Piano di ricerca

The research project (part of a PRIN, grants funded by the Italian Ministry of University and Research for nationally relevant research projects) will involve two strands of research, possibly complemented by a survey to be run in the city of Bologna. First, we investigate a specific source of contextual influences on individual turnout: the impact of the presence of immigrants from different cultures and ethnic origin in the voter's neighborhood. We rely on a unique source of data which was assembled by the Bologna unit with the Municipal Statistical Office of Bologna. The dataset collects individual-level information from signed electoral rolls, administrative registers, and income tax files on turnout and socio-demographic characteristics, spanning four elections between 2004 and 2013. Socio-demographic information at the individual level is also available for the whole resident population. We exploit the granularity of individual-level information on income, geographic coordinates of residence, and nationality, to augment the neighborhood-level variables included in order to explain individual turnout. We construct measures of ethnic diversity and income polarization, along with spatial variants of the same variables, to capture more precisely contextual influences on voting. The panel structure of the data and the different types of elections included (administrative and political) provide heterogeneous settings that may help to disentangle separate effects by allowing the use of individual fixed effects.

Second, using precinct-level aggregate data on multiple elections at the local and national level for the city of Bologna (complemented with aggregates of the individual level described above) we aim at pinning down socio-economic drivers of voting patterns, specifically related to income level and distribution and local patterns of residence of natives and (different typologies of) immigrants.

We will design and run a retrospective survey on individual political choices and we will merge to our individual-level data so to (i) validate the aggregate behavior found in the data and (ii) understand the individual-level drivers of voting, leveraging on the wide array of economic and social characteristics of individuals, on the large availability of contextuals and on the panel dimension of our dataset.

Programma delle attività

The candidate will be involved in managing, maintaining and updating the individual- and precinct-level panel datasets already existing. These activities include building new variables using other sources of data (i.e. census, criminal records, newspaper archives in combination with data scraping, etc.), checking internal and external consistency, data visualization, and regression analysis.
Together with the main investigators, the candidate will also take part to the design and implementation of the survey, helped by local RAs.