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LEMMA
Laboratoire d'économie mathématique et de microéconomie appliquée

SÉMINAIRE

SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE DYNAMICS OF PROTESTS

23 mai 2024
Lemma - Salle Maurice Desplas 4 rue Blaise Desgoffe 75006 PARIS

Séminaire du Lemma

Le LEMMA organise un séminaire, sur le thème « ***Social Media and the Dynamics of Protests*** » le jeudi 23 mai à 11h.

Benoît SCHMUTZ (Polytechnique)

Résumé :

Social media may have ambiguous effects on protest dynamics. On the one hand, social media enables the development of online communities of protesters that keep movements alive. On the other hand, social media is fertile ground for political polarization and radicalization. Using data from the 2018-2019 Yellow Vest uprising in France, we show that local street protests triggered the creation of large communities of protesters on Facebook. However, these communities progressively became more antagonistic, negative, and ideologically segregated. While moderate discussants left the discussions, those who remained radicalized. We show that a simple model where social media reveals information about the structure of political preferences can generate two effects of opposite directions — an initial period of increased participation, followed by disengagement by the majority of protesters as a result of the radicalization of the movement.