PANTHÉON-ASSAS UNIVERSITÉ PARIS

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LEMMA
Laboratoire d'économie mathématique et de microéconomie appliquée

SÉMINAIRE

POLITICAL INFLUENCE UNDER CHILDHOOD - GIANMARCO DANIELE

10 April 2026
Lemma - 4 rue Blaise Desgoffe, 75006 Paris. Salle Maurice Desplas

The LEMMA seminar will host Gianmarco Daniele. He is Professor of economics at the University of Milan and the Executive Director of the CLEAN Unit on the economics of crime at Bocconi University. His research interest lies in political, public, crime and development economics.

***Abstract**: We study the role of office-holders in the formation of political preferences during childhood. Leveraging data on 200 million registered voters and a regression discontinuity design based on U.S. gubernatorial elections from 1945 to 2024, we show that state governors systematically shift voters' partisan alignment toward their own party. The effects are concentrated among individuals who were between the ages of 6 and 17 during a governor's tenure. Each additional year of exposure to a Republican governor*
during childhood increases the probability of Republican registration in adulthood by 0.45 percentage points or about 1.8 percentage points over a four-year term. We further document lasting impacts on primary participation and survey-based attitudes. The effects are systematically stronger in settings where governors enjoy greater institutional authority, especially over education and budgeting, and when they are more popular.