



**Dr. Ro'ee Levy**

Tel Aviv University School of Economics

# The Effect of Social Movements: Evidence from #MeToo

Ro'ee Levy is a lecturer at the Tel Aviv University School of Economics. Before joining Tel Aviv University, Ro'ee visited MIT as a post-doc and received his Ph.D. from Yale University. Ro'ee focuses on political economy and social media. He is especially interested in empirically studying the forces shaping social norms, political attitudes, and policy preferences, and their subsequent influence on individual behavior. His paper "Social Media, News Consumption and Polarization: Evidence from a Field Experiment" was recently published in the *American Economic Review*.

Social movements are associated with large societal changes, but evidence of their causal effects is limited. We study the effect of the MeToo movement on reporting sex crimes to the police. We construct a new dataset of crimes reported in 31 OECD countries and employ a triple-difference strategy over time, across countries, and between crime types. The movement increased the reporting of sex crimes by 10%. Using rich US data, we find that in contrast to a common criticism of the movement, the effect is similar across socioeconomic groups, and that the movement also increased sexual assault arrests. The increased reporting reflects a higher propensity to report sex crimes and not an increase in crime incidence. The mechanism most consistent with our findings is that victims perceive sexual misconduct to be a more serious problem following the movement. Our results demonstrate that social movements can rapidly and persistently affect high-stakes decisions.

<https://tau-ac-il.zoom.us/j/8898406343>

