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Social ties and the influence of public policies on individual opinions: The case of same-sex marriage laws

This paper focuses on the impact of laws on individual's opinions and on the role of social ties as a determinant of this impact. We first propose a simplified dyadic model in which individuals learn about a social norm through strong ties (family or close friends) and weak ties (outside the family or close friends). Consistently with the existing literature on the nature of social ties, we find that the law is more likely to shape opinions of people with dominant integrated weak ties, than of people with dominant strong ties. We test this theoretical prediction by investigating the impact of same-sex marriage laws on gay-friendly opinions. Using the eight waves of the European Social Survey (2002 to 2016) we propose a cell approach exploiting the sequential approval of same-sex marriage among various European countries to identify the change in individuals' opinions on gay and lesbian rights and the role of the nature (strong vs weak) of their ties as a driver of this change. To control for the opinion of individuals' social ties, we propose two alternative strategies. We first consider socio-demographic groups with a majority of gay rights supporters in 2002. Second we focus on immigrants, distinguishing whether they come or not from a country labelled as homophobic. Empirical results are consistent with the theoretical predictions.

Mots clés : public opinion, same-sex marriage, LGBT, social interactions

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Séminaire de recherche

12H30—Salle 103 (IAE SMB Annecy)

<https://doodle.com/poll/q2cqb3wu2st4e5hs>

Agenda

05/03/2020, Vidya DRUGANTI (GEM, IREG),
Orchestrating a firm's network to leverage
resources and responses for activities
outside core Ecosystem

Calendrier des séminaires

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