	8	1	0.23%	0.0029	0.0666
Groups Mean Values					
9	1	112	25.34%	0.0124	0.0124
	2	62	14.03%	0.0203	0.0203
	3	31	7.01%	0.0146	0.0146
	4	2	0.45%	0.0024	0.0024
	5	146	33.03%	0.0044	0.0044
	6	11	2.49%	0.0042	0.0042
	7	20	4.52%	0.0032	0.0032
	8	51	11.54%	0.0057	0.0057
	9	7	1.58%	0.015	0.015
Groups Mean Values					
10	1	149	33.71%	0.0133	0.0443
	2	42	9.50%	0.0217	0.071
	3	7	1.58%	0.0129	0.0491
	4	4	0.90%	0.02	0.0668
	5	206	46.61%	0.005	0.0101
	6	1	0.23%	0.0027	0.061
	7	2	0.45%	0.0211	0.0877
	8	18	4.07%	0.0032	0.056
	9	3	0.68%	0.0031	0.0679
	10	10	2.26%	0.0048	0.0732

Appendix 2 - TABLE VII

Results from GAME algorithm in correspondence of the Variance Ratio criterion
The dataset is composed by the whole mutual funds time series monthly returns
Each time serie has been considered as a single object with T features. T=number of dates from 12/95 up to 12/00.
The iterative procedure has determined the optimal number of groups equal to 3.

Criterio RTR									
Number of Groups	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Best Fitness Value	0.00310	0.0028	0.0031	0.0036	0.0041	0.0041	0.0048	0.0051	0.0057

1st column: Number of groups
2nd column: Groups composition
3rd-4th columns: group mean value of the monthly returns and of the standard deviation of the monthly returns

Number of Groups				Groups Mean Values	
Value	Count	Percent	mean return	mean std.dev	
2					
1	228	51.58%	1.400%	5.350%	
2	214	48.42%	0.490%	1.050%	
3					
1	177	40.05%	1.120%	4.670%	
2	67	15.16%	2.010%	6.600%	
3	198	44.80%	0.470%	0.890%	
4					
1	145	32.81%	1.300%	4.340%	
2	62	14.03%	2.030%	6.690%	
3	35	7.92%	0.450%	6.310%	
4	200	45.25%	0.470%	0.900%	
5					
1	140	31.67%	1.280%	4.210%	
2	66	14.93%	2.010%	6.650%	
3	18	4.07%	0.810%	7.090%	
4	20	4.52%	0.320%	5.680%	
5	198	44.80%	0.470%	0.890%	
6					
1	137	31.00%	1.270%	4.180%	
2	65	14.71%	2.030%	6.680%	
3	10	2.26%	1.480%	6.220%	
4	13	2.94%	0.440%	7.200%	
5	198	44.80%	0.470%	0.890%	
6	19	4.30%	0.320%	5.620%	
7					
1	65	14.71%	1.260%	4.460%	
2	45	10.18%	1.150%	3.420%	
3	42	9.50%	1.530%	5.200%	
4	59	13.35%	2.060%	6.790%	
5	198	44.80%	0.470%	0.890%	
6	19	4.30%	0.320%	5.620%	
7	14	3.17%	0.490%	7.120%	
8					
1	62	14.03%	1.320%	4.860%	
2	34	7.69%	1.320%	4.020%	
3	20	4.52%	1.480%	5.140%	
4	19	4.30%	0.320%	5.620%	
5	197	44.57%	0.470%	0.880%	
6	52	11.76%	2.120%	6.970%	
7	12	2.71%	0.390%	7.250%	
8	46	10.41%	1.210%	3.790%	
9					
1	54	12.22%	1.310%	4.660%	
2	38	8.60%	1.390%	4.260%	
3	21	4.75%	1.480%	5.590%	
4	55	12.44%	2.110%	6.900%	
5	198	44.80%	0.470%	0.890%	
6	10	2.26%	0.480%	7.320%	
7	20	4.52%	0.320%	5.680%	
8	2	0.45%	0.320%	6.850%	
9	44	9.95%	1.130%	3.590%	
10					
1	71	16.06%	1.310%	4.600%	
2	68	15.38%	1.210%	3.660%	
3	14	3.17%	1.800%	6.030%	
4	47	10.63%	2.140%	7.020%	
5	196	44.34%	0.470%	0.880%	
6	9	2.04%	0.510%	7.420%	
7	13	2.94%	1.420%	5.560%	
8	4	0.90%	0.300%	6.690%	
9	19	4.30%	0.320%	5.620%	
10	1	0.23%	2.510%	9.280%	

Appendix 2 - TABLE VIII

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