

> Thursday, October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2021

12:00 - 13:30

IFLAME RESEARCH SEMINAR

**RESEARCH  
SEMINAR**



EMPOWERING CHANGEMAKERS FOR A BETTER SOCIETY



**ABSTRACT**

## **MIGRANTS' MISSING VOTES BY YVONNE GIESING (IFO INSTITUTE)**

Emigrants are less likely to participate in elections in their home country. They are also self-selected in terms of education, gender, age, and political preferences, changing the structure of the origin population. High emigration rates can therefore have a systematic influence on election results. Using administrative migration and voting data, we show that large emigration from Poland following the accession to the European Union in 2004 caused an increase in vote shares for right-wing parties, while decreasing the vote share for left-wing parties. To account for endogenous migration patterns, we construct an innovative instrument that measures the distance to the closest EU border and adds time variation by exploiting the gradual opening of different EU labour markets.

Our results further highlight that emigration reduces trust in right-wing governments, increases voting for parties with pro-European positions, but has no effects on incumbent parties. Exploiting changes in voting rules over time, we provide suggestive evidence that higher opportunity costs of casting a vote serve as an underlying mechanism.

These results have important implications for the design of voting policies.



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