Urbanization and Crime: Evidence from South Africa

RÉSUMÉ

This paper investigates the impact of urbanization on crime in South Africa. We assemble an original dataset combining yearly information on crime and urban population density at the municipality level over the 2011-2018 period. We exploit exogenous variations in rural-urban migration based on climate shocks at origin for identification. We show that an increase of population density in urban areas is associated with a decrease of pecuniary crime rate but has no effect on non-pecuniary crimes. We show that this negative effect is mostly driven by a change in population composition as migrants are on average too poor to be targeted by criminals.

Victor Stéphane (https://sites.google.com/view/victorstephane)
GATE (https://www.gate.cnrs.fr) - Université Jean Monnet