



## Third 2021/2022 Groningen PPE Colloquium

Wednesday, March 23, 2022, 15.15-16.45  
Faculty of Philosophy, Room Omega

Chair: Boudewijn de Bruin

### **Sjoerd Beugelsdijk: Why the Netherlands is polarizing**

**Abstract:** Western countries are polarizing. The United States is often seen as the most polarized society and many people in the Netherlands fear the Netherlands is becoming alike. But why is the Netherlands polarizing? What is polarization of society in the first place? And what are the drivers of this process? Are these drivers the same across Western countries? In my talk I will address these and related questions. I unpack the root cause of polarization and argue that it is the result of several long term trends taking place at the same time. These trends have to do with the structural change of the economy as a result of globalization (China) and technology (robots), societal change rooted in increasing levels of individualism, political shifts reflected in the rise of populist parties and the way we have re-organized the welfare state. The polarizing effects of these gradual changes are amplified by social media. Solutions to the challenges of a polarizing society are not obvious and relate to these different trends.

**Biography:** Sjoerd Beugelsdijk (PhD Tilburg University) is a full professor in international business and director of research at the Faculty of Economics and Business of the University of Groningen in the Netherlands. His work is at the intersection of economics and sociology. Sjoerd Beugelsdijk has held visiting positions at several universities including University of South Carolina, Copenhagen Business School, Bocconi University, and KU-Leuven. He has served as a head of department and academic director of the undergraduate international business program in Groningen. Dr. Beugelsdijk received over 1 million euros in competitive research grants (Rubicon, Veni, Vidi) of the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research. He has supervised 10 PhD projects and is editor for the *Journal of International Business Studies-JIBS* (2016-current). He has edited and co-authored the 2019 government advisory board (Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau) report on 'Dutch national identity'. He is a Fellow of the Academy of International Business. In 2021 he published a popular scientific book 'De Verdeelde Nederlanden' on polarization in the Netherlands that was extensively covered in Dutch newspapers, radio and tv. Sjoerd is included on the list of most impactful researchers worldwide compiled by the University of Stanford.