



Economics Seminars

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Aula 2 Edificio Baffi

Facoltà di Scienze Economiche Giuridiche e Politiche - Viale Sant'Ignazio 74

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Public Opinion, Racial Bias, and Labor Market Outcomes in the United States

with K. Majlesi and P. Sullivan

Abstract. We study the role of negative shifts in public opinion on the economic lives of racially under-represented groups by investigating sudden changes in views of Asian people following the anti-Chinese rhetoric that emerged with the COVID-19 pandemic, and associated changes in employment status and earnings in the U.S. labor market. Using data from the Current Population Survey, we find that, unlike other under-represented groups, Asian workers in occupations or industries with a higher likelihood of face-to-face interactions before the pandemic were more likely to become unemployed afterwards. While widespread along the political spectrum, negative shifts in perceived favorability of Asian people, and not of other under-represented groups, were much stronger among those who voted for President Trump in 2016 and could have been more influenced by the anti-Asian rhetoric.