

Sebastian Ellingsen
sebastianellingsen.github.io
sebastian.ellingsen@upf.edu

UNIVERSITAT POMPEU FABRA

Placement Director:
Libertad González libertad.gonzalez@upf.edu +34-93-542-2610

Graduate Coordinator:
Marta Araque marta.araque@upf.edu +34-93-542-2226

Office Contact Information

Office 20.146
Carrer de Ramon Trias Fargas, 25-27
Barcelona, ES 08005
+34-65-427-2489

Personal Information: Citizenship: Norwegian/German

Undergraduate Studies:

Bachelor of Science in Mathematics and Economics, **University of Oslo**, 2014
Bachelor of Arts in Economics, **University of Oslo**, 2012

Graduate Studies:

PhD in Economics, **Universitat Pompeu Fabra**, 2015-present
PhD Visiting Student, **University of Chicago**, 2018-2019

Expected Completion Date: June 2021

Master of Research in Economics, **Universitat Pompeu Fabra**, 2016
Master of Science in Economics and Finance, **Barcelona Graduate School of Economics**, 2015
Master of Philosophy in Economics, **University of Oslo**, 2014

References:

Professor Maria Petrova
Universitat Pompeu Fabra
maria.petrova@upf.edu
(+34) 93 542 28 87

Professor Giacomo Ponzetto
CREI, Universitat Pompeu Fabra
gponzetto@crei.cat
(+34) 93 542 2829

Professor Dávid Nagy
CREI, Universitat Pompeu Fabra
dnagy@crei.cat
(+34) 93-542-2760

Teaching and Research Fields:

Primary fields: Applied Economics, Economic Geography
Secondary fields: Political Economy, International Trade

Teaching Experience:

Spring 2016-2019	Universitat Pompeu Fabra, TA for Econometrics (undergraduate), Labor Economics (undergraduate), and Microeconomics (undergraduate)
Fall 2015-2016	Barcelona GSE, TA for Econometrics (graduate)

Spring 2013-2014 University of Oslo, TA for International Economics (undergraduate), and
Macroeconomics (undergraduate)

Research Experience and Other Employment:

2019-present ERC Project “The Rise and Fall of Populism and Extremism”, Research Assistant
Summer 2014 Statistics Norway, Research Assistant

Presentations:

2020 SAEe 2020 (scheduled), PhD Student Workshop of the Urban Economic Association, DEVPEC (Berkeley/Stanford), Young Economist Symposium (UPenn), World Congress of the Econometric Society (Bocconi), Applied Young Economist Webinar, CREI International Lunch (CREI), 42nd Annual Meeting of the Norwegian Association of Economists (Norwegian University of Life Sciences), Student Seminar (UPF)

2018-2019 Barcelona GSE PhD Jamboree (BGSE), Spring Meeting of Young Economists (ULB), Lunch Seminar (Norwegian Business School), Seminar (Frisch Centre), Labor, Political Economy, and Development Seminar (UPF), Student Seminar (UPF)

2017-2018 Labor, Political Economy, and Development Seminar (UPF), Economics PhD Conference (Warwick), Institute of Social Research (Oslo), 5th PhD-Student Workshop in Industrial and Public Economics (Reus), Barcelona GSE PhD Jamboree (BGSE)

2016-2017 Labor, Political Economy, and Development Seminar (UPF), Student Seminar (UPF)

Refereeing Activities: *Journal of Public Economics, Quarterly Journal of Political Science, Political Behavior*

Honors, Scholarships, and Fellowships:

2015-2019 Teaching Assistant Fellowship, UPF
2014 Best Master Thesis in Macroeconomics, University of Oslo
2013 Master Thesis Scholarship, University of Oslo

Publication:

“*The Impact of Commercial Television on Turnout and Public Policy: Evidence from Norwegian Local Politics*”
Journal of Public Economics, Vol 159, March 2018, Pages 1-15

Media Coverage: [New York Times – The Upshot](#)

We investigate the impact of commercial television on political participation and local policy outcomes. Exploiting a geographically staggered expansion of cable television after the liberalization of Norwegian broadcasting in 1981, we show that higher cable television penetration significantly reduced turnout in municipal elections. Using individual-level data, we find that cable television coverage had a negative effect on the extent to which respondents were exposed to political information through mass media. The effect is more pronounced for individuals that on average watch more cable television; namely individuals with fewer years of schooling. Consistent with an increased difference in political participation and exposure to information between more and less educated groups, we find that commercial television led to reduced public spending and increased the share spent on education. The results are evidence that commercial mass media can influence electoral politics by reducing political participation and exposure to information of its target audiences.

Research Papers:

“*Free and Protected: Trade and Breaks in Long-Term Persistence*” (Job Market Paper)

The spatial distribution of economic activity depends largely on market access and history, but countries differ greatly in the extent to which their geography reflects these two determinants. What explains these differences? This paper explores this question using a staggered lifting of restrictions on direct trade with Europe across the Spanish Empire. I combine a difference-in-differences approach with a dynamic spatial equilibrium framework and detailed georeferenced data on maritime travel from historical logbooks to examine this issue. I show that the increase in market access induced by the reform led to a substantial reconfiguration of the economic geography in places that were initially less-densely settled. Moreover, I show that modern-day settlement patterns depend less on pre-colonial population density,

and more on coastal access in areas subjected to the reform. Taken together, the findings show that a key determinant of persistence in economic geography is the level of development of a country as it opens up to trade.

“Does High-Speed Internet Erode Democracy? Evidence from a Norwegian Broadband Reform”, with Øystein Hernæs and Øyvind Skorge

To what extent the surge of high-speed internet has contributed to democratic erosion is contested. On the one hand, it may crowd out voters’ consumption of traditional media with higher and more unbiased knowledge about politics, which is expected to lessen turnout and polarize those who nonetheless vote. On the other hand, it may add to individuals’ existing news consumption and increase political knowledge, which is expected to increase turnout and leave polarization unaffected. To evaluate these competing hypotheses, we exploit a large-scale broadband reform that was rolled out in a staggered fashion across Norwegian municipalities during the 2000-2008 period. Our instrumental variable analysis reveals a positive effect of high-speed internet usage on the turnout rate in municipal elections and a small (and insignificant) negative effect on polarization in vote choice. We also show that the arrival of high-speed internet increased time online without replacing the consumption of newspapers, radio, and TV. Our analysis suggests that high-speed internet have more nuanced effects on electoral participation than what is commonly asserted.

Work in Progress:

“Trade, Income, and Factor-Based Models of Regime Change”

“Language Reform and Market Integration”, with Erqi Ge

“Trade, Epidemics, and Growth”, with Gregori Galofré-Vilà