

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.edu
(+34) 93-542-2760

Teaching and Research Fields:

Primary fields: Economic Geography, Political Economy
Secondary fields: 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 PhD Student Workshop of the Urban Economic Association (scheduled), DEVPEC
(Berkley/Stanford, scheduled), 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 Costs and Economic Development*” ([Job Market Paper](#))

How do trade costs shape economic development in the long-run? This paper analyzes the role of international trade costs in economic development using a staggered lifting of restrictions on long-distance trade in goods within the Spanish Empire. Using detailed georeferenced data on infrastructure, physical geography, and maritime travel from historical logbooks, I show that the reform induced large reductions in international trade costs. A difference-in-difference approach shows that the lower international trade costs induced by the opening of long-distance trade promoted the formation of new settlements and population growth and that the reform had substantial spatial spillovers. The effects are stronger in the periphery, locations with lower population density, and in areas suitable for export

agriculture. To assess the long-run effects, I use the changes in trade costs to estimate the parameters of a dynamic spatial general equilibrium model. A series of counterfactual exercises quantify the role that the timing of the reform as well as the initial spatial distribution of population plays in determining the long-run impact of the trade cost shock. The findings demonstrate that lower international transportation costs can promote growth and diversification in economies that specialize in commodity exports, but that the effects are highly contingent on initial geography and endowments.

“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 in Spain”, with Gregori Galofré-Vilà