

Nikita Melnikov

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References

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Job Market Paper

Mobile Internet and Political Polarization

How has mobile internet affected political polarization in the United States? Using Gallup Daily Poll data covering 1,765,114 individuals in 31,499 ZIP codes between 2008 and 2017, I perform a difference-in-differences analysis and an instrumental-variable design to show that, after gaining access to 3G internet, Democratic voters became more liberal in their political views and increased their support for Democratic congressional candidates and policy priorities, while Republican voters shifted in the opposite direction. This increase in polarization largely did not take place among social media users. Instead, following the arrival of 3G, experienced internet and social media users from both parties became more pro-Democratic, whereas less-experienced users became more pro-Republican. This divergence is partly driven by differences in news consumption between the two groups: after the arrival of 3G, experienced internet users decreased their consumption of Fox News, increased their consumption of CNN, and increased their political knowledge. Polarization also increased due to a political realignment of voters: wealthy, well-educated people became more liberal; poor, uneducated people—more conservative.

Media coverage: The Boston Globe, Marginal Revolution (Tyler Cowen's favorite 2021/2022 JMP)

Education

Princeton University

Ph.D. in Economics

2016—present
Exp. completion: May 2022

M.A. in Economics

2018

Higher School of Economics & New Economic School

B.A. in Economics

2016

Summa Cum Laude, Best Thesis Award

Publications

3G Internet and Confidence in Government (with Sergei Guriev and Ekaterina Zhuravskaya)

Quarterly Journal of Economics, November 2021, 136 (4): 2533–2613.

Media coverage: The Economist, VoxEU, EBRD Transition Report 2019–2020 (p. 30–31), World Economic Forum, The Moscow Times

Happiness Convergence in Transition Countries (with Sergei Guriev)

Journal of Comparative Economics, September 2018, 46 (3): 683–707.

War, Inflation, and Social Capital (with Sergei Guriev)

American Economic Review: Papers and Proceedings, May 2016, 106 (5): 230–235.

Media coverage: The Moscow Times, RBC (in Russian)

Working Papers and Work in Progress

Gangs, Labor Mobility, and Development (with Carlos Schmidt-Padilla and María Micaela Sviatschi)

Media coverage: The Economist, Probable Causation, VoxDev, NBER Digest

Censorship, Propaganda, and Political Popularity: Evidence From Russia (work in progress)

Organized Crime and Public Goods Provision During a Pandemic (with María Micaela Sviatschi; work in progress)

Professional Activities

Seminar and conference presentations: Princeton University CHW-RPDS, Political Economy, Public Finance, and IRS lunch seminars (2021), Bocconi University guest lecture (2021), EBRD Office of the Chief Economist seminar series (2020), University of Chicago and London School of

Economics Conference on the Economics of Crime and Justice (2019), ESOC 2019 Annual Meeting, 2019 APPAM Fall Research Conference, 2019 APSA Annual Meeting, WEAI 94th Annual Conference, 4th Economics of Media Bias Workshop, 16th Media Economics Workshop

Seminar organizer: Princeton University Political Economy lunch seminar (2018–2021)

Referee: *American Economic Review: Insights*, *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, *Journal of Comparative Economics*, *Journal of Development Economics*, *Journal of Public Economics*, *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, *Economics of Transition*

Honors and Awards (selected)

Prize Fellowship in the Social Sciences	2019–2022
Humane Studies Fellowship, Institute for Humane Studies	2019
Dean’s Fund for Scholarly Travel	2018
Travel grant, Philip Bennett *79 Public Policy and Finance Fund	2018
UniCredit Foundation US Ph.D. Scholarship	2016–2018
Princeton University Honorific Fellowship	2016–2018
Best Thesis Award, New Economic School	2016
Scholarship for Outstanding Academic Achievements, Higher School of Economics	2014–2016
Scholarship for Academic Achievements, Higher School of Economics	2012–2016
President of Russia’s Award in Support of Talented Young Students	2012
Absolute Winner of the Russian National Olympiad in Economics (Ranked 1st among more than 300,000 participants)	2012
Prize winner of seven other Olympiads in Economics and Mathematics	2012

Teaching Experience

Microeconomic Theory [ECO 300], Princeton University	Fall 2018
International Development [WWS 302/ECO 359], Princeton University	Fall 2018
Industrial Organization, Higher School of Economics & New Economic School	Spring 2016
Microeconomics II, Higher School of Economics & New Economic School	Fall 2015
Microeconomics I, Higher School of Economics & New Economic School	Spring 2015
