Essays on Political Behavior

Marco Giani

In my PhD dissertation, I focus on two separate topics: (1) Issue salience and (ii) Political inequality. For each topic, I present one theoretical and one empirical analysis. This sums up to 4 chapters.

**Chapter 1** (Political inequality, theoretical): "Immigration, Human Rights and Redistribution".

Input: In this work in progress paper, I assess the effect of immigration on the political behavior of natives.

Output: Plutocratic collective choice mechanisms rather than the law of supply and demand are responsible for the immigration worries of native unskilled workers. The effect of immigration on redistribution is shown, however, to be largely mitigated by the concession of political, social and working rights to foreign workers.

**Chapter 2** (Issue salience, theoretical): "Electoral Competition through Issue Selection".

Input: In this published paper, we assess the effect of priming on the intensity of electoral competition.

Output: Policy innovation is more likely when the ability of parties to divert the attention of voters towards their "owned issues" is stronger.

**Chapter 3** (Issue salience, empirical): "The Leader and the Public under the Terror Threat".

Input: In this work in progress paper, we assess the effect of a shock to the salience of an issue (terrorism) in the political preferences of agents.

Output: Populist leaders’ strategy to divide the public on key issues is less effective when a real threat actually arises.

**Chapter 4** (Political inequality, empirical): "The Depoliticized Participant".

Input: In this preliminary essay, I assess the participation behavior of depoliticized individuals (ideological centrist or "don't knows"), typically neglected in the field.

Output: Depoliticized individuals are alienated from politics rather than hostile to the democratic order.