

The Research Centre of the School of Economics and Business,
in cooperation with **the Bank of Slovenia,**
cordially invites you to a free research seminar
on **Thursday, 18 April 2024, at 14:00 CEST** in room **P-201**
at the **School of Economics and Business, University of Ljubljana**

Author

Daniel Klerman (*University of Southern California*)

will present the article

Legal Origin: A Geographic Regression Discontinuity Approach

This article advances the debate over legal origins by using survey data and satellite imagery to measure economic development and by employing geographic regression discontinuity analysis to control for climate, culture, and other observable and unobservable factors correlated with location. The basic legal structure of most countries was imposed by colonial powers, but Great Britain, France and other European nations did not colonize randomly. The lack of random assignment means that simple cross-country analyses may lead to erroneous conclusions because of unobservables correlated with legal origin. Regression discontinuity analysis is especially promising for Africa because many borders were drawn in Europe by diplomats and bureaucrats who had only the haziest knowledge of local conditions, except in coastal areas. As a result, borders split ethnic groups, and areas on either side of the border are similar along observable dimensions and presumably on unobservable ones as well. Satellite imagery is used to measure night-time lights and night-time lights per capita. Survey data are used to measure individual height and whether a household has electricity, a cell phone, a non-dirt floor, non-human-powered transport, or access to improved latrines or toilets. Analysis suggests that countries with common law legal origin do not perform consistently better, as measured by these eight proxies for economic development, than those with civil law. In fact, one key variable, height, suggests better nutrition and standards of living in former French colonies during the colonial period.

Please sign up for the free seminar at <http://raziskave.ef.uni-lj.si/a/1705>
by 17 April 2024.

We look forward to seeing you.