

Webinaire Junior sur l'économie des migrations

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Do Enfranchised Immigrants Affect Political Behaviour?

RÉSUMÉ

This paper analyses 3 million UK Parliament speeches between 1972 and 2011 to understand how enfranchised immigrants affect political behaviour towards existing and prospective immigrants. Since the birth of the Commonwealth of Nations in 1931, the immigrants from commonwealth countries in the UK have a right to vote in the national elections, while the non-commonwealth immigrants do not have this enfranchisement power. I find an increase in the share of enfranchised immigrants makes the incumbent spend more time in the Parliament talking about immigrants, address immigrants with a positive sentiment and vote to make immigration tougher. An increase in disenfranchised immigrants leads to the opposite effect. The enfranchised immigrants undertake more socio-political actions (signing a petition, participating in protests, contacting a politician etc.) compared to disenfranchised immigrants, which drives politician's behaviour. Disenfranchised immigrants only start catching up with the enfranchised immigrants after naturalisation.

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