

Tube-based stochastic model predictive control with flexible state initialization

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ABSTRACT

The robust model predictive control does not exploit the potentially existing statistical properties of system uncertainties, which may result in overly conservative control solutions. To address this issue, this paper proposes a novel approach of stochastic model predictive control, specifically tailored for linear time-invariant systems that are confronted with bounded additive uncertainties. The proposed method is established within the robust tube-based model predictive control framework, where chance constraints are transformed into deterministic ones. In particular, by leveraging the propagation characteristics of uncertainties, an algorithm of time-varying tube-based stochastic model predictive control is devised through computing tightened constraints along the prediction horizons. Furthermore, utilizing the infinite-horizon propagation property of uncertainties, a constant tube-based stochastic model predictive control method is derived by implementing conservatively constant tightened constraints throughout the entire prediction horizons. The feasibility and closed-loop stability results are rigorously developed, and a numerical example is provided to demonstrate the efficacy of the proposed method.



1. Introduction

Model predictive control (MPC) is an effective receding horizon control strategy, widely adopted for its capability to handle uncertain dynamics, achieve optimal control performance, and satisfy state and input constraints.¹⁻³ When model uncertainties are assumed to be bounded, robust MPC approaches address such uncertainties by considering worst-case scenarios. However, these frameworks typically neglect the potential statistical properties of uncertainties, despite the fact that statistical information is often available in practical applications.⁴⁻⁷ Consequently, robust methods may exhibit excessive conservatism. To mitigate this limitation,

stochastic MPC (SMPC) leverages the stochastic characteristics of uncertainties by incorporating chance constraints, which enable a permissible degree of constraint violation to occur within a probabilistic framework.⁸⁻¹¹ This approach reduces conservatism in constraint satisfaction and improves control performance, as worst-case scenarios are rarely encountered in practice. Generally, SMPC methods can be categorized into two primary classes:¹²⁻¹⁴ analytic approximation methods and scenario-based methods. The former reformulates probabilistic constraints into deterministic approximations via constraint tightening, whereas the latter ensures satisfaction of chance constraints by generating

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a sufficient number of randomly sampled realizations.

Several representative SMPC methods have been developed to handle chance constraints while ensuring recursive feasibility. Li et al.¹⁵ proposed a sophisticated SMPC strategy tailored for linear time-invariant (LTI) systems, which are subjected to additive uncertainties following a truncated normal distribution, by leveraging the one-step-ahead constraint. Cannon et al.¹⁶ introduced an SMPC framework that incorporates time-varying constraint tightening throughout the prediction horizon. This framework is grounded in tubes characterized by fixed cross-sectional shapes and variable scaling factors, which are precomputed offline based on the permissible probability of constraint violation. Kouvaritakis et al.¹⁷ constructed tubes offline directly by explicitly utilizing the distribution characteristics of additive disturbances. Leveraging the scenario method to enable offline computation of probabilistic reachable sets, Hewing and Zeilinger¹⁸ proposed an SMPC framework for linear discrete-time systems with unbounded and correlated additive disturbances. Lorenzen et al.¹⁹ computed constraint tightening via an offline sampling strategy, aiming to accelerate online computation while guaranteeing robust recursive feasibility. Meanwhile, another recursively feasible SMPC scheme put forward, which involves the imposition of supplementary constraints specifically on the initial predicted step²⁰ Tsai and Malak²¹ addressed control co-design problems under probabilistic disturbances by formulating a finite-horizon optimal control problem with chance constraints. By combining tube-based SMPC with constraint-tightening techniques, this approach achieves a balanced trade-off between performance and robustness, while mitigating the risks of instability and infeasibility. Farina et al.²² designed an SMPC method that selects the nominal state initialization online between an open-loop strategy and a closed-loop strategy. However, regardless of the varying assumptions made about uncertainties, the nominal state initializations in all the aforementioned works are primarily chosen as the measured actual state. This could potentially result in inaccuracies when using the open-loop nominal state as an approximation of the actual closed-loop state, thereby requiring more intricate demonstrations to establish recursive feasibility and ensure stability.²³

In this paper, we investigate the MPC problem for LTI systems subject to bounded additive

uncertainties. To address this problem, we propose a tube-based SMPC scheme that belongs to the analytic approximation category, which is developed within the framework of a typical robust tube-based MPC (RTMPC).²⁴ Specifically, the proposed scheme, termed time-varying tube-based SMPC, is formulated by constructing time-varying tightened constraints that account for the propagation of uncertainties over the prediction horizon. A special case, referred to as constant tube-based SMPC (CTSMPC), is derived by imposing infinitely tightened constraints with constant bounds on all predicted nominal states across the entire horizon. The novelty of this work lies in the adoption of the RTMPC framework, which enables accurate prediction of nominal states through flexible state initializations. This not only results in simple and standard MPC algorithms but also facilitates the guarantee of recursive feasibility and stability.

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows. Section 2 elaborates on the problem under investigation and outlines the fundamental preliminaries pertaining to the RTMPC algorithm. Section 3 presents the proposed SMPC framework, commencing with the formulation of the time-varying tube-based SMPC (TTSMP), proceeding to the construction of its specialized variant, and culminating in a comparative analysis of their feasible regions. In Section 4, numerical examples and comparative studies are provided to validate the proposed approach, while Section 5 draws together the key findings and concludes the paper.

Notations: The symbol \mathbb{R} represents the set encompassing all real numbers, \mathbb{N}_i denotes the set of all integers that are greater than or equal to i , and \mathbb{N}_i^j signifies the set composed of all consecutive integers within the range $\{i, \dots, j\}$. The value of a variable x at a specific time instant k is denoted by x_k , whereas the k -step-ahead prediction of x at time t is represented as $x_{k|t}$. We define the weighted norm as $\|x\|_Q^2 = x^T Q x$, where the notation $Q \succ 0$ is used to indicate that Q is a positive definite matrix. The probability of an event A taking place is denoted by $\Pr(A)$. When a random variable x adheres to the distribution \mathcal{Q}^x , it is expressed as $x \sim \mathcal{Q}^x$. A Gaussian distribution characterized by a mean of μ and a variance of Σ is denoted by $\mathcal{N}(\mu, \Sigma)$. The Minkowski sum is represented by the notation $A \oplus B$, which is defined as the set $\{a + b | a \in A, b \in B\}$. The Pontryagin set difference is denoted by $A \ominus B$, and it is defined as the set $\{a \in A | a + b \in A, \forall b \in B\}$.

2. Problem statement and preliminaries

2.1. Problem statement

Consider a discrete-time LTI system subject to additive uncertainties:

$$x_{k+1} = Ax_k + Bu_k + w_k, \quad (1)$$

where $x_k \in \mathbb{R}^n$, $u_k \in \mathbb{R}^m$ and $w_k \in \mathbb{R}^n$ are the system state, control input, and uncertainty at time k , respectively. It is assumed that all the system states are measured directly, and the bounded uncertainty $w_k \sim \mathcal{Q}^w$ is independently and identically distributed and lies in a polytope \mathbb{W} , i.e., $w_k \in \mathbb{W}$. Moreover, the system in Equation (1) is subject to the following constraints on states and inputs:

$$x_k \in \mathbb{X}, k \in \mathbb{N}_0, \quad (2)$$

$$u_k \in \mathbb{U}, k \in \mathbb{N}_0, \quad (3)$$

where $\mathbb{X} \subset \mathbb{R}^n$, and $\mathbb{U} \subset \mathbb{R}^m$ are compact and each set contains the origin in its interior.

In light of the stochastic characteristics inherent in the system dynamics, chance constraints, which permitting violations with a probability not exceeding $\varepsilon \in (0,1)$, are employed to mitigate conservatism across all predicted states within the future horizon. The selection of the violation ratio is determined by specific engineering requirements. Generally, a greater violation ratio implies increased optimization opportunities in the enlarged feasible region, whereas a lower violation ratio (i.e., higher satisfaction probabilities) results in more conservative solutions.

The primary objective of this paper is to devise an SMPC algorithm that stabilizes the system in Equation (1) while satisfying the following constraints:

$$\Pr(x_{k+1} \in \mathbb{X}) \geq 1 - \varepsilon, k \in \mathbb{N}_0, \quad (4)$$

$$u_k \in \mathbb{U}, k \in \mathbb{N}_0. \quad (5)$$

Remark 1. *The deterministic constraints on control represent the actuator limitations. In addition, since system uncertainty is bounded, the deterministic treatment is used to ensure the feasibility of the algorithm.*

2.2. Preliminaries

In this subsection, we first recapitulate the RTMPC framework for the system described by (1), which serves as a foundational basis for the subsequent algorithmic design. To streamline the presentation, we begin by introducing several key definitions.

Definition 1. *Robust positively invariant set [24] A set Z is defined as a robust positively invariant set for the system described by the equation:*

$$x_{k+1} = f(x_k, w_k), \quad (6)$$

where $w_k \in \mathbb{W}$, and $f(\cdot)$ represents the system's dynamic function. This set Z satisfies the condition that for every $x \in Z$ and every $w \in \mathbb{W}$, the state x_{k+1} remains within the set Z .

Definition 2. *Confidence Region [25]. A set \mathcal{E}_p is said to be a confidence region of probability level p for a random variable $x \sim \mathcal{Q}^x$, if $\Pr(x \in \mathcal{E}_p) \geq p$.*

The system dynamics presented in Equation (1) can be decomposed into two distinct components: a nominal dynamics and an error dynamics, as follows:

$$s_{k+1} = As_k + Bv_k, \quad (7)$$

$$e_{k+1} = A_{cl}e_k + w_k, \quad (8)$$

where the nominal state is denoted by $s_k \in \mathbb{R}^n$ and the nominal input is denoted by $v_k \in \mathbb{R}^m$. The closed-loop system matrix $A_{cl} = A + BK$ exhibits stability, where the feedback gain matrix K is derived by solving the linear quadratic regulator problem associated with the nominal dynamics in Equation (7). The discrepancy between the observed state x_k and the nominal state s_k is formally defined as the error e_k , which can be expressed mathematically as:

$$e_k = x_k - s_k. \quad (9)$$

The state feedback control law is:

$$u_k = Ke_k + v_k. \quad (10)$$

Let \mathcal{Z} denote the minimal robust positively invariant (mRPI) set corresponding to the error dynamics in Equation (8), taking into account the uncertainty $w_k \in \mathbb{W}$, which is defined as:

$$\mathcal{Z} \triangleq \sum_{i=0}^{\infty} \oplus A_{cl}^i \mathbb{W}. \quad (11)$$

Construct the robustly tightened state constraint set as:

$$\mathcal{C} \triangleq \mathbb{X} \ominus \mathcal{Z}. \quad (12)$$

Then the satisfaction of state constraint Equation (2) can be guaranteed by Equation (12), i.e., if $s \in \mathcal{C}$, $e \in \mathcal{Z}$, then $x = s + e \in \mathbb{X}$. And the satisfaction of input constraint Equation (3) can be guaranteed by imposing:

$$\mathcal{V} \triangleq \mathbb{U} \ominus K\mathcal{Z}, \quad (13)$$

i.e., provided that the control input component v is an element of the set \mathcal{V} and the error e lies within the set \mathcal{Z} , it follows that the actual control input $u = v + Ke \in \mathbb{U}$.

Select the stage cost function as $\ell(s, v) = \|s\|_Q^2 + \|v\|_R^2$, and define the terminal cost as $V_f = \|s\|_P^2$. Here, the matrices $Q \succ 0$, $R \succ 0$, and the matrix P is obtained as the solution to the algebraic Lyapunov equation:

$$(A+BK)^T P (A+BK) - P = -Q - K^T R K. \quad (14)$$

The terminal constraint set is formulated as follows:

$$\mathcal{X}_f \triangleq \{s \in \mathbb{R}^n : s_k \in \mathcal{C}, Ks_k \in \mathcal{V}, k \in \mathbb{N}_0\}. \quad (15)$$

This set \mathcal{X}_f represents the maximal output admissible set, as defined by Kolmanovsky and Gilbert,²⁶ for the autonomous system characterized by the state transition equation:

$$s_{k+1} = (A+BK)s_k. \quad (16)$$

Under these circumstances, \mathcal{X}_f adheres to the axioms outlined by Mayne et al.:²⁷

$$\mathbf{A1:} \quad (A+BK)\mathcal{X}_f \subset \mathcal{X}_f, \mathcal{X}_f \subset \mathbb{X} \ominus \mathcal{Z}, K\mathcal{X}_f \subset \mathbb{U} \ominus K\mathcal{Z}.$$

$$\mathbf{A2:} \quad V_f(A_{cl}x) + \ell(x, Kx) \leq V_f(x), \forall x \in \mathcal{X}_f.$$

Drawing upon the aforementioned components, the finite horizon optimal control problem $\mathbb{P}_N^{rtmpc}(x_t)$, as introduced in the study by Mayne et al.,²⁴ which needs to be addressed at each time instant t , is formulated as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} & \min_{s_{0|t}, v_t} \sum_{k=0}^{N-1} (\|s_{k|t}\|_Q^2 + \|v_{k|t}\|_R^2) + \|s_{N|t}\|_P^2 \\ \text{s.t.} \quad & s_{k+1|t} = As_{k|t} + Bv_{k|t}, \\ & s_{k|t} \in \mathcal{C}, k \in \mathbb{N}_1^{N-1}, \\ & v_{k|t} \in \mathcal{V}, k \in \mathbb{N}_0^{N-1}, \\ & x_t - s_{0|t} \in \mathcal{Z}, \\ & s_{N|t} \in \mathcal{X}_f. \end{aligned} \quad (17)$$

3. Tube-based stochastic model predictive control

3.1. Time-varying tube-based stochastic model predictive control

Suppose that a polytope $\mathcal{E}_{1-\varepsilon} \subset \mathbb{W}$ is a confidence region of probability level $1-\varepsilon$ for the uncertainty w , where $\varepsilon \in (0, 1)$. Then:

$$\Pr(w \in \mathcal{E}_{1-\varepsilon}) \geq 1 - \varepsilon \quad (18)$$

follows from Definition 2. Various methodologies for formulating confidence regions of uncertainty, including the scenario generation method,¹² Chebyshev inequality method,²² box-shaped method, and ellipsoidal method,²⁵ can be incorporated into the proposed tube-based SMPC framework.

Especially, suppose that the uncertainty w follows the truncated normal distribution, i.e., $w \sim \mathcal{N}(0, \sigma^2)$, and $w \in \mathbb{W}$. Let $1 - \varepsilon$, where $\varepsilon \in (0, 1)$, be the confidence coefficient of w , then the quantile value corresponding to the confidence coefficient is:

$$\alpha = \Phi^{-1}(1 - \varepsilon), \quad (19)$$

where Φ^{-1} denotes the quantile function of the standard normal distribution. Consequently, the confidence region for the variable w , which corresponds to the confidence coefficient $1 - \varepsilon$, can be precisely defined as:

$$\mathcal{E}_{1-\varepsilon} \triangleq \{w : -\alpha\sigma \leq w \leq \alpha\sigma\}. \quad (20)$$

Given the computational challenges associated with evaluating probability integrals, we propose a strategy to reformulate the chance constraints in Equation (4) into time-varying, tightened deterministic approximate constraints across the prediction horizons, as detailed below.

Given that the error dynamics presented in Equation (8) is linear and the uncertainty w belongs to the set \mathbb{W} , the evolution of the propagation set of the uncertainty, where $e_k \in \mathcal{W}_k$, can be described by the following equation:

$$\mathcal{W}_{k+1} = A_{cl}\mathcal{W}_k \oplus \mathbb{W}, k \in \mathbb{N}_0, \quad (21)$$

where $\mathcal{W}_0 = \mathbb{W}$. Then, $\mathcal{W}_k = \sum_{i=0}^k \oplus A_{cl}^i \mathbb{W}$, $k \in \mathbb{N}_0$, can be induced by recursively expanding. $\mathcal{W}_k \subseteq \mathcal{W}_{k+1}$ follows. Consequently, considering Equation (11):

$$\lim_{k \rightarrow \infty} \mathcal{W}_k = \sum_{i=0}^{\infty} \oplus A_{cl}^i \mathbb{W} = \mathcal{Z}, \quad (22)$$

holds, and $\mathcal{W}_k \subseteq \mathcal{Z}$, and $k \in \mathbb{N}_0$ follows.

Construct the tightened propagation set of uncertainty as:

$$\mathcal{D}_k = A_{cl}\mathcal{W}_{k-1} \oplus \mathcal{E}_{1-\varepsilon}, k \in \mathbb{N}_1, \quad (23)$$

where $\mathcal{E}_{1-\varepsilon}$ is the confidence region of w corresponding to the confidence coefficient $1 - \varepsilon$ and $\mathcal{D}_0 = \mathcal{E}_{1-\varepsilon}$.

Then, $\mathcal{D}_k \subseteq \mathcal{D}_{k+1}$ follows directly. Then:

$$\Pr(e_k \in \mathcal{D}_k) \geq 1 - \varepsilon, k \in \mathbb{N}_0, \quad (24)$$

follows from Equation (18).

Construct the time-varying tightened state constraint set as:

$$\mathcal{C}_k \triangleq \mathbb{X} \ominus \mathcal{D}_k, k \in \mathbb{N}_0. \quad (25)$$

Then, $\mathcal{C}_{k+1} \subseteq \mathcal{C}_k$ as a result of $\mathcal{D}_k \subseteq \mathcal{D}_{k+1}$, which will facilitate to ensure the recursive feasibility. Clearly, if the nominal state $s_k \in \mathcal{C}_k$, then the chance constraint in Equation (4) is satisfied, i.e., $\Pr(x_k = s_k + e_k \in \mathbb{X}) \geq 1 - \varepsilon, k \in \mathbb{N}_1$, can be guaranteed by Equation (24), and the satisfaction of hard constraint in Equation (5) can be guaranteed by constructing the robust tightened input constraint set $\mathcal{V} \triangleq \mathbb{U} \ominus K\mathcal{Z}$ and letting $v_k \in \mathcal{V}$. Moreover, to ensure the feasibility, we construct the terminal constraint set as:

$$\tilde{\mathcal{X}}_f \triangleq \{s \in \mathbb{R}^n : s_k \in \mathcal{C}_k, Ks_k \in \mathcal{V}, k \in \mathbb{N}_0\}, \quad (26)$$

which satisfies the axioms **A1** and **A2**.

To leverage the time-varying constraint tightening strategy, the finite-horizon optimal control problem $\mathbb{P}_N^{ttsmpc}(x_t)$ that needs to be solved at each time instant t is formulated as follows:

$$\min_{s_{0|t}, v_t} \sum_{k=0}^{N-1} (\|s_{k|t}\|_Q^2 + \|v_{k|t}\|_R^2) + \|s_{N|t}\|_P^2 \quad (27)$$

$$s.t. \quad s_{k+1|t} = As_{k|t} + Bv_{k|t}, \quad (28)$$

$$s_{k|t} \in \mathcal{C}_{k+t}, k \in \mathbb{N}_1^{N-1}, \quad (29)$$

$$v_{k|t} \in \mathcal{V}, k \in \mathbb{N}_0^{N-1}, \quad (30)$$

$$x_t - s_{0|t} \in \mathcal{W}_t, \quad (31)$$

$$s_{N|t} \in \tilde{\mathcal{X}}_f. \quad (32)$$

The optimal solution to the problem $\mathbb{P}_N^{ttsmpc}(x_t)$ comprises two key components: the nominal state $s_{0|t}^*$ and input sequence $\mathbf{v}^*(x_t) = [v_{0|t}^*, v_{1|t}^*, \dots, v_{N-1|t}^*]$. Correspondingly, the associated optimal state sequence for the nominal system is denoted as $\mathbf{s}^*(x_t) = [s_{0|t}^*, s_{1|t}^*, \dots, s_{N|t}^*]$.

At each time instant t , the problem $\mathbb{P}_N^{ttsmpc}(x_t)$ is solved to generate the optimal input sequence $\mathbf{v}^*(x_t)$ and the initial nominal state $s_{0|t}^*$. Based on these results, the optimal control law is formulated as follows:

$$u^*(x_t) = K(x_t - s_{0|t}^*) + v_{0|t}^*. \quad (33)$$

The entire procedure of the time-varying tube-based SMPC is iteratively carried out for all $t \geq 0$.

This iterative process gives rise to a receding horizon control strategy, which continuously updates the control inputs based on the current system state and the predicted future behavior.

Remark 2. Owing to the time-varying characteristic of uncertainty propagation, the state constraint set \mathcal{C}_k undergoes gradual tightening over the prediction horizon. It is noteworthy that all tightened sets can be computed offline; consequently, the computational burden of the resulting TTSMP algorithm is comparable to that of the RTMPC algorithm.

A property established in the following proposition will be employed to ensure recursive feasibility.

Proposition 1. Let \mathcal{W}_t be the propagation set of uncertainty defined in Equation (21) for the error dynamics in Equation (8) with $w_t \in \mathbb{W}$. For $x_{t+1} = Ax_t + Bu_t + w_t$, and $s_{k+1|t} = As_{k|t} + Bv_{k|t}$, if $x_t \in s_{0|t} \oplus \mathcal{W}_t$ and $u_t = K(x_t - s_{0|t}) + v_{0|t}$, then $x_{t+1} \in s_{1|t} \oplus \mathcal{W}_{t+1}$ for all $w_t \in \mathbb{W}$.

Proof. In Equation (9) we have defined $e_t = x_t - s_{0|t}$ and $e_{t+1} = x_{t+1} - s_{1|t}$. Due to $x_t \in s_{0|t} \oplus \mathcal{W}_t$, it follows that $e_t = x_t - s_{0|t} \in \mathcal{W}_t$. Since, according to Equations (21) and (8), $e_{t+1} = A_{cl}e_t + w_t \in A_{cl}\mathcal{W}_t \oplus \mathbb{W} = \mathcal{W}_{t+1}$ holds, then $x_{t+1} = s_{1|t} + e_{t+1} \in s_{1|t} \oplus \mathcal{W}_{t+1}$ follows.

Building upon Proposition 1, the results concerning recursive feasibility and closed-loop chance constraint satisfaction are presented as follows.

Theorem 1. Feasibility and constraint satisfaction. Considering the optimal control problem $\mathbb{P}_N^{ttsmpc}(x_t)$ in Equation (27) for the system dynamics in Equation (1) under the control law in Equation (33), then the following hold true:

- (i) If $\mathcal{M}_t = [s_{0|t}^*, v_{0|t}^*, v_{1|t}^*, \dots, v_{N-1|t}^*]$ is feasible for the problem $\mathbb{P}_N^{ttsmpc}(x_t)$ at time instant t , then applying the control law in Equation (33) gives the recursive feasibility at time instant $t + 1$, i.e., there exists a feasible \mathcal{M}_{t+1} for x_{t+1} .
- (ii) The closed-loop state chance constraint in Equation (4) and input hard constraint in Equation (5) are satisfied.

Proof. The proof of part (i) follows the similar line of reasoning as described in the work by Mayne et al.²⁴ (Proposition 3 in their work). Since \mathcal{M}_t is feasible for the problem $\mathbb{P}_N^{ttsmpc}(x_t)$, the constraints Equations (29)-(32) are satisfied by $\mathbf{v}^*(x_t)$ and $\mathbf{s}^*(x_t)$. The shifted input sequence of $\mathbf{v}^*(x_t)$ is denoted as

$\bar{v}^*(x_t) = [v_{1|t}^*, \dots, v_{N-1|t}^*, Ks_{N|t}^*]$ and the shifted state sequence of $s^*(x_t)$ is denoted as $\bar{s}^*(x_t) = [s_{1|t}^*, \dots, s_{N|t}^*, A_{cl}s_{N|t}^*]$. We choose the candidate solution $\mathcal{M}_{t+1} = [s_{1|t}^*, v_{1|t}^*, \dots, v_{N-1|t}^*, Ks_{N|t}^*]$. Hence, the first $N-1$ elements of $\bar{v}^*(x_t)$ satisfy the hard input constraint Equation (29) and the first N elements of $\bar{s}^*(x_t)$ satisfy the time-varying tightened constraints Equation (29) due to the fact that if $s_{k+1|t}^* \in \mathcal{C}_{k+1+t}$, then $s_{k+1|t}^* \in \mathcal{C}_{k+t}$ as $\mathcal{C}_{k+1+t} \subseteq \mathcal{C}_{k+t}$. Because $s_{N|t}^* \in \tilde{\mathcal{X}}_f$, it follows from **A1** that $A_{cl}s_{N|t}^* \in \tilde{\mathcal{X}}_f$ and $Ks_{N|t}^* \in \mathbb{U} \ominus K\mathcal{Z}$. Therefore, the last element $Ks_{N|t}^*$ of $\bar{v}^*(x_t)$ satisfies constraint Equation (29) and the last element $A_{cl}s_{N|t}^*$ of $\bar{s}^*(x_t)$ satisfies the terminal constraint Equation (29). Moreover, from Proposition 1 we have that if $x_t \in s_{0|t}^* \oplus \mathcal{W}_t$, then $x_{t+1} \in s_{1|t}^* \oplus \mathcal{W}_{t+1}$ for all $w \in \mathbb{W}$, i.e., the initial constraint Equation (29) is satisfied. To summarize, \mathcal{M}_{t+1} satisfies the feasibility conditions for the problem $\mathbb{P}_N^{ttsmpc}(x_{t+1})$. This completes the proof for point (i).

The proof of point (ii) is as follows. From the optimal control problem $\mathbb{P}_N^{ttsmpc}(x_t)$ in Equation (27), we have that $e_t = x_t - s_{0|t}^* \in \mathcal{W}_t$, $t \in \mathbb{N}_0$. Using the fact $\mathcal{D}_{t+1} = A_{cl}\mathcal{W}_t \oplus \mathcal{E}_{1-\varepsilon}$, we get that $\Pr(A_{cl}e_t + w_t \in \mathcal{D}_{t+1} | e_t \in \mathcal{W}_t) \geq 1 - \varepsilon$ for all $w_t \in \mathbb{W}$ following from Equation (18). Since $s_{1|t}^* \in \mathcal{C}_{t+1}$, $\Pr(s_{1|t}^* + A_{cl}e_t + w_t \in \mathcal{C}_{t+1} \oplus \mathcal{D}_{t+1} | e_t \in \mathcal{W}_t) \geq 1 - \varepsilon$ holds. Consequently, as $x_{t+1} = s_{1|t}^* + A_{cl}e_t + w_t$ and $\mathbb{X} = \mathcal{C}_{t+1} \oplus \mathcal{D}_{t+1}$, it follows that $\Pr(x_{t+1} \in \mathbb{X}) \geq 1 - \varepsilon$, $t \in \mathbb{N}_0$. To prove the satisfaction of the closed-loop input hard constraint, note that $x_t - s_{0|t}^* \in \mathcal{W}_t$ and $v_{0|t}^* \in \mathcal{V}$, $t \in \mathbb{N}_0$, due to the recursive feasibility of $\mathbb{P}_N^{ttsmpc}(x_t)$. Since $u_t = K(x_t - s_{0|t}^*) + v_{0|t}^*$, $\mathcal{V} = \mathbb{U} \ominus K\mathcal{Z}$ and $\mathcal{W}_t \subseteq \mathcal{Z}$, then $u_t \in K\mathcal{W}_t \oplus (\mathbb{U} \ominus K\mathcal{Z}) \subseteq K\mathcal{Z} \oplus (\mathbb{U} \ominus K\mathcal{Z}) \subseteq \mathbb{U}$, $t \in \mathbb{N}_0$, holds.

Lastly, we provide a demonstration that the proposed algorithm ensures the stability of the closed-loop system. The pivotal outcome is presented in the subsequent theorem.

Theorem 2. Stability. Suppose that \mathcal{Z} is the mRPI set for the error dynamics in Equation (8). Considering the optimal control problem $\mathbb{P}_N^{ttsmpc}(x_t)$ in Equation (27) for the system dynamics in (1) under the control law in Equation (33), the actual states converge to \mathcal{Z} asymptotically.

Proof. It is worth noting that the terminal cost function $\|\cdot\|_P^2$ serves as a control Lyapunov function within the terminal set $\tilde{\mathcal{X}}_f$. Furthermore, the set $\tilde{\mathcal{X}}_f$ complies with the axioms **A1** and

A2. Consequently, according to Theorem 2.7 and Theorem 2.8 in the study by Kouvaritakis et al.,²⁸ we can conclude that $\lim_{k \rightarrow \infty} s_{k|t} = 0$ and the origin $s = 0$ is exponentially stable. Moreover, since $\lim_{k \rightarrow \infty} e_{t+k} \in \mathcal{W}_\infty = \mathcal{Z}$, $\lim_{k \rightarrow \infty} x_{t+k} = \lim_{k \rightarrow \infty} (s_{k|t} + e_{t+k}) = \lim_{k \rightarrow \infty} e_{t+k} \in \mathcal{Z}$ follows.

3.2. Special case

To simplify the TTSMPC algorithm, we relax all tightened state constraint sets to an infinite-horizon tightening set, thereby formulating an alternative algorithm referred to as the CTSMPC.

It should be noted that $\lim_{t \rightarrow \infty} \mathcal{W}_t = \sum_{i=0}^{\infty} \oplus A_{cl}^i \mathbb{W} = \mathcal{Z}$ and the polytope $\mathcal{E}_{1-\varepsilon} \subseteq \mathbb{W}$ is the confidence region of the variable w associated with the confidence coefficient $1 - \varepsilon$, as a result, the tightened propagation set of uncertainty at the infinite time step:

$$\mathcal{D}_\infty = A_{cl}\mathcal{Z} \oplus \mathcal{E}_{1-\varepsilon} \quad (34)$$

follows from (23). Therefore, $\mathcal{D}_k \subseteq \mathcal{D}_\infty$, $k \in \mathbb{N}_0$, as $\mathcal{D}_k \subseteq \mathcal{D}_{k+1}$. Thus,

$$\Pr(e_k \in \mathcal{D}_\infty) \geq 1 - \varepsilon, k \in \mathbb{N}_0, \quad (35)$$

can be derived from (24).

Construct the constantly tightened state constraint set as:

$$\mathcal{C}_\infty \triangleq \mathbb{X} \ominus \mathcal{D}_\infty, \quad (36)$$

then, the chance constraint in Equation (4) is satisfied. The reason is that, if the nominal state $s_k \in \mathcal{C}_\infty$, then, $\Pr(x_k = s_k + e_k \in \mathbb{X}) \geq 1 - \varepsilon$ can be guaranteed by Equation (35). And the satisfaction of hard constraint in Equation (5), $u_k = v_k + Ke_k \in \mathbb{U}$, can be guaranteed by constructing the robust tightened input constraint set $\mathcal{V} \triangleq \mathbb{U} \ominus K\mathcal{Z}$ and letting $v_k \in \mathcal{V}$. Furthermore, in order to guarantee the feasibility of the problem, we formulate the terminal constraint set in the following manner:

$$\tilde{\mathcal{X}}_f \triangleq \{s \in \mathbb{R}^n : s_k \in \mathcal{C}_\infty, Ks_k \in \mathcal{V}, k \in \mathbb{N}_0\}, \quad (37)$$

which satisfies the axioms **A1** and **A2**.

Leveraging the constant constraint tightening strategy, the finite horizon optimal control problem $\mathbb{P}_N^{ctsmpc}(x_t)$, which is required to be solved at every time instant t , can be formulated as follows:

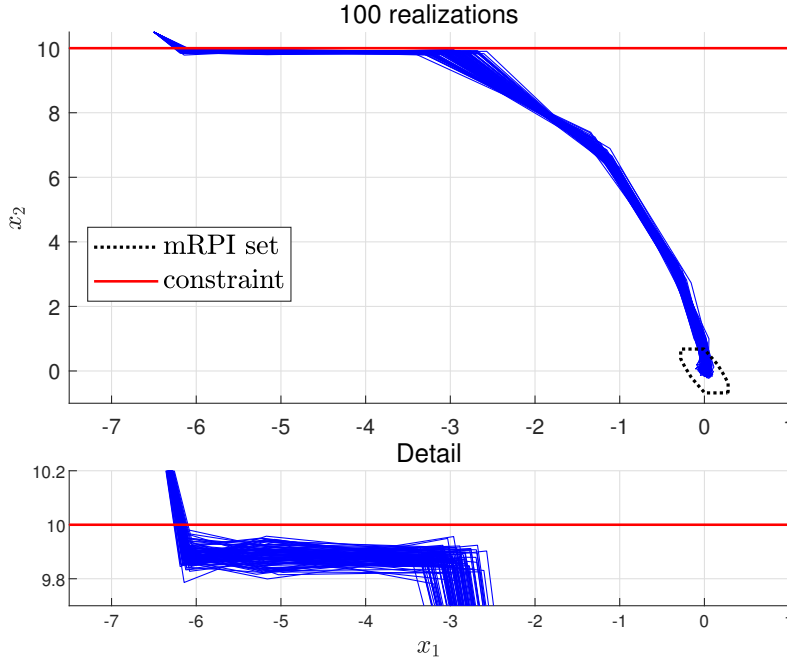


Figure 1. Constraint violation of the robust tube-based model predictive control
Abbreviation: mRPI: Minimal robust positively invariant.

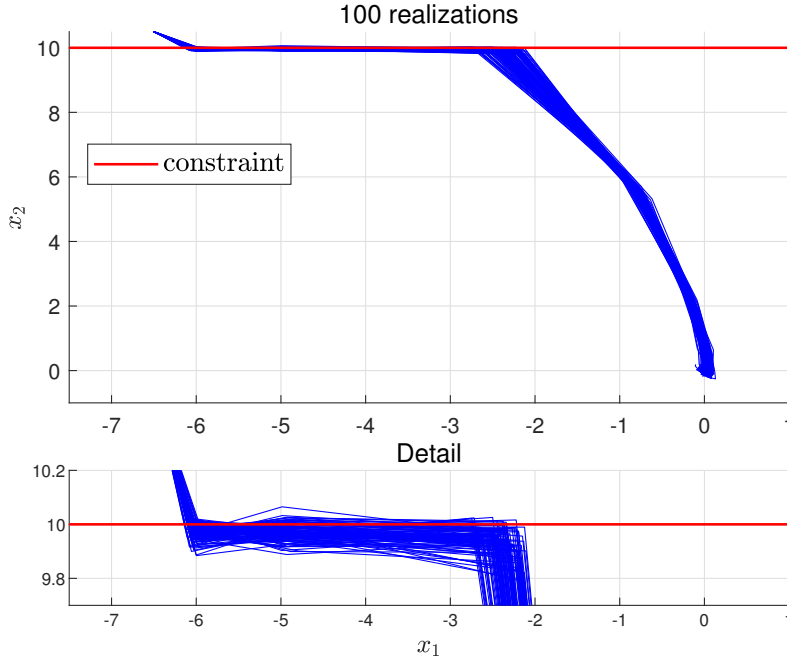


Figure 2. Constraint violation of the variable scaling tube-based stochastic model predictive control

$$\begin{aligned}
 & \min_{s_{0|t}, v_t} \sum_{k=0}^{N-1} (\|s_{k|t}\|_Q^2 + \|v_{k|t}\|_R^2) + \|s_{N|t}\|_P^2 \\
 & s.t. \quad s_{k+1|t} = As_{k|t} + Bv_{k|t}, \\
 & \quad s_{k|t} \in \mathcal{C}_\infty, k \in \mathbb{N}_1^{N-1}, \\
 & \quad v_{k|t} \in \mathcal{V}, k \in \mathbb{N}_0^{N-1}, \\
 & \quad x_t - s_{0|t} \in \mathcal{Z}, \\
 & \quad s_{N|t} \in \bar{\mathcal{X}}_f.
 \end{aligned}$$

(38)

The optimal solution to the problem $\mathbb{P}_N^{ctsmpe}(x_t)$ comprises two key components: the nominal state $s_{0|t}^*$ and input sequence $v^*(x_t) = [v_{0|t}^*, v_{1|t}^*, \dots, v_{N-1|t}^*]$. Correspondingly, the associated optimal state sequence for the nominal system is denoted as $s^*(x_t) = [s_{0|t}^*, s_{1|t}^*, \dots, s_{N|t}^*]$. At each time instant t , the problem $\mathbb{P}_N^{ctsmpe}(x_t)$ is solved to generate the optimal input sequence $v^*(x_t)$ and the initial nominal state $s_{0|t}^*$. Based

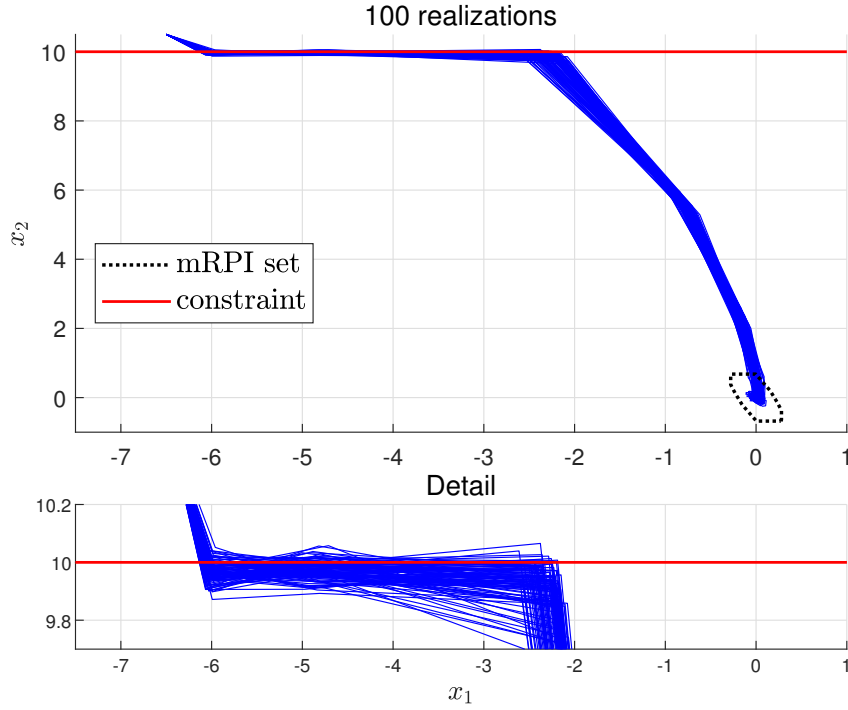


Figure 3. Constraint violation of the time-varying tube-based stochastic model predictive control
Abbreviation: mRPI: Minimal robust positively invariant.

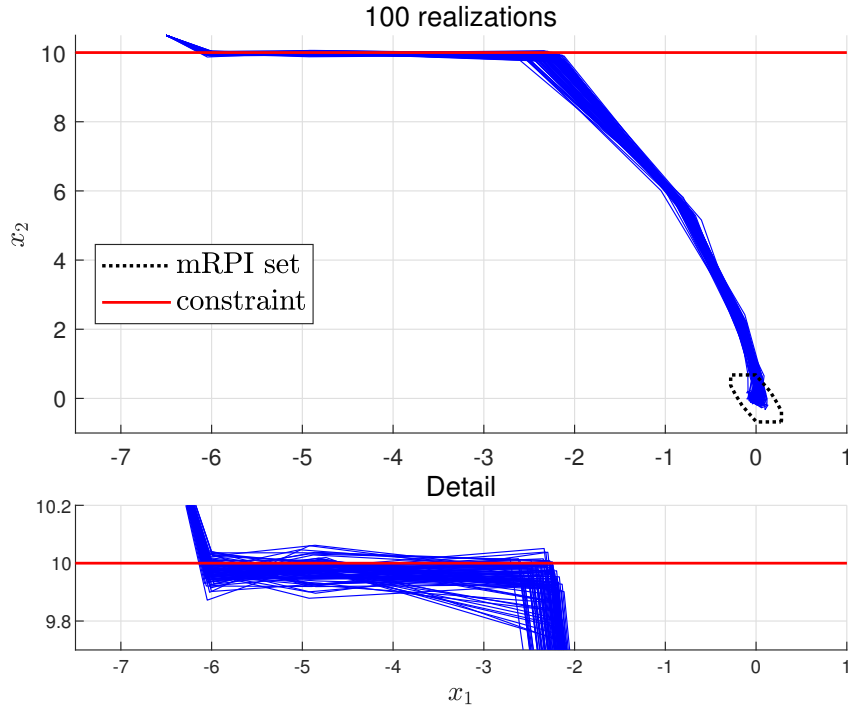


Figure 4. Constraint violation of the constant tube-based stochastic model predictive control
Abbreviation: mRPI: Minimal robust positively invariant.

on these results, the optimal control law is designed as in Equation (33). The complete procedure of the CTSMPc is executed in an iterative fashion for all $t \geq 0$. Such an iterative execution results in a receding horizon control strategy.

The proofs of recursive feasibility and stability for this special case can be derived following a similar approach to that used for the TTSMPC.

Remark 3. It is noteworthy that the tightened deterministic state constraint set \mathcal{C}_∞ for the special case remains constant across the prediction

Table 1. Constraint violation of the model predictive control algorithms

Algorithm	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Average
RTMPC	0%	0%	0%	0%
VTSMPC	16.32%	17.11%	8.96%	14.13%
TTSMP	19.89%	20.16%	9.82%	16.62%
CTSMPC	19.90%	20.15%	9.35%	16.47%

Abbreviations: CTSMPC: Constant tube-based stochastic model predictive control; RTMPC: Robust tube-based model predictive control; TTSMP: Time-varying tube-based stochastic model predictive control; VTSMPC: Variable scaling tube-based stochastic model predictive control.

Table 2. Time consumption of the model predictive control algorithms

Algorithm	RTMPC	VTSMPC	TTSMP	CTSMPC
Time(s)	0.027	0.030	0.032	0.029

Abbreviations: CTSMPC: Constant tube-based stochastic model predictive control; RTMPC: Robust tube-based model predictive control; TTSMP: Time-varying tube-based stochastic model predictive control; VTSMPC: Variable scaling tube-based stochastic model predictive control.

horizon and can be computed offline. Consequently, the resulting CTSMPC algorithm exhibits the same computational complexity as the RTMPC algorithm.

Remark 4. Given that $\lim_{t \rightarrow \infty} \mathcal{W}_t = \mathcal{Z}$, the optimal control problem $\mathbb{P}_N^{ttsmpc}(x_t)$ becomes equivalent to $\mathbb{P}_N^{ctsmpc}(x_t)$ as $t \rightarrow \infty$. It should be noted that the CTSMPC algorithm is essentially identical to the work presented by Rosolia et al.,²⁹ albeit with a distinct derivation process.

4. Numerical Simulation

In this section, we verify the chance constraint violation behaviors of the proposed algorithms. The discrete-time LTI system subject to truncated normal distributed additive uncertainties is considered:¹⁷

$$x_{k+1} = \begin{bmatrix} 1.6 & 1.1 \\ -0.7 & 1.2 \end{bmatrix} x_k + \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix} u_k + w_k, \quad (39)$$

where $\mathbb{X} \triangleq \left\{ x \in \mathbb{R}^2 : \begin{bmatrix} -10 \\ -2 \end{bmatrix} \leq x \leq \begin{bmatrix} 2 \\ 10 \end{bmatrix} \right\}$, $\mathbb{U} \triangleq \{u \in \mathbb{R} : |u| \leq 10\}$, and $\mathbb{W} \triangleq \{w \in \mathbb{R}^2 : \|w\|_\infty \leq 0.1, w \sim \mathcal{N}(0, 0.03^2 I)\}$.

The state and input constraints are specified as follows: $\Pr(x_k \in \mathbb{X}) \geq 0.8$ and $u_k \in \mathbb{U}$, $\forall w_k \in \mathbb{W}$, $k \in \mathbb{N}_0$. The weights of the cost functions are $Q = I$ and $R = 1$, respectively. K is chosen as the linear quadratic regulator feedback gain for the unconstrained optimal problem

(A, B, Q, R) . The prediction horizon N is set sufficiently large to ensure algorithm feasibility and maintain acceptable control performance. However, to limit computational overhead, N should be minimized as much as possible. In this particular simulation scenario, the prediction horizon is set to $N = 6$, the number of simulation steps is $N_{\text{sim}} = 11$ and the initial state of the system is given by $x_0 = [-6.5, 10.5]^T$.

4.1. Chance Constraint Violation

In this subsection, the chance constraint satisfaction of the proposed algorithms are verified. Figures 1–4 report the simulation results with 100 realizations of the RTMPC,²⁴ variable scaling tube-based SMPC (VTSMPC),¹⁶ TTSMP and CTSMPC algorithms for system in Equation (39). These figures illustrate the closed-loop trajectories along with detailed views of the first three steps. To precisely characterize the violation of chance constraints, 10,000 simulation realizations were conducted. The constraint violations within the first three steps are summarized in Table 1. Consistent with the observations from Figures 1–4, the RTMPC exhibited an average constraint violation of 0%, whereas the VTSMPC, TTSMP, and CTSMPC yielded average violations of 16.47%, 16.62%, and 16.47%, respectively. All the three SMPC satisfied the chance constraints $\Pr(x_k \in \mathbb{X}) \geq 0.8$. Furthermore, a higher violation ratio indicates greater optimization potential within the expanded feasible region. Consequently, the proposed SMPC approaches exhibited less conservative with the violation ratios were closer to the predefined threshold of 20%.

4.2. Computational Time

The average computational times for one step of the four strategies are shown in Table 2. The proposed TTSMPC algorithm and the CTSMPC algorithm require the comparable computational load with the RTMPC algorithm and the VTSMPC algorithm. The reason is that the calculations of the tubes were performed offline.

5. Conclusion

In this paper, an SMPC approach is developed within the RTMPC framework for linear constrained systems subject to bounded additive uncertainties. The proposed SMPC scheme mitigates conservatism by tightening constraints based on uncertainty propagation while accommodating chance constraints. Moreover, we have established the recursive feasibility and closed-loop stability of the proposed method. In addition, the tightened constraints within the SMPC scheme can be precomputed in an offline manner, rendering the proposed approach comparable in computational requirements to the RTMPC. Numerical simulations validate that the proposed SMPC approach reduces conservatism in terms of constraint violations.

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Conflict of interest

The authors declare they have no competing interests.

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Availability of data

Not applicable.

AI tools statement


All authors confirm that no AI tools were used in the preparation of this manuscript.

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