

Abstract of a paper to be presented at the
5th Berlin IO Day, on September 25th, 2015:

Internet and Politics: Evidence from UK Local Elections and Local Government Policies

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We empirically study the effects of broadband internet penetration in the UK on local election outcomes and on Local Authorities' policy choices using rich data from 2006-2010. Overall, our analysis suggests that the internet has displaced other media with greater news content (i.e., radio and newspapers), thereby decreasing voter turnout, most notably among less-educated and younger individuals. In turn, local-government expenditures (and taxes) are lower in areas with greater broadband penetration, more so those targeted at less-educated voters and less so those targeted at older individuals. Our findings corroborate the idea that voters' information plays a key role in determining electoral participation, government policies and government size.