

RESEARCH FORUM 2021-2022

Department of Political and Social Sciences

Thursday, March 3rd at 12pm

Room 40.035

Sala de graus A. Calsamiglia

Campus Ciutadella



Dr. Toni Rodon

Universitat Pompeu Fabra

will present

**Polling Officers and the Turnout
Gender Gap**

Abstract

The turnout gender gap in periods of early democratization has been a matter of scholarly interest for years. In the wake of female enfranchisement, why is it that women participated at lower rates in the elections than men? Against the backdrop of existing explanations, we suggest that being exposed to the functioning of elections can facilitate the closing of the gender turnout gap. Learning how elections work represents a political socialization experience that can counteract previous biases. Using the context of the Spanish Second Republic as a unique case-study (1931-1936), we test this argument by exploiting a lottery that assigned some citizens (men and women) to act as polling officers in 1933, the year in which women were first allowed to vote and serve as election officials. By building and exploiting a panel with individual-and contextual-level information, we show that women randomly selected in 1933 to act as polling officers were as likely to participate in the subsequent election than men. The analysis suggests that this mainly occurred because randomly selected women were more reactive to mobilization strategies by parties and trade unions. Our findings are important as they highlight the potential benefits of exposure to election engineering among groups less engaged with democracy.

Speaker's bio

European Doctor by the Universitat Pompeu Fabra. He is currently an Assistant Professor at the Universitat Pompeu Fabra (UPF) and a Visiting Fellow at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). Before that, he was a postdoctoral researcher at the Department of Government at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) and at the Spatial Social Science Lab at Stanford University (2014-2016). He did his Bachelor's degree in Political and Administration Sciences and a Master in Political and Social Sciences at the UPF. He has also been a visiting student at Nuffield College (University of Oxford), at the Institute for Social Change (University of Manchester) and at the Juan March Foundation (Center for Advanced Study in the Social Sciences). His research interests include electoral participation, political geography, comparative politics and historical political economy, as well as public opinion and the study of nationalism.