

Jonathan Lehne

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Job Market Contact

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Research Fields

Development Economics, Political Economy, Economic History, Applied Econometrics

Education

- 2015 – present Ph.D. in Economics, expected completion date: Spring 2020
Paris School of Economics/Université Paris 1 Panthéon Sorbonne, France
Advisor: Oliver Vanden Eynde
Thesis committee: Ekaterina Zhuravskaya, Margherita Comola
- 2018 Visiting student at Stanford University, USA
Advisor: Saad Gulzar
- 2014-2015 Master Analysis and Policy in Economics
Paris School of Economics/EHESS, France
- 2010-2011 MSc in Economics – Research
London School of Economics, UK
- 2008-2009 MSc in Development Studies
London School of Economics, UK
- 2004-2007 BA (Hons) in Economics and Management
University of Oxford, UK

References

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Job Market Paper

“Irrigation vs education: the long run effects of opium cultivation in British India”

The spatial allocation of public investments can have long term consequences. This paper analyses the effects of opium production in British India on colonial government spending on physical and human capital, and evaluates the relative persistence of these investments over time. My empirical strategy exploits administrative boundaries that demarcated opium-growing areas and fine-grained local variation in environmental suitability for poppy cultivation. In opium-growing districts, suitability for poppies was associated with higher colonial-era spending on irrigation and the rural police but lower investment in schools and healthcare. A century after the end of the opium trade, there are no significant effects on irrigation or police presence. However, former opium-cultivating villages have lower literacy, fewer schools and fewer health centres today. These results indicate that the physical capital investments favoured by colonial officials in opium-growing districts had less persistent consequences than the resultant underprovision of human capital. Evidence that past opium cultivation is associated with lower turnout and more votes cast for criminal politicians, suggests that differences in human capital were relatively more persistent because they affected the political equilibrium that emerged after independence.

Publications

“Building connections: Political corruption and road construction in India” joint with Jacob Shapiro and Oliver Vanden Eynde, *Journal of Development Economics* (2018), Vol. 131.

Politically-driven corruption is a pervasive challenge for development, but evidence of its welfare effects are scarce. Using data from a major rural road construction programme in India we document political influence in a 2 setting where politicians have no official role in contracting decisions. Exploiting close elections to identify the causal effect of coming to power, we show that the share of contractors whose name matches that of the winning politician increases by 83% (from 4% to 7%) in the term after a close election compared to the term before. Regression discontinuity estimates at the road level show that political interference raises the cost of road construction and increases the likelihood that roads go missing.

Work in Progress

“Administering voter suppression? Evidence from 140 million voters’ registrations in India”

Elections are complex administrative exercises. Free and fair elections require free and fair administrators. This paper tests for strategic manipulation in the electoral roll of Uttar Pradesh, the largest state of India. By constructing an individual-level panel dataset with over 140 million voters, I am able to track the appearance and disappearance of voters on the roll from year to year. Using a regression discontinuity design, I estimate whether voters are disproportionately more likely to be removed from the roll in precincts which voted against the incumbent. While politicians would have a clear incentive to engage in such voter suppression, the electoral roll is controlled by ostensibly neutral bureaucrats. Detailed data on the bureaucrats responsible for electoral registration (at the district, constituency, and precinct level) allows me to test whether politicians reassign bureaucrats in order to strategically influence the composition of the electorate.

“Bidding for Roads”, joint with Jacob Shapiro and Oliver Vanden Eynde

In many countries, public procurement is both a large component of government expenditure and a significant source of corruption. For this project we have collected detailed, bid-level data on tenders for over 20,000 road

construction projects in 6 states as part of India's major rural-road construction scheme. We match these data on the technical and financial evaluation of bids to separate administrative records on completed roads. We aim to analyse how the institutional design of the procurement process affects the levels of competition and corruption in the allocation of contracts, and how these relate to the quality of infrastructure provided.

Non-academic publications

"Income convergence at risk", joint with Jeromin Zettelmeyer, *EBRD Transition Report 2013*, Ch. 1.

"Macroeconomic developments and outlook", *EBRD Transition Report 2013*

"Transition region in the shadows of the eurozone crisis", joint with Franto Ricka, *EBRD Transition Report 2012*, Ch. 2.

Work Experience

2011-2014	Macroeconomic Research Analyst Office of the Chief Economist, Research Department European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, UK
2011	Research Intern Office of the Chief Economist, Research Department European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, UK
2008 and 2009	Junior Fellow Researcher European Stability Initiative, Berlin and Istanbul Offices

Teaching Experience

2019/2020	<i>Applied econometrics</i> Graduate level tutorial for Econometrics 2, Lecturer: Marc Gurgand Paris School of Economics, France
2018/2019	<i>Applied econometrics</i> Graduate level tutorial for Econometrics 2, Lecturer: Marc Gurgand Office hours for Econometrics 2 & 3 Paris School of Economics, France
2018/2019	<i>Economic history</i> TA for graduate course in Global Economic Governance: Lecturer Jerome Sgard Sciences Po, France

Awards, scholarships and grants

2017	Research Centre "OSE Open-up Economics" (<i>Labex OSE</i>) grant	2000 EUR
2017	IGC State Effectiveness "Bidding for Roads – top up"; (co-PI)	26,360 GBP
2015	IGC State Effectiveness "Bidding for Roads"	17,192 GBP

2015-2018	PhD Scholarship, Université Paris 1 Panthéon Sorbonne
2009	Prize for best overall performance in MSc in Development Studies, LSE
2009	Excellent Dissertation Prize LSE

Presentations

2019	Society for Institutional & Organizational Economics conference (Stockholm) German Economic Association Development Economics and Policy (Berlin) Warwick Economics PhD conference (Warwick University) Spring Meeting of Young Economists (Brussels) Navarra Center for International Development – Research workshop (Madrid)
2018	NEUDC - North East Universities Development Consortium (Cornell University) Oxford Development Economics Workshop (Oxford University) CEPREMAP India China Conference (Paris) Quality of Governance Conference (Stanford University) Political Economy of Democracy and Dictatorship Conference (Münster)
pre-2018	Indian Political Economy Workshop (Brussels) CEPREMAP India China Conference (Paris) India Research Group Conference (Paris) Bank of Finland Institute for Economies in Transition (Helsinki) Seminar at Estonian Finance Ministry (Tallinn) Conference on Trade Finance (Milan)

Refereeing

Referee for *Journal of Development Economics*

Languages

English (fluent)	German (fluent)	French (intermediate)	Arabic (basic)
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Software Skills

Stata	QGIS	Matlab	Latex	Python
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