

# Project overview

**Project Short Title/Acronym:** MigJND

**Project Full Title:** Migrants and just-noticeable differences in meso-level democratic values

**Project Lead PI:** Chris HANRETTY (Royal Holloway, University of London)

**Keywords:** Democracy, migrants, epistemologies, representation, accountability

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## Themes covered:

- Theme #1: Concepts, understandings, and models of democracy, governance and trust
- Theme #7: Epistemologies, knowledge and expertise

## Abstract

People disagree about what type of democracy is best. Often this is because there are trade-offs between meso-level democratic values. For example: democracies with proportional electoral systems fairly translate votes into seats, but have weak links between electoral success and participation in government (Kam et al., 2020). Given such trade-offs, political scientists have either maintained value neutrality, limiting themselves to identifying these conflicts, or have argued for the primacy of certain democratic values, thereby risking divergence between expert preferences and views in the general population. Limited use has been made of appeals to public opinion, since public knowledge of different types of democracy is often limited. This project studies beliefs and opinions of one population group which is well-qualified to evaluate different democracies: migrants. Migrants – particularly adult migrants from democratic countries – often participate actively in the politics of both their origin and host countries (Peltoniemi, 2018). They can therefore make informed comparisons between levels of proportionality, government identifiability, accountability, promissory and descriptive representation in their origin and host countries. By modelling comparisons between countries as a function of objective or intersubjective “ground truth” measures corresponding to these values in both countries, we establish which differences are “just-noticeable differences” (JNDs): the difference in the ground truth measure such that survey respondents detect a difference at least half the time. JNDs allow us to make normative claims about democratic trade-offs if differences which are alike in being “just-noticeable” are alike in normative weight. Migrants from countries with different institutional forms (different electoral system, different form of government) are also able to express preferences between institutional forms, and act as informed observers (Mill, 1863/1987). By studying JNDs in the realization of meso-level democratic values, and preferences over institutional forms, our project uses migrant knowledge to sharpen our understanding of democracy.

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# Migrants and just-noticeable differences in meso-level democratic values

## Abstract

People disagree about what type of democracy is best. Often this is because there are trade-offs between meso-level democratic values. For example: democracies with proportional electoral systems fairly translate votes into seats, but have weak links between electoral success and participation in government (Kam et al., 2020). Given such trade-offs, political scientists have either maintained value neutrality, limiting themselves to identifying these conflicts, or have argued for the primacy of certain democratic values, thereby risking divergence between expert preferences and views in the general population. Limited use has been made of appeals to public opinion, since public knowledge of different types of democracy is often limited. This project studies beliefs and opinions of one population group which is well-qualified to evaluate different democracies: migrants. Migrants – particularly adult migrants from democratic countries – often participate actively in the politics of both their origin and host countries (Peltoniemi, 2018). They can therefore make informed comparisons between levels of proportionality, government identifiability, accountability, promissory and descriptive representation in their origin and host countries. By modelling comparisons between countries as a function of objective or intersubjective “ground truth” measures corresponding to these values in both countries, we establish which differences are “just-noticeable differences” (JNDs): the difference in the ground truth measure such that survey respondents detect a difference at least half the time. JNDs allow us to make normative claims about democratic trade-offs if differences which are alike in being “just-noticeable” are alike in normative weight. Migrants from countries with different institutional forms (different electoral system, different form of government) are also able to express preferences between institutional forms, and act as informed observers (Mill, 1863/1987). By studying JNDs in the realization of meso-level democratic values, and preferences over institutional forms, our project uses migrant knowledge to sharpen our understanding of democracy.

## B1 Aims and background of the research proposed

Democracy is animated by multiple conflicting values. These conflicts are ubiquitous at the macro-level, where values cluster into different models of democracy, whether liberal, egalitarian or participatory (Coppedge et al., 2016). Yet conflict is equally ubiquitous at the meso-level of institutional design in *representative* democracies. Different countries use different electoral systems (Bormann & Golder, 2022) and forms of government. No system might be the single best overall, but one system might be acknowledged as best at realizing one particular value. For example: majoritarian electoral systems are often defended on the grounds that they maximize voters' ability to remove unsatisfactory governments ("kicking the rascals out"), and that this meso-level value should carry great weight when evaluating representative democracies (Pinto-Duschinsky, 1999).

Given conflict, political scientists can:

- *avoid* arguments about meso-level values, and give conditional recommendations for institutional choice/reform ("if you want more proportionality, you should adopt larger multi-member electoral districts"). This preserves an idea of value-free social science (M. Weber, 1989, pp. 25–26) but leaves political scientists unable to say whether increasing proportionality is good *all things considered*.
- *sidestep* argument about meso-level values and assess whether institutions promote outcomes that (almost) everyone regards as an unqualified good. Political scientists might recommend parliamentary systems over presidential systems because parliamentarism is robustly associated with lower infant mortality (Gerring et al., 2009), and no-one thinks higher infant mortality has offsetting advantages. This merely relocates the normative disagreement to a different level.
- *engage* in normative arguments, benefitting from greater knowledge of alternative institutional forms, but creating a risk that their judgements will be seen as reflecting the underlying partisan or socioeconomic interests of a "Brahmin left" (Piketty, 2020).

We propose a new way of resolving conflicts between meso-level democratic values and choosing institutional forms. In democracies public opinion plays an important normative role. However, public opinion on institutional choice is inchoate: most members of the public have limited interest in the institutions of their *own* polity, still less alternative institutions. We therefore appeal to public opinion amongst one population group which does have experience of multiple political systems. Migrants – particularly adult migrants from democratic countries – often participate actively in the politics of both their origin and host countries (Peltoniemi, 2018). They are well placed both to evaluate host and origin countries' performance in respect of different values, and (for migrants from countries with different institutional forms) to evaluate different institutional forms. These lived experiences are a firmer basis for comparison than fictive experiences of participants in lab-based experiments (Bol et al., 2023).

We survey migrants to answer two related questions.

First, we investigate whether migrants equally familiar with both host and origin countries *generally* prefer different institutional forms. We ask about preferences regarding form of executive (presidential, parliamentary, or semi-presidential) and the electoral system (majoritarian, proportional or mixed-member). To prevent negative/positive affect towards host countries from colouring responses, we ask this question two different ways: whether the *host* country would be better off if it adopted the origin country's institutional form; and whether the *origin* country would be better off if it adopted the host country's institutional form. Migrant preferences are normatively important because migrants are familiar with both forms, and because “familiarity with both objects of choice” is commonly regarded as a necessary basis for exercising competent prudential, ethical, or aesthetic judgement. Famously, for Mill ([1863/1987](#)), “the test of quality... [is] the preference felt by those who... are best furnished with the means of comparison” (283). Migrants are good “Millian observers”.

Preferences regarding institutional forms matter, but can only tell us about discrete institutional choices. We cannot use these preferences to evaluate reforms involving differences of degree rather than differences of kind – for example, the suggestion that proportional representation works best with small districts electing three to five representatives each (Carey & Hix, [2011](#)).

We therefore also ask migrants whether their host or origin countries better demonstrate different meso-level democratic values (and electoral democracy overall). The particular meso-level values we ask about are:

- government identifiability (Hanretty, [2023](#))
- accountability (Kam et al., [2020](#))
- proportionality (Gallagher, [1991](#))
- congruence (Golder & Stramski, [2010](#))
- minority protection, particularly with reference to protection through the courts (Ginsburg et al., [2018](#))
- promissory representation (Naurin et al., [2019](#); Pitkin, [1967](#)), and
- descriptive representation (Pitkin, [1967](#)).

Political scientists have developed objective or intersubjective measures which assess the degree to which these values are realized in practice. For example: descriptive representation can be assessed by comparing the proportion of women in parliament to the proportion in the (adult) population. We call these our “ground truth” measures. Given such measures, and subjective judgements as to which country better exemplifies a value (or whether they are indistinguishable), we can derive the “just-noticeable difference” (JND): the difference in the ground truth measure at which survey respondents correctly identify the better performing country at least half the time. JNDs can be used to *commensurate* different values. For Edgeworth ([1881](#)), it was a “first principle incapable of proof” that the “minimum sensible” or “just perceptible increment” of all pleasures is equitable.

Our analysis of the comparative judgements of migrants will suggest how different goals should be traded-off, but it does not tell us whether particular recommendations for institutional choice will gain public support. In the final part of our project, we test whether recounting migrants’ experiences of alternative institutional forms has a causal effect on

support for reform. We recontact UK migrant survey participants to discuss their views on institutional reform, and use this as the basis for a survey experiment which shows a random subset of non-migrant respondents these experiential arguments or a control condition.

Our research aims are therefore embodied in six work packages as follows:

**WP1.** To survey current and return migrants in the five fieldwork countries (Canada, Poland, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States) and ask them to judge which country (country of origin/former host country or fieldwork country) performs better in terms of seven meso-level democratic principles (government identifiability, accountability, congruence, proportionality, minority protection, promissory representation, and descriptive representation) and in terms of its overall level of democracy

**WP2.** To ask current and return migrants from a country with a different institutional configuration to the fieldwork country whether (i) the fieldwork country and (ii) their country of origin/former host country would do better if they adopted this alternative institutional configuration

**WP3.** To compile information on the degree to which electoral democracies around the world do in fact realise the seven meso-level democratic principles mentioned above, and the principle of electoral democracy

**WP4.** To create “just-noticeable differences” for the seven meso-level democratic principles and overall level of democracy

**WP5.** To determine whether particular institutional forms are generally preferred by migrants equally familiar with both forms

**WP6.** To test whether migrants’ experiential arguments for institutional choice cause greater support for those choices in non-migrant populations

### B1.1 Fit with TAP themes

This research falls within with TAP theme 4.1 (“Concepts, understandings and models of democracy, governance and trust”). It specifically tackles the meso-level identified in the call, and explicitly addresses the “links to electoral democracy [and] political accountability” also mentioned there. It is also focused on “structures” and “democratic institutions”, which can be reformed by legislative action, rather than sticky and slowly-changing behavioural factors affecting democratic challenges.

Our research also falls within TAP theme 4.7 (“Epistemologies, knowledge and expertise”). We start from the epistemic advantage enjoyed by one particular population group – and moreover a population group (migrants) which is often marginalised. This epistemic advantage is a form of implicit knowledge regarding their origin and host countries. Because we go back to survey respondents and invite them to contribute arguments for institutional reform, we co-produce research, testing whether migrant voices are heard when they make experiential arguments for institutional reform.

## B1.2 Relationship to TAP objectives

This plan of work corresponds closely to the objectives of the TAP call. First, it “innovate[s] our conceptualization of democracy” by making clear the trade-offs between meso-level values found in representative democracy. The *existence* of these trade-offs has been made clear before, but no researcher so far has been able to show satisfactorily the shape of this trade-off, either empirically or normatively. We do not expect our answer to these questions to be the last word on these trade-offs, but we do regard it as a major step forward, and one capable of shifting the debate on democratic practice from questions about whether trade-offs exist to how critical they are.

Second, our research “*empirically define[s] and describe[s]* the challenges... relevant to democracy” from a “contemporary perspective”. We match subjective judgements with “ground truth” measures of how well different democracies realize different meso-level values.

Third, our research offers a methodologically diverse and cross-national perspective. To our knowledge, ours will be the first study to apply the concept of just-noticeable differences to the study of political outcomes. It thereby profits from a rich strand of literature in psychology and ethics, discussed more fully in §3.1.

Fourth, it tests a possible intervention – sharing migrant experiences – “aimed at enhancing democratic processes”. Whilst large-scale institutional reforms are uncommon, there is value in understanding which arguments move people (Loewen et al., 2012).

Finally, our research is a form of co-production of knowledge with a particular community – the community of current and former migrants. We view our project as a way of harnessing the epistemic advantage of that community to produce a better understanding of democracy and its tensions.

## B2 Methodology of the research proposed

### B2.1 JNDs

A key component of our research is the elicitation of just-noticeable differences (JNDs) for meso-level democratic values. JNDs are usually elicited by repeatedly presenting participants with different sets of stimuli, with respondents either forced to choose one higher rated stimulus, or allowed to state that the alternatives cannot be distinguished. Where respondents can be presented with multiple stimuli sets, accurate inferences are possible with a small number of respondents. For example: one study of JNDs in the saltiness of foods presented just 50 respondents with seven stimuli sets (Drake et al., 2011).

We can only “present” migrant respondents with one stimuli set, with two alternatives (the country of residence and *either* the country of origin, for current migrants, *or* the former country of residence, for “former” or “return” migrants). Though some individuals have worked

or studied in multiple countries, such individuals are rare, and the implementation costs of eliciting comparative judgements between three countries are prohibitive.

Because we can only ask each respondent about two alternatives, our study uses many more respondents than is typical in JND research in psychology or marketing. We have also designed our response format to ensure maximally informative responses: we allow respondents to indicate that the two countries are indistinguishable with respect to the value we ask about, but we also allow them to express greater or lesser confidence in their judgements. These two steps allow us to estimate JNDs precisely despite the fact that each respondent is only comparing two alternatives per value.

Box 1 gives an example for promissory representation. We begin by asking respondents about the level of promissory representation in the fieldwork country. We ask this question first to guard against “response substitution” (Graham & Coppock, 2021), where respondents dissatisfied with the level of democracy in the fieldwork country rate it poorly if asked to compare immediately. We then ask respondents to make a comparative judgement between the fieldwork country and the country of origin/former country of residence.

**i** Box 1: Example question for promissory representation.

**Q1:** Thinking about the last couple of elections in [FIELDWORK COUNTRY], to what extent would you agree with the following statement: “Parties in government generally do what they promised before the election”

- strongly disagree
- disagree
- neither agree nor disagree
- agree
- strongly agree

**Q2:** Thinking about the last couple of elections in [COUNTRY OF ORIGIN/FORMER COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE], would you say parties are better at keeping promises in [COUNTRY OF ORIGIN/FORMER COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE], or better at keeping promises in [FIELDWORK COUNTRY]?

- Much better at promise-keeping in [COUNTRY OF ORIGIN]
- Somewhat better at promise-keeping in [COUNTRY OF ORIGIN]
- About the same in both countries
- Somewhat better at promise-keeping in [FIELDWORK COUNTRY]
- Much better at promise-keeping in [FIELDWORK COUNTRY]

Where a large number of respondents evaluate the same stimuli, it is possible to study directly which pairs of stimuli are successfully distinguished more than half of the time. If forty of fifty respondents rate food A as saltier than food B, this is good evidence that the JND is smaller than the difference in salt between the two samples. Where there are relatively few comparisons involving the same stimuli, we have to model the responses, and approach the issue of the JND more indirectly.

Because we have ordered responses (much better, somewhat better, etc.,), we use an ordinal logistic regression with a single predictor – the difference in the ground truth variable between fieldwork and origin countries. An ordinal logistic regression has a series of different ordered intercepts for each of the response categories, such that higher response categories require a larger difference between fieldwork and origin countries.

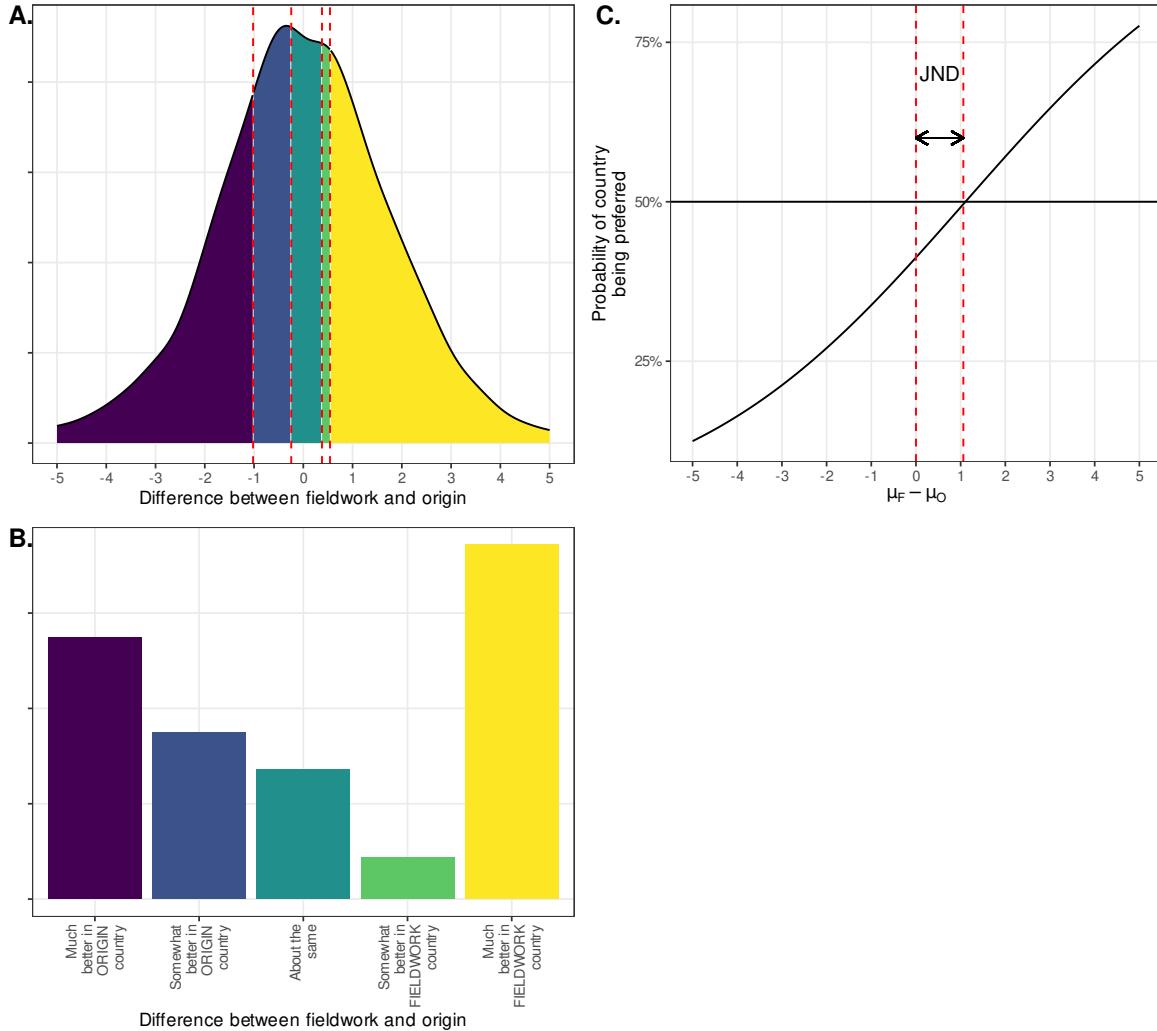


Figure 1: Illustrative plots of distribution of underlying differences in ground truth (panel A), realized survey responses (panel B), and predicted probabilities of exceeding the ‘about the same’ category (panel C.)

After estimating this model, we can work out the just-noticeable difference. Recall that this is the smallest difference at which the probability of the larger stimulus being correctly identified is equal to or greater than fifty percent. Figure 1 shows how this works for simulated data. The fieldwork country is (correctly) chosen by respondents when the difference between the fieldwork and origin country is just over one unit (panel C).

Unless all respondents say all countries are exactly the same, the model always recovers

some JND. Where respondents are poor judges of the concepts involved, it will take big differences in the ground truth to shift responses, and the JND will be large (equivalently, the slope in panel C will be shallow). Where respondents are good judges, JNDs will be smaller. One goal of the project is to identify which values are associated with small just noticeable differences.

This model is the simplest model for eliciting the JND. It is possible to extend the model to allow for order effects (e.g., respondents are more likely pick the country of origin regardless of true differences), or for country-specific effects (e.g., Canada is more often picked than it should be given its performance). It is also possible to model the scale of the threshold parameters as a function of respondent characteristics such as their level of knowledge. We estimate these models using the `brms` package for R (Bürkner, 2017), which allows us easily to summarize the posterior distribution of the JND rather than producing a single point estimate.

## B2.2 Survey

To elicit JNDs we need to survey current or former migrants. Our inferences are more valid the more migrant opinions are similar to individuals alike in all important respects save for their migration background. For this reason we additionally survey non-migrants to establish whether their evaluations of meso-level democratic values are systematically harsher or more generous than the evaluations of migrants. In this section we describe the structure of the survey (see Figure 2), before going on to discuss issues of question wording.

The survey starts with filter questions which ask respondents whether they were born in the fieldwork country, or whether if not they have worked or studied abroad in another country for three or more years. Current migrants (i.e., those not born in the fieldwork country) will be asked for their country of birth, and say how long they have lived in the fieldwork country. Former migrants will be asked to identify the country in which they spent most time, and say how long they lived there.

We restrict our analysis of migrants to migrants from democratic countries. By democratic countries, we mean countries with an average score over the past ten years of at least 0.4 on the V-Dem project's electoral democracy index (Baltz et al., 2022). We exclude migrants from non-democratic countries because (i) they may not be able to answer questions about electoral processes where no electoral processes exist, and because (ii) comparing across democratic and non-democratic regimes increases the risk that respondents will use the same words to mean different things (Ariely & Davidov, 2011).

Respondents are then asked to make a series of evaluations concerning overall levels of democracy and their realization of the seven meso-level democratic values we specify above. Above we gave an example of this kind of question for one particular democratic value (promissory representation). Table 1 lists the question wordings for levels of electoral democracy and for the remaining seven meso-level democratic values. Non-migrants will be asked about the fieldwork country; migrants will also be asked to make a comparative evaluation.

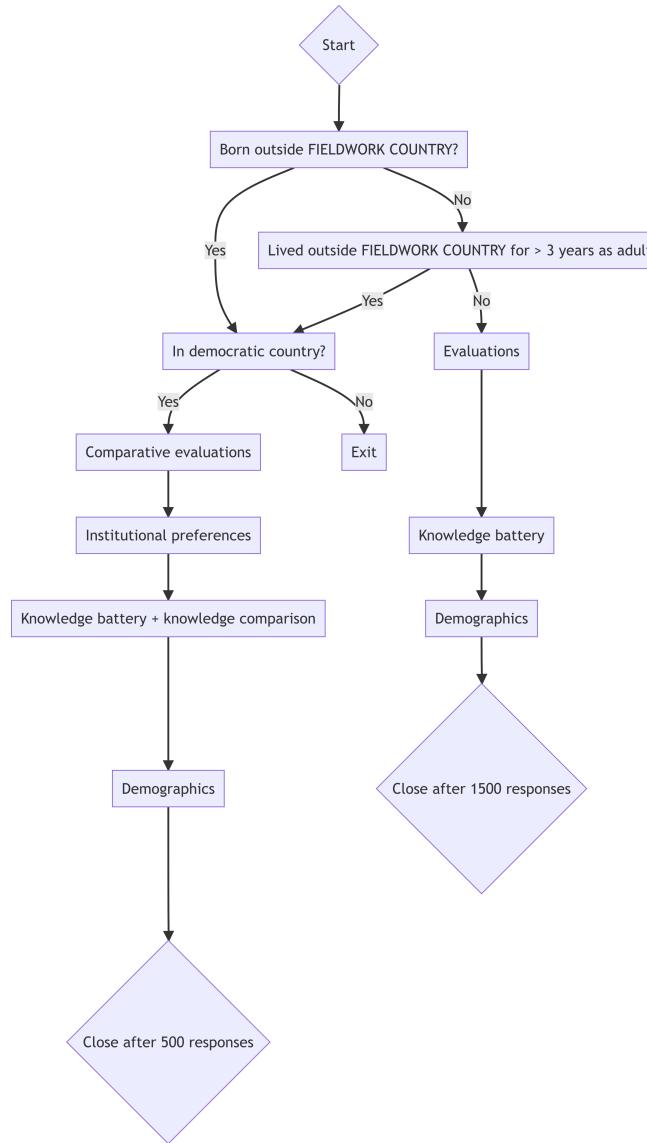


Figure 2: Survey flow-chart.

Table 1: Example survey questions

Value	Question	Responses
Democracy	Thinking about the past ten years, to what extent would you agree with the following statement: “FIELDWORK COUNTRY is a democracy where there are regular free and fair elections”	<i>Likert agreement</i>
Identifiability	Thinking about the last couple of elections in FIELDWORK COUNTRY, would you say that you knew which party or parties would form the government as soon as you knew the election results, or did you find it harder?	<i>Very easy / quite easy / quite hard / very hard</i>
Accountability	Thinking about the last couple of elections in FIELDWORK COUNTRY, to what extent would you agree with the following statement: “It’s easy to get rid of parties in government that aren’t doing a good job”	<i>Likert agreement</i>
Proportionality	Thinking about the last couple of elections in FIELDWORK COUNTRY, to what extent would you agree with the following statement: “The number of seats each party wins in [NATIONAL/FEDERAL LEGISLATURE] is a fair reflection of the number of votes they get”	<i>Likert agreement</i>
Congruence	Thinking about the last couple of elections in FIELDWORK COUNTRY, to what extent would you agree with the following statement: “The views of the average member of [NATIONAL/FEDERAL LEGISLATURE] are a good match to the views of the average person in the country”	<i>Likert agreement</i>
Minority protection	Thinking about the past fifteen years, to what extent would you agree with the following statement: “FIELDWORK COUNTRY is a country where the court system treats everyone fairly”	<i>Likert agreement</i>
Promissory representation	Thinking about the last couple of elections in FIELDWORK COUNTRY, to what extent would you agree with the following statement: “Parties in government generally do what they promised before the election”	<i>Likert agreement</i>
Descriptive representation	Thinking about the last couple of elections in FIELDWORK COUNTRY, to what extent would you agree with the following statement: “[NATIONAL/FEDERAL LEGISLATURE] holds up a mirror to society: people of all ages, genders and ethnicities are represented in proportion to their presence in the population”	<i>Likert agreement</i>

The next section is only answered by a subset of migrants. Migrants from a country where the electoral system or form of government is of a different type to the type used in the fieldwork country are asked whether the fieldwork country would be better off adopting the alternative form, and are then asked the question in the reverse about their country of origin. We do not ask non-migrants these questions because some of the institutional forms are hard to explain to individuals who lack knowledge of them.

We then ask respondents to complete a knowledge battery formed of six cross-nationally comparable questions, together with an exhortation to answer honestly (Clifford & Jerit, 2016). Migrant respondents are additionally asked to give subjective assessments of their levels of knowledge in *both* the fieldwork country and their country of origin/country of former residence. Asking these questions allows us, in subsequent analyses, to exclude current or former migrants whose connection to their countries of birth/countries of former residence is minimal.

Finally, we collect demographic information on all respondents. This allows us to weight responses to the relevant populations, and to match migrants to the most similar non-migrant respondent in follow-up analyses.

### B2.3 Ground truths

The survey allows us to elicit comparative judgements about democratic values, but to assess which differences are noticeable we need to measure the degree to which these values are actually exemplified in democratic countries globally. We use the following measures:

- **democracy:** the “electoral democracy” index produced by the V-Dem project (Coppedge et al., 2016);
- **proportionality:** the average value of the Gallagher index of disproportionality (Gallagher, 1991) averaged over the last three elections
- **identifiability:** the entropy of predicted probabilities of coalition formation (Hanretty, 2023), averaged over the last three legislative terms
- **accountability:** the seat-share weighted ratio of change in cabinet portfolio share divided by change in vote share of incumbent parties (Kam et al., 2020)
- **congruence:** the distance on the left-right scale between the average (mean) legislator and the average survey respondent (Golder & Stramski, 2010)
- **minority protection:** the V-Dem project’s “Equality before the law and individual liberty” index (v2xcl\_r01) (Coppedge et al., 2016)
- **descriptive representation:** the disproportionalities (measured by the Gallagher index) between the proportion of the population and the proportion of lower-chamber legislators who belong to two cross-nationally comparable demographic groups [gender groups, age groups], averaged over the last three legislative terms
- **promissory representation:** an extension of Thomson et al. (2017) for the twelve countries included in that study

Not all ground truth measures are available for all countries. Whereas V-Dem measures are available for all countries, our measure of promissory representation requires time-consuming additional data to be collected, and we can only promise coverage for the six most common countries of origin in each fieldwork country (see §5.4 for more details). Similarly, our measure of congruence is based on over 200 national election studies which ask respondents to place themselves *and parties* on a (comparable) left-right scale, which covers *most* but not all electoral democracies likely to feature in our survey.

## B2.4 Experimental tests of experiential arguments

Our final method is an experimental test of experiential arguments for institutional reform. We recontact UK survey respondents and ask to discuss their views on institutional reform. Based on an unstructured interview, we write a short script (< 250 words) which summarises their migration history, their experience of the different institution, and what they find most persuasive. We recruit an actor to perform this script. We test the effect of this recorded script on support for institutional reform in a follow-up survey. We compare the effect of the experiential argument to a non-experiential argument (a video segment recorded by the same actor, but with a UK accent and with no mention of any immigration background) and a control (a video segment discussing arguments for organ donation).

# B3 Position in the context of existing research

## B3.1 Just-noticeable differences

The concept of the just-noticeable difference (JND) originates in psychophysics (Fechner, 1860; E. Weber, 1934/1978). Earlier work in psychophysics tried to identify a single JND for each type of stimulus: psychologists at the time hoped to identify *the* JND for light, for pitch, and so on. More recent work in psychophysics (Laming, 1973) suggests that JNDs are at least partly context-dependent.

Early work by Weber and Fechner directly inspired early utilitarians who hoped to identify the just-noticeable difference in terms of utility, and thereby make different sorts of pleasures commensurable (Edgeworth, 1881). This has led some to suggest a perception-theoretic approach to utilitarianism (Argenziano & Gilboa, 2019; Ng, 1975), although such authors place more emphasis on the way just-noticeable differences vary between individuals rather than the way they vary across activities (e.g., a rich person may not notice a loss of \$100 but a poor person will). Although these perception-theoretic arguments are highly abstract, more practical applications of the JND occur in medicine, where some studies base the “minimal clinically important difference” (MCID) on the smallest difference, for any outcome of interest, that patients can detect (Jaeschke et al., 1989).

The use of JNDs has been attacked on the grounds that it fails to deal with cumulative processes and with outcomes that are valued at least partly for their consequences. Concerning cumulative processes: Luce (1956) noted that consumers are unlikely to have a

preference between a cup of coffee with no sugar, and a cup of coffee with one grain of sugar: the additional sugar is well below the just noticeable difference for sugar in solution. Yet at the same time consumers can have strong preferences between cups of coffee with varying amounts of sugar even where these have been added one grain at a time. This can be viewed as a particular application of the sorites paradox. As far as partly instrumentally valuable quantities are concerned, although it is possible to establish just-noticeable differences in how clear the air looks (Henry, 2002), our interest in clear air is partly intrinsic (we value being able to see through the air and disvalue smog) and partly instrumental (we value clear air because lower levels of particulate matter cause fewer breathing difficulties). It would therefore be wrong to limit air pollution to less than just-noticeable levels, since this might fail to account for long-term consequences of polluted but visibly clear air. Fortunately neither of these issues applies to political outcomes: our seven meso-level values are valued intrinsically in the here and now rather than for their long-term consequences.

### B3.2 Expert opinion

We ask migrants their views because they are familiar with different polities – but so too are political scientists. There have been several studies of expert opinion regarding the desirability of different electoral systems overall and with respect to their likely consequences. Bowler et al. (2005) and Carey et al. (2013) both report the results of surveys of experts regarding electoral systems and the prioritization of electoral system objectives. The experts surveyed in Bowler et al. (2005) ranked seven different electoral system types. Of these, mixed member proportional was the best ranked on average and was also a Condorcet winner. Single member plurality was ranked sixth, ahead of run-off systems, single non-transferable vote, and mixed member majoritarian. Experts were also asked to rank “desirable properties” of electoral systems. Of these, “proportionality of outcome” and “helps ensure stable government” were the highest ranked, with accountability [“allows voters to ‘kick the rascals out’”] ranked fifth. The survey reported in Carey et al. (2013) gave a very different ordering of priorities, with the individual accountability of legislators ranked first, followed by stability of government. Linhart et al. (2023) speculate that the divergence “can be a direct effect of the consulted experts – APSA members in the case of Carey et al., a broader group (PSA, APSA, and IPSA members) in the study by Bowler and colleagues”.

These studies have done three things: they have identified (i) which electoral systems are generally preferred, (ii) which electoral systems are thought better for particular meso-level values, and (iii) have identified (partly overlapping but partly inconsistent) relative orderings of meso-level values. Achievement (i) is helpful, but may result from the different (national or economic) contexts in which academics find themselves. Achievement (ii) helps us if we are told directly to design a system to maximize a particular value, but this is rare. Achievement (iii) only helps us if the ordering of priorities is a lexical ordering, such that no reform can worsen a higher level priority to achieve an improvement in a lower level priority, no matter how large that improvement is; or we make some assumptions about what an equal amount of government accountability or proportionality is, such that an equal amount of a higher-rated priority is to be preferred to an equal amount of a lower-rated priority. This task of equating different meso-level values is of course precisely what we want to achieve in

this project. Our argument therefore is that existing studies of expert opinion cannot fully address the question of how to trade-off meso-level democratic values.

### B3.3 Public opinion

Testing popular opinion on electoral systems and meso-level democratic values is difficult, for reasons already discussed – but we can distinguish between studies of informed citizens participating in deliberative publics (or other educational contexts) and studies of the general population.

Deliberative publics have typically favoured more proportional electoral systems. This was true of Canadian deliberative publics; the Dutch deliberative public never addressed the issue of the proportionality of the Dutch electoral system, preferring to focus on the within-party dimension (Fournier, 2011). Concerning the general population: there are studies of public opinion in systems which have experienced reform (New Zealand; France) which conclude that partisan advantage is the factor which best explains electoral system preference (Blais et al., 2015; Jou, 2013). This contrasts with lab-based work (Bol et al., 2023), which suggests that preferences are driven by attitudes towards equality.

There are also experimental or quasi-experimental studies of public opinion which explicitly tackle trade-offs. These studies (Linhart et al., 2023; Plescia et al., 2020) reveal that citizens do value most of the meso-level democratic values discussed above. However, the main problem with these studies is that they have to describe outcomes in broad and non-specific terms to participants. Thus, although respondents prefer fictitious composite systems which make “clear majorities” “very likely”, or in which “proportionality” is “always guaranteed”, it is not always clear what these mean in practice (how likely is “very likely”?). These studies run up against the limits of what conjoint studies can assess.

### B3.4 Migrant political behaviour

Migrants are a numerically important group, but a group that has been studied more as the *object* of different policies than as a political *subject*. Studies which have looked at migrants’ political attitudes have often focused on particular groups (migrants “from countries that are perhaps less developed, less democratic and have lower living standards to countries that may be more developed, more democratic and have higher living standards”: Peltoniemi (2018), 393) which raise particular research questions, often concerning the way in which contact with a more democratic host country can affect migrants’ attitudes towards democracy. The role and opinions of migrants from consolidated democracies (say, Finns in Sweden: (Peltoniemi, 2018), or Australians in the UK) have been comparatively neglected.

Exceptions to this general rule include studies of “external voting”, or voting from abroad in country-of-origin elections (Peltoniemi, 2018; Szulecki et al., 2023). The forms of political engagement adopted depend on citizenship rules in the host and origin countries, and on the ease of external voting. Although the relationship between political *engagement* in the

host and origin countries is likely to be zero-sum (Tsuda, 2012), this relationship is not always straightforward: time spent “abroad” is positively associated with the likelihood of voting in *both* country of residence and country of origin elections.

## B4 Added value of the trans-Atlantic partnership

The proposed research project will only be possible given international collaboration of the type encouraged by the trans-Atlantic partnership. Migrants (whether current or former) are almost always a minority group in any given country. As such, polling migrants in any single country is expensive, and survey panel providers may not be able to achieve large numbers of completed responses amongst this group. Even if it were possible to survey a large number of migrants in any one country, a key part of our methodology involves pairwise comparisons between host countries and countries of origin/countries of former residence, and it is hard to learn from pairwise comparisons which always involve one specific object of comparison: any patterns identified may reflect the influence either of general attributes also shared by other objects of comparison or idiosyncratic features of that country. For these reasons only cross-national survey research can provide robust answers to the questions we pose. Although it is becoming increasingly possible for researchers within a single country to conduct cross-national survey research by using large multinational polling providers, the presence of researchers active in each fieldwork country has helped us assess the practical and financial feasibility of this study, and has already led to country-specific revisions to our draft survey instrument.

These are reasons why this research has to be cross-national, but not reasons which are specific to trans-Atlantic research. Our research needs to span the Atlantic because we investigate relative preferences for presidentialism over parliamentarism, and because pure presidentialism is predominantly found in the Americas. Fully half of the democracies listed as presidential in one popular comparative politics textbook (Clark et al., 2017) are in the Americas. We include amongst our fieldwork countries the world’s longest-lived presidential democracy in the form of the United States, which attracts migrants from the world over (including many parliamentary and semipresidential democracies). We are also able to examine the opinions of migrants in Canada, many of whom come from presidential democracies to the South. Conversely, although we have in Canada a parliamentary system in the Americas, we cannot rely on a single parliamentary system, especially not one which also uses single member electoral districts. We therefore also include European parliamentary (United Kingdom) and semipresidential (Poland) systems.

Within the set of TAP-participating countries, we have chosen to study countries which all have either high proportionate rates of inward migration (Switzerland, Canada, the USA, the UK) or outward migration (Poland). According to 2019 United Nations figures, Switzerland (28.8%), Canada (21.3%), the USA (15.4%) and the United Kingdom (14.1%) are the TAP countries with the largest foreign-born populations per capita. Although there are no good statistics on the proportion of return migrants, Polish emigration has been consistently high by most international standards of comparison. This ensures that we are able to achieve a reasonable number of responses from current and former migrants in each country.

## **B5 Project Management, Dissemination, and Communications Plan (PMDC)**

### **B5.1 Roles and responsibilities**

Chris HANRETTY will have overall responsibility for the project, and will take on particular responsibility for survey design and delivery (WP1). He will also supervise a post-doctoral researcher who will be responsible for WP6 (effects of migrants' experiential arguments).

Ruth DASSONNEVILLE and Sona and Matt GOLDER will be primarily responsible for compiling information on "ground truth" measures of the meso-level democratic values (WP3). DASSONNEVILLE will supervise a post-doctoral researcher who will lead the data collection for promissory representation; this post-doc will spend time at Penn State, where s/he will work with a project manager who will handle polling in North America and the maintenance of different dissemination outputs.

Ben STANLEY will be primarily responsible for producing the just-noticeable differences referenced in WP4.

Natasha WUNSCH will have overall responsibility for the the analysis of discrete institutional choices (WP5). She will supervise a post-doctoral researcher who will carry out the bulk of the empirical analysis for this work-package.

All named researchers and the post-doctoral researchers will be coauthors on, and jointly responsible for, any academic outputs of the project, except where otherwise agreed.

### **B5.2 Collaborations**

This grant represents an opportunity for a group of researchers who are well embedded into the comparative politics community to collaborate formally for the first time, and to build on existing informal relationships. Sona and Matt GOLDER have, in addition to their coauthored work, played a key role in the study of comparative politics in the United States, holding positions of responsibility nationally within the American Political Science Association and locally through their founding of the Penn State Comparative Politics Research Lab. Sona and Matt GOLDER met with DASSONNEVILLE through events organised under the auspices of the SSHRC-funded *Making Electoral Democracy Work* project. DASSONNEVILLE in turn invited WUNSCH to lecture to a summer school organized by the CÉRIUM-FMSH Chair on Global Governance, which DASSONNEVILLE holds jointly with Romain Lachat. DASSONNEVILLE and HANRETTY have spoken at events organized by Royal Holloway's Democracy and Elections Centre, contributing their experiences on election forecasting, and HANRETTY and STANLEY have shared code relating to election forecasting and poll aggregation.

### B5.3 Dissemination and communication

The large amount of data generated by the project will make possible many different academic articles, and we imagine that the two post-docs recruited by the grant will use this data for their own articles. We would like to describe five key academic outputs which we commit to producing as part of the grant, and which will form the basis for our dissemination events.

- “Just-noticeable differences in electoral democracy”: the first application of our approach in WP4, using an existing ground truth measure. Target journal: *Journal of Democracy*.
- “Making values in electoral democracy commensurable through just-noticeable differences”. The second, flagship, output from WP4. Target journal: *American Political Science Review*.
- “Preferences over Parliamentary and Presidential government from those who know both systems” and “Individuals with experience of majoritarian and proportional electoral systems prefer [proportional] systems”: twin outputs from WP5. Target journals: *Comparative Political Studies*, *Electoral Studies*.
- “Arguments from experience and support for institutional reform”. The key output from WP6. Target journal: *Journal of Experimental Political Science*.

Each output will presented at a major international conference (target conference: American Political Science Association), submitted for publication during the period of the grant, and will be the subject of a blog-post and a short (~5 minute) explanatory video.

### B5.4 Workplan and timeline

Figure 3 shows the outline of work for the project, grouped according to work package. Individual work package elements have start and stop dates; dissemination events are marked using ‘D’. Dissemination events (preceded by team meetings) take place at the annual conference of the American Political Science Association conference, the largest conference in political science.

All work packages depend on the first two (survey-related) work packages. The paper on just-noticeable differences for electoral democracy (a key output of WP4) can be written once the survey is complete, since the corresponding “ground-truth” data on levels of electoral democracy already exists. Similarly, the paper on institutional choices can be written once the survey is complete because it does not depend on any ground truths.

The largest single dependency in the workplan is the dependency on the coding of promissory representation, necessary for the paper on JNDs for meso-level democratic values. We operationalize promissory representation as the proportion of governing party pledges fulfilled. We focus on the six most commonly reported democratic countries of origin in each fieldwork country, plus the fieldwork country itself. Although there are  $(5 \times (6 + 1) = )$  35 logically possible countries, overlap between countries of origin means that there are 21 unique countries represented. If there are on average two governing parties for each

electoral period, this totals  $21 \times 2 \times 2 = 84$  manifestos to be coded. Based on discussions with authors who have written on pledge fulfillment, we estimate that it takes around 72 hours to code a single manifesto. The total number of hours to code all these manifestos is therefore roughly 6,050 hours. This work has been divided between national teams on the basis of language competence and fiscal and management capacity. Each team will hire multiple undergraduate/Masters students to code platforms in different countries, allowing this work to proceed in parallel.

### B5.5 Training

Two members of the research team will be post-doctoral researchers (PDRs). These PDRs will benefit from exposure to researchers with a track record of mentorship (narrative résumés, §§3) and bespoke training events on scientific workflow (Spring 2025) and scientific communication (Spring 2026) held in London and delivered by the PI. PDRs will be encouraged to develop their own projects during their contract, and/or to develop projects using data generated by work packages 1-3.

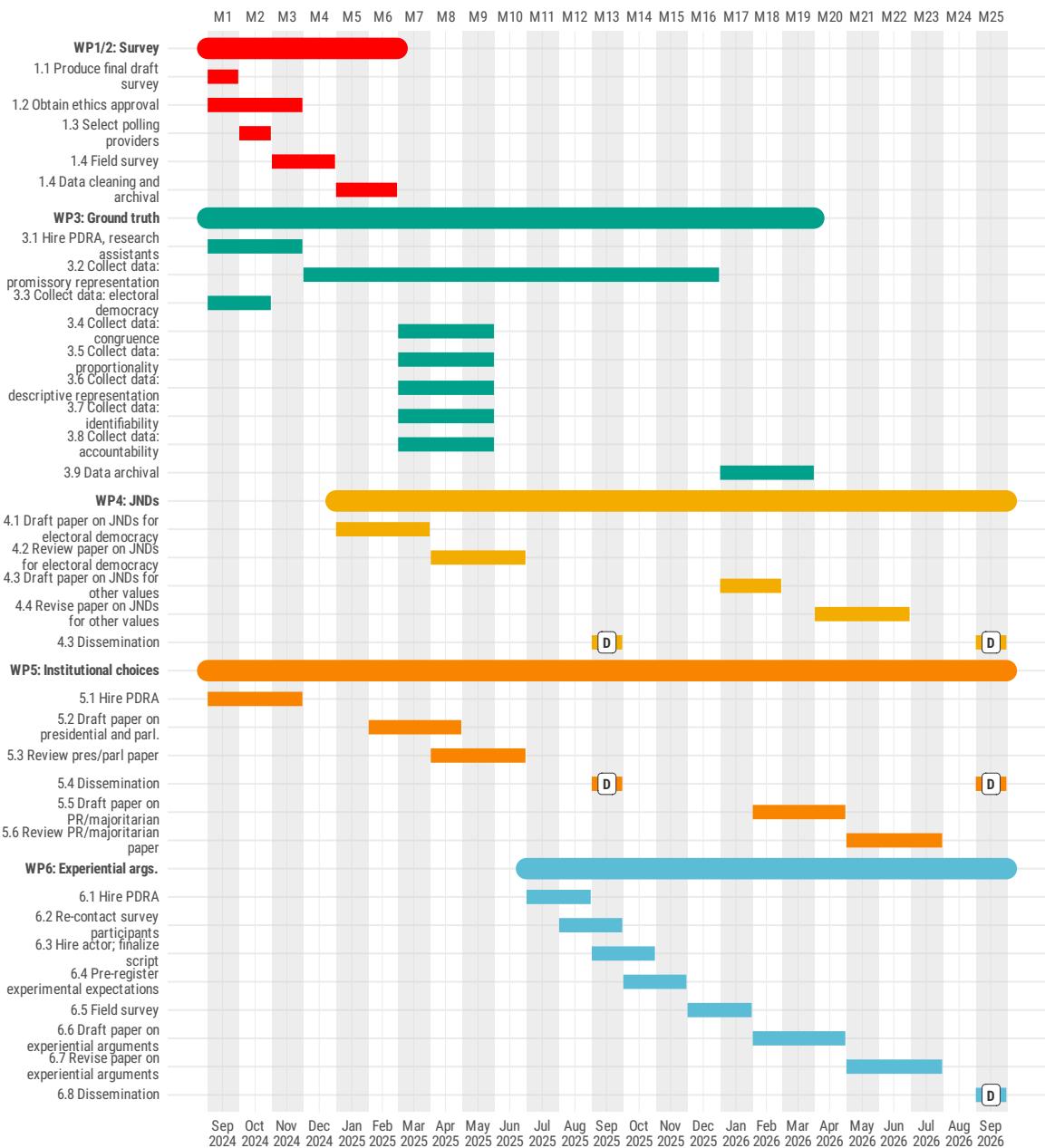


Figure 3: Gantt chart, with dissemination events marked D.

# Data management plan

## A Data description

The project draws on several existing sources of data relating to “ground truths”. We list these data sources below, together with an indication of their coverage. Data sources with partial coverage, or which are not regularly updated, will be supplemented by the project team.

- electoral democracy, data from Coppedge et al. (2016) (regularly updated, complete geographic coverage)
- for proportionality, data from Döring and Manow (2018) and Bormann and Golder (2022) (regularly updated, partial geographic coverage)
- for congruence, data from Düpont et al. (2022) (regularly updated, complete geographic coverage, partial party coverage)
- for accountability, data from Döring and Manow (2018) (regularly updated, partial geographic coverage)
- for descriptive representation, data on age- and gender-representation by Stockemer and Sundström (2022) (regularly updated, complete geographic coverage)
- for promissory representation, data from Thomson et al. (2017) (not updated, partial geographic coverage)

The project will generate new data in the form of public opinion surveys. This data will be commissioned from survey providers, and will be initially provided in different formats. Where providers supply information which is not relevant to the study aims and objectives, but which could be used to identify individuals, such data will either be removed (detailed geographic location; IP range) or coarsened (age groups) to prevent identification. Data shared between national teams will be regarded as “anonymous” data. The five different national surveys will be combined into a single master file. This master file will be tabular data, with each row corresponding to a row, and each column corresponding to a respondent characteristic or a question answer. This tabular data will be stored as a comma separated values (CSV) file.

The project will additionally generate additional data in the form of interview notes and videos relating to the work package on experiential arguments. Interviews with survey participants who expressed a willingness to be recontacted and interviewed about their support

for an alternative electoral system or form of government will be regarded as “working materials” only: that is, they shall be anonymous, may (according to the interviewee’s preference) be either digitally recorded using an audio recorder or recorded in note form by interviewers, and will be destroyed after the production of the video used as the basis for the survey experiment. The video produced as part of this work package shall be included with the replication materials for any corresponding academic output.

Finally, the project will generate several incidental data files in the course of pursuing academic dissemination. This includes R source code and graphs. The nature and number of these additional data items will depend on the research and publication process. These incidental data files are covered in the section “Preservation and sharing after project ends”.

## B Ethical and legal aspects

We rely on public opinion surveys which ask respondents about their current or former migration status, and their political beliefs. This kind of data is “special category data” under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The processing of this data is necessary in order to research the research objectives of the project. Because this data is special category data, survey participants must give their explicit consent for their data to be processed. This consent is given to the survey provider, who is the data processor for these purposes. Survey providers release data to their customers after having removed data which could be used to identify the respondent. At this point the data cease to be “personal data” under the scope of the GDPR. However, because data protection regimes vary across the five countries included in the project, we intend to take further steps to protect the anonymity of the respondents, by removing detailed respondent location and IP ranges. In addition to the responses to specific survey questions, we retain information only on:

- the respondent’s country of origin (or in the case of former migrants, their previous host country)
- the respondent’s age group (age groups to be determined)
- the respondent’s electoral district
- the respondent’s sex or gender
- the respondent’s highest level of educational qualifications
- the party the respondent voted for in the previous national election

These are typically variables included in survey releases for the purposes of survey weighting. No combination of these variables allows individuals to be uniquely identified. At the time of writing, no census provider in the five countries in the study reports information on detailed country of birth at the level of the electoral district. Whilst other census products do cross-tabulate two or more of the variables listed above, these categories are large enough to prevent the identification of particular individuals.

These ethical and legal aspects concern the survey work packages, which form the bulk of the empirical work of the project. There are additional ethical aspects to the use of migrant arguments in survey experiments. These relate to (i) consent of those participating

in follow-up interviews to the use of their arguments and permission for those arguments to be recorded by an actor; and (ii) the perception of these arguments by survey participants. Regarding the first issue: after the interview, we'll prepare scripts and ask interviewees for their consent to use these arguments and (optionally) consent to use their first name. Regarding the second issue: there is a risk that survey participants might believe that the actor is an actual migrant; in order to guard against any risk of (inadvertent) deception, we'll add a chiron at the bottom of the video of the form "Thomas (New Zealand) (words spoken by an actor)".

## C Responsibilities and management methodology

HANRETTY will have overall responsibility for the collection of survey data as part of WP1/2. Leaders of national teams will liaise with survey companies in their own countries, and will work with HANRETTY to ensure that the surveys are as comparable as possible, taking into account requirements of translation and local circumstances (i.e., the particular Swiss form of government).

DASSONNEVILLE, GOLDER and GOLDER will have overall responsibility for the collection of "ground truth" data (WP3) which is used in WP4. This responsibility will be delegated a post-doctoral research associate who will lead on the collection of all "ground truth" data, except for the data on electoral democracy, which will be collected by STANLEY. This post-doctoral research associate will in turn work with research assistants recruited by different national teams, who will have particular responsibility for collecting data on promissory representation.

Responsibility for the collection of data as part of WP6 (experiential arguments) will go to a post-doctoral research associate recruited in the UK and supervised by HANRETTY.

Overall responsibility for data documentation and preservation will lie with HANRETTY. HANRETTY will work with team members during and following the article submission process, preparing documentation so that the eventual replication archives satisfy the requirements of peer-reviewed journals and also provide a complete record of the project's work.

## D Publication formats, standards, mechanisms and repositories

We describe the data formats, standards and repositories according to the different types of data we generate.

### D.1 Survey data

Regardless of the format used by polling providers to transmit the data to the project team, pooled data from the different national surveys will be stored as a comma separated values

(CSV) file. To maximize readability and discoverability, entries in this CSV will be stored as human-readable survey answers. Thus, the answer to question 2 in Box 1 will be stored as “Much better at promise keeping in [home country]”, rather than as a numeric code. A limited number of variables will follow standard schema – countries will be recorded as ISO3166-alpha3 codes; and past party vote will be recorded using the PartyFacts schema (<https://partyfacts.herokuapp.com>).

## D.2 Ground truth data

The ground truth data will be stored as a set of seven comma separated values files: one for each meso-level democratic value. Thus, there will be one file for levels of electoral democracy, one file for levels of accountability, and so on. Entries in these files will correspond to observations of countries at different points in time. For some files, time-points will be years. For example: the file for electoral democracy will give values of electoral democracy for the ten years preceding the date of the survey. For other files, time-points will be election years. For example: the file on accountability will give values of accountability at each of the three (first-order) national elections preceding the date of survey. We report the individual values rather than period averages for each country in order to maximize the re-use potential of the data.

A separate file giving details on promissory representation will also be produced. This data file will have “party pledges” as the unit of analysis, such that each row will list a governing party, a specific manifesto pledge, and whether that pledge was (partially) fulfilled or not. In order to maximize the re-use potential of the data, we will mirror the structure of the data set released by Thomson et al. (2017).

## D.3 Survey experiment data

The survey experiment data generated by WP6 will be stored as a CSV file, recording the survey arm and responses regarding institutional form. As with the survey data generated under WP1/2, the responses will be stored as human-readable response options rather than as codes.

The video recordings made during WP6 will also be made available so that researchers can view the treatment. The video recordings will be made available as MP4 files using open source codecs.

# E Preservation and sharing after project ends

We adopt a twin-track approach to data preservation.

The first track operates through journals' own replication policies. Political science has enthusiastically adopted requirements for data sharing, and the leading journals in the discipline operate their own data repositories – most based on the Dataverse schema. Whilst data preservation efforts under this track will naturally depend on the journals in which our academic outputs appear, this track is the most “natural” track for political scientists, and maximizes the chance that the data will be discoverable, since publishers include a link to replication data as part of the publication process. These replication materials will include the particular R code that we use to generate our findings.

The second track is a “whole project” track, and will see us upload the project materials described above to a Harvard Dataverse repository. The Harvard Dataverse is open to researchers from all universities, not just Harvard, and offers persistent storage for research projects. Harvard Dataverse offers storage in near-perpetuity, and [aims to implement FAIR principles](#).

Data released under the first track will depend on the timing of journal publication decisions, but data will be made available without restrictions on reuse at the time of publication. Data released under this track may be specific to a particular academic output, such that replication data for the proposed academic output “Just noticeable differences in democracy” may be made available without other survey data being made available.

Data released under the second track will be made available as soon as:

- all data collection for the project is complete, *and*
- all academic outputs from WP4 has been published, *or*
- three months after the end of the project, whichever comes sooner

Data will continue to be publicly available without time limit.

We have listed these two tracks for data preservation. Team members will maximize the success of these tracks by including links to replication materials on their personal webpages, but such personal webpages will not be used to store replication data.

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# Ruth Dassonneville

## Personal and career information

**Key qualifications** I am a graduate of the KU Leuven (Belgium), where I obtained a PhD in Social Sciences in 2015. Between 2011 and 2015, my PhD research was funded through a doctoral scholarship of the Research Foundation Flanders (FWO). I previously obtained a BA in history (2008), an MA in history (2009) and an MA in political science (2010) at the same university.

**Relevant positions held** After graduating from the KU Leuven in 2015, I moved to the Université de Montréal to take up a position of assistant professor in the Department of Political Science. I was promoted to associate professor in 2020. Since 2016, I also hold a Tier I Canada Research Chair in Electoral Democracy (renewed in 2021). Furthermore, since 2021, I am the co-chair of the CERIUM-FMSH Chair in Global Governance.

## Awards or prizes.

- As a PhD student, I was awarded the ECPR Party Politics Award (also referred to as Peter Mair Prize) for the best student paper presented at the 2012 ECPR Summer School on Political Parties in Modern Democracies.
- For my PhD dissertation, I was awarded – as a co-winner – the 2016 Jaarprijs politiekologie for the best political science dissertation in Belgium and the Netherlands. The same year, my dissertation was also shortlisted for the ECPR Jean Blondel Prize for the best dissertation in political science.
- In 2017, I was the winner of the Politics Prize for the best paper published in the journal *Politics*, for the article “Voter turnout decline and stratification: Quasi-experimental and comparative evidence of a growing educational gap”, which was co-authored with Marc Hooghe.
- In 2018, I was awarded the Marian Irish Award for the Best Paper on Women and Politics presented at the 2018 Annual Meeting of the Southern Political Science Association. I was awarded this prize for the paper “Gender gap in voter turnout: Longitudinal analysis of European Parliament elections”, which I co-authored with Filip Kostelka.
- I am also the winner of the 2019 GESIS Klingemann Prize for the best scholarship using data from the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems project. I was awarded the prize for the article “Gender, political knowledge, and descriptive representation: The impact of long-term socialization”, which was co-authored with Ian McAllister and published in the *American Journal of Political Science*.
- I was awarded the 2021 Elizabeth Meehan Prize, for the best article published in *Government and Opposition* in 2020. I was awarded this prize for the article “Are the supporters of populist parties loyal voters? Dissatisfaction and stable voting for populist parties”, which is joint work with Remko Voogd.
- In 2022, I was also awarded a Best Reviewer Award by the journal *Political Science Research and Methods*.

## **Generation of knowledge**

1. Dassonneville R. (2023). *Voters Under Pressure. Group-Based Cross-Pressure and Voter Volatility*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

This sole-authored book manuscript was published as part of the Comparative Politics series of Oxford University Press. The book examines changes in voters' electoral choices and investigates how these changes are linked to a growth in electoral volatility. The book theorizes that when citizens' socio-demographic characteristics and their membership of social groups do not consistently push them to support one party, but instead lead them to feel cross-pressured between parties, their voting decision process lacks constraint. As a result, cross-pressured voters consider different parties, resulting in uncertainty about the vote choice and volatile voting behaviour. To test this argument, the book makes use of election survey data from eight established democracies that allow examining the correlates of voting behaviour over several decades. These data are complemented with data from the European Election Studies project and from election study panels. The book was published earlier this year and was the subject of a very positive book review that was published in *European Political Science*.

2. Dassonneville, R. and McAllister, I. (2018). Gender, Political Knowledge and Descriptive Representation: The Impact of Long-Term Socialization. *American Journal of Political Science* 62(2): 249-265.

This article, which I co-authored with Ian McAllister, was published in the *American Journal of Political Science*, one of the 'top 3' journals in political science. In this paper, we use data from the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) to describe and explain the gender gap in political knowledge. We theorize and show that among generations who have become politically socialized in a context in which there are more women in the legislature, the gap between men's and women's political knowledge is smaller. I started collaborating on this project with Ian McAllister during my time as a Visiting Fellow at the Australian National University. The paper has been cited 112 times on Google Scholar, and was awarded the 2018 GESIS Klingemann prize for best CSES scholarship.

3. Dassonneville, R. and Kostelka, F. (2021). The Cultural Sources of the Gender Gap in Voter Turnout. *British Journal of Political Science* 51(3): 1040-1061.

In this article, written jointly with Filip Kostelka, we seek to theorize and explain the sources of women's lower likelihood to turn out to vote. Using data from the European Election Studies project, we show that there is substantial between-country variation in the size of the gender gap in voter turnout. We furthermore find that this gap results from gender differences in political interest which, in turn, correlates with strong social norms about the role of women (girls) and men (boys) in society. To capture gender norms in societies we make use of data on the gender gap in mathematics tests. The article has already been cited 27 times on Google Scholar. An earlier version of the paper was awarded the Marian Irish Award for the Best Paper on Women and Politics presented at the 2018 Annual Meeting of the Southern Political Science Association.

4. Dassonneville, R., Barbosa, T., Blais, A., McAllister, I. and Turgeon, M. (2023). *Citizens Under Compulsory Voting: A Three-Country Study*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

This short book manuscript was published as part of the Elements in Campaigns, Elections, and Political Behavior series of Cambridge University Press. The book provides unique insights into citizens' knowledge about, attitudes of and preferences for compulsory voting rules in three countries that have a system of compulsory voting: Australia, Belgium and Brazil. To conduct this study, we developed original survey measures which we fielded as part of representative surveys in each of these three countries.

5. Dassonneville, R. (2018). Electoral Volatility and Parties' Ideological Responsiveness. *European Journal of Political Research* 57(4): 808-828.

In this sole-authored article, I provide new insights into the consequences of the trend towards higher levels of electoral volatility by connecting voter volatility to party responsiveness. I argue and show that in settings where electoral volatility is high, and where parties are very uncertain about the electoral support that they will receive at the next election, political parties are significantly more responsive to change in public opinion. The paper adds important nuance to debates about the surge in electoral volatility and its negative consequences for democracy, by showing that volatility can contribute to strengthening democratic representation too. The article was published in a top generalist European political science journal and has already been cited 43 times on Google Scholar.

## Human capacity development

**PhD supervision** As holder of a Canada Research Chair, I supervise a large group of graduate students. Seven Montreal-based PhD students have already graduated under my (co-)supervision: Fernando Feitosa (2021), Semra Sevi (2021), Florence Vallée-Dubois (2021), Philippe Mongrain (2022), Semih Çakir (2023), Maxime Coulombe (2023), Alexandra Jabbour (2023). Furthermore, two PhD students based at other universities that I co-supervised have graduated too: Dieter Stiers (KU Leuven, 2020) and Marta Gallina (UC Louvain, 2021). Of these nine former graduate students, six currently hold a postdoctoral position, while two have already secured a tenure-track position.

I am currently serving as a (co-)supervisor of five PhD students at the Université de Montréal (Baowen Liang, Nadjim Fréchet, Valentin Pautonnier, Matthew Taylor and Virginie Vandewalle) as well as two PhD students who are based at other universities (Klara Dentler, Mannheim University; Maria Belén Abdala, University of Vienna).

**Graduate and undergraduate teaching** At the Université de Montréal, I teach undergraduate and graduate courses on elections and the comparative study of political parties. I emphasize research and research designs, even in my teaching at the undergraduate levels and have developed a number of tools and exercises to ensure that undergraduate students can get a first research experience as part of my course. My approach to teaching

is appreciated by students and has been recognized by my university by means of the 2022 teaching excellence award of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences.

**Administrative roles** I currently serve on the PhD program committee of my department, where I participate in admissions and participate in a reform of the structure of our PhD program. I also hold important responsibilities for the subfield of political behavior, as one of the people responsible for organizing the comprehensive exams in this field.

**Organization of Winter and Summer Schools** In addition to my regular teaching responsibilities, I have organized multiple winter and summer schools on elections and representative democracy.

I co-founded and have co-organized the Winter School on elections between 2015 and 2020. This week-long program for doctoral students was organized in alternation between the universities of Leuven and Montreal. The format of the school consisted of a combination of lectures and student presentations. Lectures were given by world class scholars in electoral politics and voting behaviour. About 20 PhD students from across the world participated in this program each year. The program received the support from the KU Leuven and the Université de Montréal, the ECPR Standing Group on Public Opinion and Voting Behaviour in a Comparative Perspective as well as the ICPSR Summer Programme. The program has trained an entire generation of scholars in electoral research.

As a co-holder of the CERIUM-FMSH Chair on Global Governance I also co-organize, with Romain Lachat (SciencesPo Paris), two summer schools on challenges to electoral democracy. The first edition of this summer school, funded through the Chair, took place at SciencesPo Paris in the summer of 2023. The second edition of this program will be organized in Montreal in the summer of 2024. The program includes both morning lectures by established scholars in the field and student presentations in the afternoon.

## Scientific impact

**Leadership roles in professional associations** I am an active member of multiple national and regional political science associations and have been a section head for the annual conferences of the American, Canadian and European Political Science Association. I am also a board member of the ‘European Politics and Society’ and ‘Elections, Public Opinion and Voting Behavior’ sections of the American Political Science Association (APSA). Furthermore, I have been a board member of the Political Forecasting Group of the same association since 2013 and currently serve as the group’s president. In Europe, I am one of the co-convenors of the ECPR Standing Group on Public Opinion and Voting Behavior in a Comparative Perspective. I am also a board member of the Quebec political science association as well as the association’s treasurer. I furthermore serve on the planning committee for the 7th module of the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems project – one of the most influential data-gathering projects in my field.

**Editorial work** I do a large number of reviews each year and currently sit on the editorial board of the following journals: *Acta Politica*; *Canadian Journal of Political Science*; *European Journal of Political Research*; *European Political Science Review*; *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties*; *Political Science Research and Methods*; *West European Politics*.

In addition, I am an associate editor for *Research & Politics*; *Electoral Studies*; and *French Politics*. I am also an executive editor for the *British Journal of Political Science*.

## Broader society

I contribute to the public's understanding of elections and voting behaviour by regularly giving interviews to journalists in Belgium and Canada. Over the years, I have given interviews for radio broadcasts (e.g., *Radio Canada* or *Radio 1* in Belgium), newspapers and news magazines (e.g., *La Presse* in Canada or *Knack* in Belgium) and for television (e.g., *Info-man* in Canada). I was also one of two political scientists to be interviewed for a full episode on 'The science of the vote' produced by the Quebec-based tv-channel Savoir média.

In addition, I contribute to the public debate by publishing op-eds, for example commenting on a proposal to abolish compulsory voting in local elections in the Flemish region of Belgium or on low levels of political engagement among youth.

Furthermore, I often share my expertise with policymakers. I have, for example, appeared as a witness for the Canadian parliamentary commission on democratic reform and have participated as an expert in a session of the Montreal municipal council studying the sources for and strategies to mitigate the decline in voter turnout in local elections. Finally, last summer I co-organized a citizens' assembly in the city of Longueil that brought together 100 citizens to discuss and vote on different proposals for reform to strengthen local democracy.

# Matt Golder

## Personal and career information

**Key qualifications** I hold a Ph.D. in Political Science from New York University (awarded 2004). Previously I completed an M.A. in French Studies at New York University (1997-1999), an M.Phil. in European Politics and Society at the University of Oxford (1995-1997), and a B.A. (Hons.) degree in Politics, Philosophy and Economics at the University of Oxford (1992-1995).

**Relevant positions held** I am currently a Full Professor in the Department of Political Science at Pennsylvania State University in the United States. Previously, I was an Assistant Professor at Florida State University (2005-2010) and a Visiting Assistant Professor at the University of Iowa (2004-2005). I was a Visiting Scholar at the University of Mannheim in Germany (2012) and expect to be Visiting Scholar at New York University Abu Dhabi during the Spring 2024 semester.

**Awards or prizes** My article, “An Exit, Voice, and Loyalty Model of Politics”, won the 2016 Brian Barry Prize from the British Academy (GB£2,500). My article, “Ideological Congruence and Electoral Institutions”, won the 2011 GESIS Klingemann Prize for the Best Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) Scholarship (€1,000).

**Other relevant experience** I have intermediate level French and German.

## Generation of knowledge

1. Brambor, T., Clark, W., and Golder, M. (2006). “Understanding interaction models: Improving empirical analyses”. *Political Analysis* 14:63–82.

Conditional claims are common in the natural and social sciences. It is well-established that multiplicative interaction models are well-suited to testing these claims. In this article, we show that the implementation of interaction models is often flawed and that inferential errors are common. We argue that considerable progress can be made if scholars follow the simple checklist of dos and don’ts for using interaction models. This article is in the top ten [most cited articles ever in political science](#) (6,935 cites according to Google Scholar on October 24, 2023).

2. Golder, M. (2016). “Far right parties in Europe”. *Annual Review of Political Science* 19: 477–497.

The *Annual Review of Political Science* publishes articles by internationally renowned subject experts. In this article, I provide an overview of the literature on far right parties in Europe. In addition to describing the ideological makeup of the far right party family, I examine demand-side and supply-side explanations for its electoral success. Demand-side

explanations focus on the grievances such as those arising from immigration and the modernization processes. Supply-side explanations focus on the how the strategic choices that far right parties make and the political opportunity structure in which they act influence their success. I finish by suggesting that far right scholars must recognize the interaction between demand- and supply-side factors in their empirical analyses in order to draw valid inferences and that it would be productive to pay more attention to the political geography of far right support and the different stages of far right success. This article has been very influential and has been cited over 700 times.

3. Clark, W. and Golder, M. (2023). *Interaction Models: Specification and Interpretation*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

This new book is the culmination of my research on how to use multiplicative interaction models to test claims of conditionality. The radical interdependence between humans who live together makes virtually all human behavior conditional. The behavior of individuals is conditional upon the expectations of those around them, and those expectations are conditional upon the rules (institutions) and norms (culture) constructed to monitor, reward, and punish different behaviors. As a result, nearly all hypotheses about humans are conditional – conditional upon the resources they possess, the institutions they inhabit, or the cultural practices that tell them how to behave. Our book provides a standalone and accessible overview of how interaction models capture the intuition behind conditional claims and context dependence. By providing a comprehensive and unified introduction to the use and critical evaluation of interaction models, we show how they can be used to test theoretically-derived claims of conditionality.

4. Golder, M. and Stramski, J. 2010. "Ideological congruence and electoral institutions". *American Journal of Political Science*, 54: 90–106.

In this article, we look at whether democratic representatives are congruent with the ideological preferences of the people. We demonstrate that empirical results regarding ideological congruence depend critically on how congruence is conceptualized. We clarify various aspects of how scholars conceptualize congruence and introduce a new conceptualization and measure of congruence that captures a long tradition in democratic theory emphasizing the ideal of having a legislature that accurately reflects the preferences of the citizenry as a whole. The conceptual framework introduced in this article has been influential, and the article has been cited over 700 times.

5. Bormann, N-C. and Golder, M. (2022). "Democratic electoral systems around the world, 1946-2020", *Electoral Studies* 78, 102487.

This article provides an overview of the latest version of the Democratic Electoral Systems (DES) dataset that was first introduced in 2005. It includes detailed information on 1,563 legislative and 592 presidential elections in democracies. The DES dataset is the most widely used dataset on electoral institutions in political science. The DES dataset has been cited almost 1,400 times.

## **Human capacity development**

**Ph.D. supervision** My main contribution to the development of other academics has been through the supervision of Ph.D. students. I've supervised five Ph.D. students to completion and one post-doctoral student. I have also served as an external examiner and as a committee member on multiple other dissertations.

- Between 2008 and 2013, I was the co-dissertation chair for Marius Radean. His dissertation was "Party Politics and Legislative Party Switching". Marius is now a Permanent Lecturer at the University of Essex.
- Between 2014 and 2019, I was the dissertation chair for Yaoyao Dai. Her thesis was "Beloved Governments: Authoritarian Regimes' Toolkit for Building Popular Support". Following her defense, she started as a post-doctoral fellow at New York University Abu Dhabi. She is now an Assistant Professor at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.
- Between 2014 and 2019, I was the co-dissertation chair for Charles Crabtree. His thesis was "Measuring and Explaining Discrimination". Following his defense, he spent a year as a Senior Fellow at the Tokyo Foundation for Policy Research. He is now an Assistant Professor at Dartmouth College.
- Between 2017 and 2022, I was the co-dissertation chair for Kostanca Dhima. Her thesis was "Women's Political Representation" She is now an Assistant Professor at Georgia State University.
- Between 2017 and 2022, I was the dissertation chair for Boyoon Lee. Her thesis was "Anti-Immigrant Attitudes in Asia". She is currently a post-doctoral fellow at Vanderbilt University.
- In 2014, I served as an external examiner for Roni Lehrer, a Ph.D. student at the University of Essex. His dissertation was "The Effects of Intra-Party Competition on Party Competition". He is currently an Interim Professor at the Goethe University Frankfurt and a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Mannheim.
- Between 2015-2016, I served as a post-doctoral advisor for Ben Ferland, a former Ph.D. student from the University of McGill. Ben is now an Associate Professor at the University of Ottawa. He has published 19 articles and various public outreach pieces.

In addition, I have been a dissertation committee member for another 9 individuals who have jobs in academia and the private sector. I am currently supervising one Ph.D. student, Anil Kuleli (2022-), who recently completed his MA thesis, "Affective Polarization and Retrospective Voting". I have also served as an advisor for multiple M.A. committees and as a first-year advisor for graduate students.

**Administrative roles** I've contributed to the management of my own department at Penn State. Between 2017-2021, I served as the Director of Undergraduate Studies in the Department of Political Science. In this role, I was responsible for the undergraduate program, which has about 1,000 students across four majors (BA Political Science, BS Political Science, BA International Politics, BS Social Data Analytics). I was also responsible for overseeing and coordinating with our team of five undergraduate academic advisors. Since

2022, I have been Director of the Political Science Honors Program. In this role, I'm responsible for the 70-80 political science students accepted into Penn State's Schreyer Honors College. Since 2017, I have also served on the Department of Political Science Advisory Committee, where I provide advice and assistance to the Department Head. I have also held administrative positions outside of my university. I served as an executive committee member of the American Political Science Association's (APSA) Section on Representation and Electoral Systems (2008-2011) before being elected Section President (2011-2013). I have also been one of the conference program chairs for two large national political science conferences (Midwest Political Science Association 2014, APSA 2008).

**Formal mentorship** Along with Professor Sona Golder, I established the CP Group research lab in 2015 to improve the training and mentoring of students for whom we are the primary advisors. The CP Group has been home to one post-doc, five Ph.D. students, and twelve undergraduate students. Together the members of the CP Group have published over 60 academic pieces. The post-doc and five Ph.D. students all have academic positions. Of the undergraduates, some have gone to graduate school, some are in the private sector, one is a Fulbright scholar and finalist for both a Marshall and Rhodes scholarship, and one is a participant at the Ralph Bunche Institute Summer Program.

**International Research and Teaching** I have been involved in several collaborative international research projects. Since 2013, I have been an advisory board member of the [Electoral Integrity Project](#) which involves academics and practitioners interested in the quality and conduct of elections. From 2008-2017, I was a co-PI and member of the Executive Board of the Making Electoral Democracy Work project funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. This involved coordinating research on the quality of electoral democracy with scholars (graduate students, faculty, post-docs) across five different countries. I am also currently a member of an international project, Populism and the Future of Democracy, funded by the Tokyo Foundation for Policy Research. The project involves surveys and experiments on populism in over 20 countries.

I have also been involved in training graduate students and faculty internationally. For several years I taught classes on survival analysis from at the Essex Summer School in Social Science Data Analysis. This is the largest methods summer program in Europe and draws participants from around the world. I have also served as a lead lecturer for the week-long comparative politics component of the 2015 Empirical Implications of Theoretical Models (EITM) Summer Institute that is funded by the National Science Foundation. In 2023, I gave methods training on interaction models and intersectionality research to the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) course on Race, Ethnicity, and Quantitative Methodology, the RAND corporation, and the University of Calgary.

## Scientific impact

**Editorial Positions** I served as co-editor of APSA's Comparative Politics Newsletter (2014-2018), which is the official newsletter of APSA's largest section. This involved commissioning 10-12 articles every six months. We focused on getting contributions from graduate

students and junior scholars, as well as people from traditionally underrepresented communities and regions of the world. We had special editions on Race and Ethnic Politics, Women/Gender and Politics, Policing, Fake News and Misinformation, Populism, Data Access and Research Transparency, Training the Next Generation of Comparative Scholars, and Studying Sensitive Political Phenomena.

**Contributing to peer review of varied kinds** I have served on the editorial boards of some of the leading political science journals: *Comparative Political Studies* (2013-), the *Journal of Politics* (2011-2015), and the *American Journal of Political Science* (2012-2014). I have reviewed for thirty different journals and multiple national funding agencies in the US, the Netherlands, the UK, and Canada. I have also reviewed several tenure and promotion applications for universities in the United States, the United Kingdom, and China.

**Producing software resources for others to use** From the beginning of my career, I have pushed the importance of replication in the scientific process. Replication files and data sets have been provided for all of my research since my first publication in 2003, well before replication materials were required at our major journals. I have also provided extensive Stata and R code to help people estimate and interpret analyses using multiplicative interaction models. This code has been very popular in political science. In particular, many, many scholars have used it for constructing conditional marginal effect plots, a type of plot popularized in my 2005 *Political Analysis* article. I am also a strong believer in the public goods nature of building datasets. I originally introduced my Democratic Electoral Systems (DES) dataset with extensive documentation in 2005. This is the most commonly used dataset on electoral rules and party systems in political science. I have provided regular updates to this dataset to extend the time period and the variables that are included. The DES 5.0 dataset will be launched by the end of 2023.

## **Broader society**

I have been involved in several international projects that have had a large public outreach component. I was a co-PI and a member of the executive board for the Making Electoral Democracy Work project (2008-2017) that was supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. This project was designed to look in particular at how electoral rules influence the functioning of democracy. Practitioners from civil society or non-governmental organizations such as Elections Canada regularly participated in our annual workshops. There was also a public blog where we posted summaries of recent publications and findings. Since 2013, I have been on the advisory board for the Electoral Integrity Project (EIP), which brings together academics and practitioners from diverse disciplines, global regions, and international organizations, interested in the quality and conduct of elections. EIP produces policy briefs and offers consultancy and training for electoral management bodies and policy makers. It is partnered with a variety of organizations such as the Carter Center and the International Foundation of Electoral Systems. Workshops and other events are regularly attended by practitioners. There is a yearly Fellowship programme that includes Junior Fellows, Senior Fellows, and Practitioner Fellows from government and non-governmental agencies, civil society, or industry.

# Sona Golder

## Personal and career information

**Key qualifications** I hold a Ph.D. in Political Science from New York University (awarded 2004). I was awarded a Political Studies Certificate (Certificat d'études politiques) from the Institute of Political Studies, Paris (Sciences Po) in 1996. I completed a BA degree with general and departmental honors at the University of Chicago (1993).

**Relevant positions held** I am currently a Full Professor in the Department of Political Science at Pennsylvania State University in the United States. Previously, I was an Assistant Professor at Florida State University (2005-2010) and a Visiting Assistant Professor at the University of Iowa (2004-2005). I have also been a Visiting Scholar at the University of Mannheim in Germany (2012) and expect to be one at New York University Abu Dhabi during the Spring 2024 semester.

**Awards or prizes** My article, "An Exit, Voice, and Loyalty Model of Politics", won the 2016 Brian Barry Prize from the British Academy (GB£2,500). I was invited to give the Keynote (Plenary) Address at the Annual Meeting of the Australian Society for Quantitative Political Science (Australian National University, Canberra, 2018) and at the New Zealand Political Studies Association Annual Meeting (Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand, 2018).

**Other relevant experience** I have advanced level French and beginning Spanish.

## Generation of knowledge

1. Golder, S.N. (2006). *The Logic of Pre-Electoral Coalition Formation*. Ohio State University Press.

In most parliamentary democracies, it is not possible for a single party to enter government on its own; single parties rarely control a legislative majority and must form a coalition. The literature had generally assumed that political parties wait until after an election before beginning to form a coalition. This book, though, demonstrates that it is quite common for parties to begin the coalition formation process before an election takes place. It was the first to focus on the causes and consequences of 'pre-electoral coalitions' (PECs). It helps to explain why some parties coordinate their electoral strategies as part of a PEC, whereas others choose to compete independently at election time. Electoral coalition can have a considerable impact on election outcomes, government composition, and policies. The original data set that I collected for the book was the first cross-national data set of electoral coalitions. An earlier version of one chapter won the 2003 Society for Political Methodology Poster Award. This research has initiated a new strand in the literature looking at PECs. Scholars have built on my work on electoral coalitions in Western Europe to look at PECs in Eastern Europe, Latin America, and Africa, as well as in dictatorships. My research on PECs (including this book and two related articles) has been cited over 900 times.

2. Golder, S.N. "Bargaining Delays in the Government Formation Process". (2010). *Comparative Political Studies*. 43(1): 3–32.

Why does it take so much longer for governments to form in some countries than others? Bargaining delays can have detrimental economic and political consequences. Lengthy delays are typically viewed as a failure of democratic governance because the members of the legislature are unable to work together to form a new government and the caretaker government that remains in office can't enact new policy initiatives. This article, which focuses on the interplay between the uncertainty that elites have over the acceptability of potential governments and the complexity of their bargaining environment, helps resolve contradictory findings in the existing literature. I show that delays are most likely to occur in countries with many legislative parties and an ideologically polarized party system. Proportional electoral rules that allow many different groups of citizens to be represented in the legislature can, under some conditions, can also delay forming a new government.

3. Golder, S.N., Lago, I., Blais, A., Gidengil, E. and Gschwend, T. (2017). *Multi-level Electoral Politics: Beyond the Second-Order Election Model*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

This book is co-authored with colleagues on the “Making Electoral Democracy Work” project that was funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada to investigate how electoral rules affect democracy. In this book, we examine how electoral rules influence the strategies adopted by party elites on multi-level elections in France, Germany, and Spain. Rather than examining subnational, national, or European elections separately as the existing literature tends to do, the book uses survey and interview data to show how the decisions made at one level are related to, and affect, the decisions made at other levels.

4. Golder, S.N., Stephenson, L., Van der Straeten, K., Blais, A., Bol, D., Harfst, P. and Laslier, J-F. (2017). “Votes for Women: Electoral Systems and Support for Female Candidates”. *Politics & Gender* 13(1): 107-131.

It is a well-established finding that proportional representation (PR) electoral systems are associated with greater legislative representation for women than single member systems. However, the degree to which different types of PR rules affect voting for female candidates is unclear. Existing literature is typically hampered by a reliance on cross-national data in which individual vote preferences and electoral system features are endogenous. In this article, we draw upon an experiment conducted during the 2014 European Parliament (EP) elections to isolate the effects of different PR electoral systems. Participants in the experiment were given the opportunity to vote for real EP candidates in three different electoral systems that varied in terms of how much influence a voter had over choosing candidates. We find that voters, regardless of their gender, support female candidates, and that this support is stronger under open electoral rules.

5. Dhima, K., Golder, S.N. Stephenson, L., and Van der Straeten, K. (2021). “Permissive Electoral Systems and Descriptive Representation”. *Electoral Studies* 73.

In this article, we test implications of theoretical arguments about the impact of electoral rules on voters' propensity to vote for women candidates. We conducted a survey experiment during the 2017 provincial election in British Columbia, Canada, using actual candidates in both real and hypothetical electoral districts. We find that more permissive, or candidate-centered, forms of proportional representation do not improve descriptive representation of women; if anything, they diminish it. We interpret these results as being driven by the supply of candidates – voters tend to vote for incumbent, well-known candidates who happen to be predominantly men. Our findings provide a cautionary note about how electoral rules can interact with real-world experiences and conditions.

## Human capacity development

**Ph.D. supervision** My main contribution to the development of other academics has been through the supervision of Ph.D. students. I've supervised two Ph.D. students to completion, served as an external examiner, and served on multiple dissertation committees.

1. Between 2011 and 2018, I was the dissertation chair for Margaret (Molly) Ariotti. Her dissertation was "Executive-Legislative Relations and Government formation in African Democracies." Molly began her career as an Assistant Professor (tenure track) at the University of Georgia and now works for the United States' Department of State's Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (African Affairs).
2. Between 2016 and 2021, I was the dissertation chair for Jinyuk Jang. His thesis was "Government Formation in Asian-Pacific Democracies." Following his defense, he started as a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at Kochi Institute of Technology (Japan).
3. I served as the external examiner for Raimondas Ibenskas, a Ph.D. student at Trinity College (Dublin, Ireland), in 2012. Raimondas began his career at the University of Exeter and is currently a Professor at the University of Bergen in Norway. Raimondas and I are currently co-PIs on a grant project funded by the Norwegian Research Council.

I have served as a committee member on nineteen dissertation committees. These Ph.D. students have been in both political science and economics departments, and have earned their degrees from Florida State University, Pennsylvania State University, and the University of California, Los Angeles. I've also served as advisor for multiple M.A. committees and as first-year advisor for graduate students.

**Administrative roles** I've contributed to the management of the College of Liberal Arts at Penn State by serving on the College Promotion and Tenure Committee (2020-2021) and by chairing the committee for two years (2021-2023). I also served on the Immediate Tenure Committee and chaired a committee evaluating the administration of my own department. In my department, I have served as an undergraduate honors advisor since 2022 and chaired the Teaching Improvement Committee (2018-2022). I have also held administrative positions outside of my university. I served as an executive committee member of the American Political Science Association's (APSA) Section on Representation and Electoral Systems (2013-2016) as a Councilmember of the section since 2022.

**Formal mentorship** I have served as an official faculty mentor to a new junior hire in my department. Additionally, along with Professor Matt Golder, I established the CP Group research lab in 2015 to improve the training and mentoring of students for whom we are the primary advisors. The CP Group has been home to one post-doc, five Ph.D. students, and twelve undergraduate students. Together the members of the CP Group have published over 60 academic pieces. The post-doc and five Ph.D. students all have academic positions. Of the undergraduates, some have gone to graduate school, some are in the private sector, one is a Fulbright scholar and finalist for both a Marshall and Rhodes scholarship, and one is a participant at the Ralph Bunche Institute Summer Program.

**International Research and Teaching** I have been involved in several collaborative international research projects. From 2008-2017, I was a co-PI on the “Making Electoral Democracy Work” project that was funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and that involved collaborating with colleagues across five countries to investigate the quality of electoral democracy. I am currently a member of an international project, “INSTAPARTY: Party Instability in Parliaments”, funded by the Norwegian Research Council. The project focuses on legislative party (in)stability in European democracies.

I have also been involved in training graduate students and faculty internationally. For example, I taught introductory classes on quantitative methods from 2010-2013 at the Essex Summer School in Social Science Data Analysis, the largest methods summer program in Europe. I have also been a faculty member at workshops to train graduate students working on specific areas of comparative politics, including the ECPR Summer School on Political Parties (Aarhus University, Denmark, 2022) and the Leuven-Montreal Winter School on Elections and Voting Behavior (University of Montreal, Canada, 2016). I have also served as a lead lecturer for the week-long comparative politics component of the 2015 Empirical Implications of Theoretical Models (EITM) Summer Institute that is funded by the National Science Foundation, as well as participating as a panel discussant at the 2016 EITM Program and as a Mentoring-Faculty-in-Residence at the 20007 EITM Program.

## Scientific impact

**Editorial Positions** With respect to disciplinary service, I have taken on considerable editorial duties. I served as a co-editor of the *British Journal of Political Science* (a top five general discipline journal in political science) from 2010-2020 and have been serving as an associate editor for *Research & Politics* since 2013. I also served as co-editor of APSA’s Comparative Politics Newsletter (2014-2018), which is the official newsletter of the American Political Science Association’s largest section. This involved commissioning 10-12 articles every six months. We focused on getting contributions from graduate students and junior scholars, as well as people from traditionally underrepresented communities and regions of the world. We had special editions on Race and Ethnic Politics, Women/Gender and Politics, Policing, Fake News and Misinformation, Populism, Data Access and Research Transparency, Training the Next Generation of Comparative Scholars, and Studying Sensitive Political Phenomena. Since 2018 I have also been a co-editor of the new Oxford Politics of Institutions Series (Oxford University Press).

**Contributing to peer review of varied kinds** I have served or am serving on the editorial boards of some leading political science journals: the *American Journal of Political Science* (2023- ), the *American Political Science Review* (2016-2020), the *British Journal of Political Science* (2014-2015), *Comparative Political Studies* (2013-2010), and *Political Science Research and Methods* (2012- ). I have reviewed for more than thirty different journals, several academic presses, and multiple national funding agencies (in the US, Sweden, Poland, Israel, and Canada), including serving on panels for the US National Science Foundation. I have also written evaluations for over a dozen (tenure and) promotion dossiers for universities in the US, the UK, Canada, France, and China. Finally, I chaired a committee tasked with external evaluation of the political science department at a university in the US.

**Contributing to a more representative discipline** I have a strong interest in promoting diversity (including, but not limited to, gender, race, and class) in political science. In 2012, I organized and co-hosted the fourth annual Workshop for Women in Political Methodology (VIM), a conference sponsored by the National Science Foundation and the Society for Political Methodology. I have served as a mentor to junior faculty and graduate students (officially in the case of the VIM mentoring program, unofficially otherwise), and I have served on the Diversity Committee for the Society for Political Methodology. In my department, I chaired a newly-formed Climate Committee (2015-2019).

**Broader society** I have contributed to broader public understanding of comparative political institutions through engagement with various media outlets in the US and UK. In 2019, I discussed “Brexit and the UK’s identify crisis” on the Democracy Works podcast (produced by the McCourtney Institute for Democracy at Penn State). In 2017, co-authors and I contributed to a blog post for Democratic Audit UK (Public Policy Group, LSE Government Department) about “Good news: fielding women candidates doesn’t put parties at a disadvantage in elections”, based on a recent article we had published in *Gender & Politics*. In 2016, Garrett Glasgow and I wrote a post for *The Plot* (EPSA/Cambridge University Press) “On the Difficulty of Forecasting ‘Winners’ in Parliamentary Elections” explaining a recent article we’d published in the *British Journal of Political Science*. I also did a short radio interview in 2012 to explain “The Problem with Coalitions” on Public Radio International’s *The World*.

# Chris Hanretty

## Personal and career information

**Key qualifications** I hold a PhD in Politics from the European University Institute (EUI) (awarded 2009). Previously I completed an M.Phil in European Politics and Society at the University of Oxford (2004-2006) and a Ba (Hons.) (1st Class) degree in Politics, Philosophy and Economics at the University of Oxford.

**Relevant positions held** I am currently Professor of Politics at Royal Holloway, University of London. I took up this position in 2017. I was previously (2010-2017) Lecturer and then Reader at the University of East Anglia.

**Awards or prizes** My doctoral thesis “The Political Independence of Public Service Broadcasters” was awarded both the EUI Alumni Association prize for best thesis (€3,000) and the inaugural François Mény prize for best comparative thesis on political institutions (€5,000). During my doctoral study I was also awarded the Association for the Study of Modern Italy’s Graduate Essay Prize.

In 2019 I was awarded both the UK Political Studies Association’s Richard Rose Prize, for an early career researcher who has made “a distinctive contribution to British politics”, and the Philip Leverhulme Prize, awarded to “outstanding researchers whose work has already attracted international recognition and whose future career is exceptionally promising”.

**Other relevant experience** I have good reading comprehension (but more limited written and oral production) in several different European languages (Italian, Spanish, French, Swedish).

## Generation of knowledge

1. Hanretty, C. (2012), “Dissent in Iberia: the ideal points of justices on the Spanish and Portuguese Constitutional Tribunals”. *European Journal of Political Research*, 51(5), 671–692.

This paper works backwards from patterns of dissent between judges on two constitutional courts in order to infer their positions on a left-right spectrum. The key finding of the paper is not just that judges’ positions can be inferred on the basis of their “votes”, but that these positions match up with the positions of the political actors who appointed them. This research owes a great deal to the path-breaking work on Martin and Quinn on the Supreme Court of the United States, but my paper has been influential in turn as the first application of Bayesian techniques to decision-making on European constitutional courts. The paper has been cited in subsequent analyses of decision-making on Swedish, Norwegian, Estonian, Bulgarian and Italian courts.

2. Hanretty, C. and Koop, C. (2018). “Political independence, accountability, and the quality of regulatory decision-making”. *Comparative Political Studies*, 51(1), 38–75.

This article was the culmination of three linked articles coauthored with Christel Koop on regulators’ *de jure* and *de facto* independence. Previous papers had examined the structure of *de jure* independence and the link between *de jure* and *de facto* independence. In this paper we went further to examine whether greater independence actually led to better quality decision-making, as measured by regulator ratings in the *Global Competition Review*, a specialist trade publication. The paper is important because it connects careful measurement to a normatively important debate – whether the greater power given to non-majoritarian institutions actually brings with it noticeable improvements in the quality of the work they do. We find that regulators with greater formal independence do indeed work better.

3. Hanretty, C., English P., and Mellon, J. (2021). “Members of Parliament are minimally accountable for their issue stances (and they know it)”. *American Political Science Review*, 115(4), 1275–1291.

In 2016, shortly after the UK’s referendum on membership of the European Union, I produced estimates of how each Westminster constituency had voted. My analysis (also described below in the section on broader societal impact) showed that most MPs were “out of step” with their constituents – but how would being “out of step” matter for those MPs’ re-election prospects? In this paper together with Jon Mellon and Patrick English, I showed that MPs’ positions mattered very little: MPs who had campaigned for ‘Remain’ in the average Leave-supporting seat would have gained less than a percentage point had they instead supported Leave, as a majority of their constituents would have preferred. This on its own was an important finding, but we went beyond this link, presenting MPs with five survey vignettes and asking whether they thought the featured MP would have done better if they had switched their position. While Leave-supporting MPs thought that MPs would have done better by switching to Leave (and vice versa), the “average” MP thought that MPs would not have substantially increased their vote share by changing their position to reflect the position of the majority of their constituents.

4. Hanretty, C. (2020). *A court of specialists: judicial behavior on the UK Supreme Court*. Oxford University Press, New York.

This book represented the culmination of seven years’ work on the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom, which was established in 2009 to replace the Appellate Committee of the House of Lords. The first quantitative study of decision-making on the UK Supreme Court, the book covers all aspects of the court’s work, from the selection of cases to the final outcome. A key finding of the book is the fact that judges’ disagreements are now structured by a left-right dimension, which was not true of the Appellate Committee. The book has been the subject of two author-meets-critics events at the (online) ICON-S conference and at Durham University.

5. Hanretty, C. (2022). “Party system polarization and the effective number of parties”. *Electoral Studies*, 76 (April), 102459.

This paper extends the Shugart-Taageperaa agenda (as represented by their 2017 book, *Votes from Seats*) to include a normatively relevant property of party systems, namely their polarization. In the paper I present a simple model of party system polarization based on a single input variable: the effective number of seat-winning parties. I show that the functional form of the relationship between the number of seat-winning parties and polarization follows the Bessel correction for sample variance. In practical terms, polarization increases steeply when moving from two to three seat-winning parties, and increases less steeply after that. The paper suggests that, for countries with assemblies of average size, most of the “cost” in terms of polarization comes when moving from very strongly majoritarian to weakly proportional electoral systems.

## Human capacity development

**PhD supervision/examining** My main contribution to the development of other academics has been through the supervision of PhD students. I've supervised three PhD students to completion, all of whom have gone on to excellent careers:

- Between 2013 and 2017 I was supervisor to **Francesca Vantaggiato**, whose thesis “Networks as Levers: Emergence, Functioning and Export of Transnational Networks of Energy Regulations” was passed without corrections. Francesca was supervised jointly with Hussein Kassim. Following her PhD, Francesca started post-doctoral study at the Center for Environmental Policy and Behavior at the University of California, Davis. She is now a Senior Lecturer in Public Policy at King's College London.
- Between 2018 and 2021 I was supervisor to **Ben Lobo**, whose thesis “Can we improve multilevel regression and post-stratification (MRP) through new ways to leverage information” was passed without corrections. Ben's PhD study was part-funded by the polling company Survation. Ben was supervised jointly with Oliver Heath. Following his PhD, Ben went on to work as Data Scientist for the public opinion research company FocalData.
- Between 2018 and 2023 I was supervisor to **Laura Serra**, whose thesis “Assessing the widening age gap in British partisanship: the impact of values, maturation and political mobilization” was passed with minor corrections. Laura's PhD study was part-funded by the polling company Survation. Laura was supervised jointly with Oliver Heath. Following her PhD, Laura went on to start post-doctoral study at the London School of Economics and Political Science.

Between 2016 and 2017 I also supervised (jointly with Toby James) Scott Rawlinson, who was researching local Labour parties in the post-war period, but this supervision ended when I moved from the University of East Anglia to Royal Holloway.

I currently supervise two PhD students: Tom Barton (2019–), who has recently submitted his thesis “The Impact of Voter Identification Laws on Participation and Perceptions of Electoral Integrity: An International Study”, and Vasil Lazarov (2023–), whose PhD study is funded by the polling company Survation.

I have additionally acted as an examiner for five PhD students: two (Lewis Graham [Cambridge] and Simone Schroff [UEA]) in departments of law, two in departments of politics (Philip Schroeder [UCL], Amy Smith [Royal Holloway]), and one in a department of methodology (Tom Pashkalis [LSE]).

**Administrative roles** I have contributed to the management of my own department: between 2018 and 2020 I served as Head of Department for the Department of Politics, International Relations and Philosophy at Royal Holloway. As Head of Department I was responsible for line managing staff across two separate disciplines, appraising staff, and facilitating the transition from a faculty-based model of governance to a school-based model which would bring the study of politics, international relations and philosophy together with law, economics and criminology to create a School of Law and Social sciences.

**Formal mentorship** I have acted as mentor to new hires within my department, to early career researchers as part of a cross-departmental mentorship scheme, and to junior researchers as part of conference-specific mentorship programmes linked to pre-conference events. In this respect I have benefitted from internal training programmes on unconscious bias, mentorship, and my own reading on gendered patterns of promotion within the discipline.

**Internal training programmes** I have consistently provided internal and external training programmes to students and staff. At the University of East Anglia I ran repeat (2013, 2014, and 2017) short courses for doctoral students on scraping the web. At Royal Holloway I ran a short (two-day) course for staff showing how to convert from SPSS/Stata to the R statistical environment (course materials at <http://chrishanretty.co.uk/conveRt/>). For the University of Oxford I taught a short course on multilevel regression and post-stratification as part of the Oxford Spring School in Advanced Research Methods (course materials at <https://github.com/chrishanretty/oxfordmrp/>). As a member of the Scottish Election Study, I am delivering a hands-on workshop on multilevel regression and post-stratification for grant members, including both co-investigators and post-doctoral students.

## Scientific impact

**Contributing to the growth of subfields** Between 2015 and 2019 I served as the Convenor for the ECPR Law and Politics Standing Group. In this role I boosted the average number of papers presented in this section at ECPR General Conferences by forty percent. The Standing Group is now a vibrant and integral part of the General Conference.

**Contributing to a more representative discipline** During the pandemic, I produced a report for the Political Studies Association (PSA) and the British International Studies Association (BISA) on the career trajectories of staff in departments of politics and international relations. The report drew on Higher Education Statistics Agency data for the period 2012/13 to 2018/19, and provided authoritative figures on the gender and ethnicity breakdown of staff in politics departments overall and by level of seniority. Incredibly, this was the first time such data had been produced for UK departments.

**Producing software resources for others to use** I've gone above and beyond to ensure that the techniques that I use in my research are made available to others in an easy-to-use format. I am the author of two software packages for the R statistical environment: `sharesimulatoR`, a package to simulate party systems (written together with Denis Cohen), and `hrr`, a package for hierarchical related regression and (some forms of) multilevel regression and post-stratification. I previously published an R package which helped R users to process and resolve British parliamentary constituency names.

**Contributing to peer review of varied kinds** I am a member of the editorial board of two journals (Electoral Studies and the Journal of Law and Courts). I have reviewed for more than fifty different journals, six national or international funding bodies, and have reviewed tenure and promotion applications for universities in the United States, Jamaica and the United Kingdom.

## Broader society

I have contributed to broader public understanding of electoral behaviour through engagement with print and broadcast media in the UK and internationally. In 2015, I was the polling analyst for the BBC2 current affairs programme *Newnight*: election forecasts which I produced for that programme together with Ben Lauderdale and Nick Vivyan were key in shaping that programme's narrative concerning the election, even though the forecasts were eventually confounded when the Conservative party won an unexpected majority in the election.

One year later, following the UK's referendum on membership of the European Union, I produced estimates of how individual constituencies had voted in the referendum. These estimates – necessary because the referendum had been counted at the level of local authorities rather than Westminster constituencies – have become quasi-official records of how constituencies voted, and have been cited in the House of Commons, in the media, and in authoritative constituency profiles (*The Times Guide to the House of Commons*, materials produced by the House of Commons Library). For better or worse, they have shaped how MPs reacted to the referendum result in their area.

Since the referendum I have been working with Survation, a leading polling company, helping them produce MRP-based estimates of constituency vote intention and issue opinion for a range of clients between and during election periods. As part of this work I've run training events for Survation staff, helping them to transition from older software (SPSS) to newer open source software (R) and software versioning (GitHub). This (commercial) work overlaps with my broader commitment to making it easier to produce estimates of local area opinion.

# Ben Stanley

## Personal and career information

**Key qualifications** I hold a PhD in Government from the University of Essex (awarded 2010) and a habilitation in Social Sciences awarded by the Polish Academy of Sciences (2018). Previously I completed an MA in European Politics (distinction) at the University of Essex (2005), an MA in International Studies (distinction) at the University of Durham (2001) and a BA in English Literature (First Class with distinction) at the University of Warwick (2000).

## Relevant positions held

I am currently Associate Professor in the Centre for the Study of Democracy at SWPS University, Warsaw, where I have been employed since 2015. I was previously Marie Curie Intra-European Research Fellow at the School of Law, Politics and Sociology, University of Sussex (2013 – 2015), Assistant Professor at the Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University, Warsaw (2011 – 2013) and Marie Curie Post-Doctoral Fellow at the Institute for Public Affairs, Bratislava (2010).

**Awards or prizes** Rector's Award for Scientific Achievements 2020/2021, SWPS University, 2021.

**Other relevant experience** I am fluent in Polish and have good reading comprehension in Czech and Slovak.

## Generation of knowledge

1. Stanley, B. (2008). "The thin ideology of populism". *Journal of Political Ideologies* 13: 95–110.

This paper, a reworked and expanded version of my MA thesis, draws on the work of Michael Freeden on the morphology of ideologies and Margaret Canovan's work on the redemptive and pragmatic faces of democracy to argue that populism is best understood as a 'thin ideology' which possesses its own internal coherence but must combine with more elaborate, 'thicker' ideologies if it is to be politically efficacious. Along with Mudde's (2004) "The Populist Zeitgeist" this paper has had a significant impact on the rise of the ideational paradigm in populism studies, providing a clear theoretical-conceptual apparatus for the study of the phenomenon both from the supply side (party ideologies and electoral appeals) and the demand side (voter attitudes and voting behaviour). The paper has been cited over 1500 times.

2. Stanley, B. (2011). "Populism, nationalism, or national populism? An analysis of Slovak voting behaviour at the 2010 parliamentary election". *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 44: 257–270.

This paper analyses the relationship between populism and vote choice at the 2010 parliamentary election in Slovakia. It is most notable for being the first attempt to derive a conceptually robust measure of specifically populist attitudes among voters, where previous studies had used dubious proxies. Although in this case the items chosen did not form a scale, the questions used have informed subsequent attempts to operationalise populist attitudes and some of them appear in standard question batteries in amended form.

3. Szulecki, K., Erdal, M.B., and Stanley, B. (2023). *External Voting, The Patterns and Drivers of Central European Migrants' Homeland Electoral Participation*. Palgrave Macmillan.

This short monograph is the first comparative study of voting behaviour among Central and Eastern European diaspora communities in Western European countries. The main output of the DIASPOLitic project, and drawing on a unique dataset assembled by the project members, this book uses both qualitative and quantitative methods to analyse broad patterns of voting behaviour among diaspora voters and to probe their motivations for electoral participation and party support. This book has been positively received among the community of scholars studying emigre and diaspora politics, and has resulted in invitations to contribute further research in this area to special issues on the comparative study of diaspora politics. The book launch coincided with the 2023 Polish election campaign, and some of its findings (in particular regarding administrative and institutional barriers to diaspora voting) were drawn upon by Polish consular staff when administering the vote in Norway.

4. Szulecki, K., Kotnarowski, M. and Stanley, B. (2023). "Emigrant external voting in Central-Eastern Europe after EU enlargement". *Electoral Studies* 81: 102552.

This is the main output from my work package on the aforementioned DIASPOLitic project. It uses aggregate data to compare voting behaviour among diaspora electorates with that of electorates in countries of origin, finding that there is an increasing discrepancy between the two, and that this discrepancy has an ideological character, with diaspora voters generally voting in greater number for more socially liberal and economically right-wing parties. This study is one of the first to quantify the "political remittances" generated by differences in the character of voting behaviour between diaspora and origin-country voters, and has helped structure an emerging research agenda into the ideological and institutional drivers of the diaspora vote as these communities mature and become more rooted in their 'host' countries.

5. Pirro, A.L.P., and Stanley, B. (2021). "Forging, Bending, and Breaking: Enacting the 'Illiberal Playbook' in Hungary and Poland". *Perspectives on Politics* 20: 86–101.

This paper draws on the cases of Hungary and Poland to propose a paradigm of policy change in backsliding democracies that comprises forging (passing laws contrary to the orthodox model of liberal-democratic consolidation), bending (passing laws which are consistent with the letter of the law but contrary to its spirit) and breaking (passing laws and

undertaking other actions contrary to the law), thereby enabling a more subtle set of distinctions between different rationales and gradations of illiberal policymaking. The paper contributes to an emerging literature that seeks to take illiberalism seriously as an ideological agenda in its own right, rather than just as the mere negation of liberalism.

## **Human capacity development**

**PhD supervision/examining** During my two years at the University of Sussex (2013 – 2015) I was on the PhD board for Elvis Bisong Tambe's thesis, titled "Electoral participation in new democracies: applying existing models of turnout to new democracies in Africa, East Asia and Post-Communist Europe". At SWPS University I have supervised seven research theses undertaken by postgraduate students, all to successful completion, and am currently supervising one student.

I have served as examiner for three PhD theses: - Paulina Lenik, "A pendulum swung back? Comparative analysis of populism in Central and Eastern Europe.", University College London, 2022. - Justyna Lisińska, "How do populist supporters engage online?", University of Southampton, 2021. - Agnieszka Sztajdel, "The Post-Truth Narrative in Post-Smolensk Poland", European University Institute, 2019.

**Contribution to institutional development** As part of SWPS's drive to diversify its offering to students, in 2020 - 2021 I was a member of a team tasked with developing a new multidisciplinary undergraduate course, "Public Life", combining sociology, psychology and political science. This course is now in its third year, and has attracted an increasing number of students each year. The approach the team devised for creating this course has been applied to the creation of other proposed new courses in the university.

In 2022 - 2023 I was a member of a team created to devise a new overarching strategy for SWPS University. My main contribution consisted in identifying priorities for further internationalisation of the university as a research and teaching community, with the aim of increasing SWPS's international prominence through increased research collaboration and personnel exchange. The proposed strategy met with the approval of the university board and will be implemented in the 2024 - 2029 period.

## **Scientific impact**

**Contribution to the growth of subfields** My major contribution in this respect is to the subfield of populism, as detailed above in 'Generation of knowledge'. My articles on this topic have not simply contributed to an emerging body of knowledge but have helped shape one of the leading approaches to the study of the discipline – the ideational approach.

**Contribution to the development of comparative surveys** I have been involved with the creation and administration of several surveys. Since 2015 I have been a member of the team responsible for producing the Polish National Election Study (PNES), a post-election survey that has been running since 1997 and is the only such survey in Central and Eastern Europe to incorporate all rounds of the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) to date. This has involved trialling new questions to capture values and attitudes in a dynamically changing political reality, and experimenting with the use of online survey modes to address problems created by decreasing response rates for traditional face-to-face surveys. I was a member of the questionnaire committee for the CSES Slovakia 2010 post-electoral survey carried out by the Institute of Sociology at the Slovak Academy of Sciences, in which role I contributed an original battery of survey questions on populism and cooperated with native Slovak speakers to ensure the faithfulness of the translation of the CSES survey questions. In 2022, I was part of the team responsible for ensuring the integrity of the translation of the European Social Survey (ESS) questions into Polish.

**Contribution to peer review** I am a member of the editorial advisory board for the Czech Journal of Political Science, the Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties, and Populism. I served as a member of the selection committee for the ECPR Joint Sessions of Workshops in 2019, and have served as a reviewer of grant bids for the Slovak Academy of Sciences (SASPRO) and the Polish National Science Centre (NCN). I have reviewed articles for over 30 journals, including leading journals such as the *American Journal of Political Science* and *Comparative Political Studies*.

## Broader society

I have made a significant contribution to the understanding of polling in Polish media. Since 2013 I have published aggregates of vote intention polling and projection of seat shares for Polish parties on social media. This led to me being commissioned to write a regular monthly column for the website of the weekly Polish current affairs magazine *Polityka*, in which I present ongoing trends in polling and explain to readers some of the key issues in the interpretation of polls. My polling estimates have also been used by numerous international media outlets (including the *Financial Times*, *The Guardian*, *El País* and *Le Monde*) in their coverage of Polish politics. I have made numerous presentations on this issue for several foreign embassies in Poland, and have regularly met with new embassy staff to familiarise them with Polish party politics more generally.

Since 2015, I have used my social media account to provide ongoing commentary on democratic backsliding in Poland. My X (formerly Twitter) account was followed by many foreign journalists and law scholars in the period immediately after democratic backsliding began, as I was able to use my knowledge of the Polish case and my Polish language skills to provide ongoing information on topics poorly covered by the international media.

# Natasha Wunsch

## Personal and career information

**Key qualifications** I hold a PhD in Political Science from University College London (awarded 2016) and a habilitation from the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH) Zurich (2023). Previously I completed a dual MA in European Studies/Political Science at Sciences Po and the Free University Berlin (2009-2011). Prior to that, I completed a French-German undergraduate programme in Social Sciences at Sciences Po (2005-2008).

**Relevant positions held** I am currently Professor of European Studies at the University of Fribourg. I arrived at Fribourg in early 2023. I was previously (2019-2023) Assistant Professor of European Integration/Political Science at Sciences Po.

**Awards or prizes** My doctoral research was supported by a SSEES Excellence Scholarship awarded to one PhD candidate per cohort at University College London's School of Slavonic and East European Studies. One of the key articles from my PhD (Wunsch 2016) received the Best Article Prize from the European Union Studies Association. Another co-authored article (Richter & Wunsch 2020) received the Best Article Prize from European Community Studies Association – Germany. I have received multiple competitive grants to support my postdoctoral research, including the ETH Postdoctoral Fellowship (2017-2019, CHF 225,700) and an Ambizione research group grant from the Swiss National Science Foundation (2019-2024, CHF 973,034).

**Other relevant experience** I am fluent in German, English, French and Spanish and have a good understanding of Italian and Serbo-Croatian.

## Generation of knowledge

1. Wunsch, N. (under contract). *Democratic Commitment: How Conceptions of Democracy Shape Tolerance for Democratic Backsliding*, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.

This book represents the culmination of a four-year research project investigating why citizens in advanced democracies tolerate democratic violations by elected leaders. Going beyond elite-centric studies of regime change, this book brings ordinary citizens back into the picture. It claims that divergent democratic attitudes within the population are key to explaining enduring electoral support for elected leaders who engage in the dismantling of democratic checks and balances. This lack of attitudinal consolidation around liberal democratic norms leaves important parts of the electorate vulnerable to majoritarian or illiberal appeals by political elites. Updating the classical literature on political culture and its role in democratisation, the book studies the crucial cases of Poland and Hungary to uncover the micro-foundations

of the proposed linkage between democratic attitudes and political behaviour. The empirical analysis leverages a mixed-methods design and draws on extensive material comprising focus groups, discourse data and original surveys including two conjoint experiments.

2. Wunsch, N. and Gessler, T. (2023). Who Tolerates Democratic Backsliding? A Mosaic Approach to Voters' Responses to Authoritarian Leadership in Hungary, *Democratization*.

This article leverages a conjoint survey experiment in Hungary to probe competing mechanisms of citizen tolerance towards democratic violations in a context of severe backsliding. Its main contribution consists of demonstrating empirically the presence of a composite effect, whereby authoritarian-leaning elites succeed in offering targeted compensations to different groups, ultimately building a mosaic of support among voters to secure enduring electoral backing. The article pinpoints trade-offs notably related to cultural conservatism and economic benefits among different subgroups of the population. At the same time, its empirical findings indicate surprisingly high levels of condemnation of undemocratic positions by Hungarian respondents. The article discusses how this unexpected pattern points to the limitations of conjoint designs as well as the overlooked supply side of democratic backsliding. In doing so, the article feeds into broader debates about the unfolding and entrenchment of democratic backsliding and how we study these processes.

3. Richter, S. and Wunsch, N. (2020): Money, Power, Glory: Linkages between EU conditionality and state capture in the Western Balkans, *Journal of European Public Policy* 27(1): 41-62.

This article sheds a critical light on the EU's enlargement policy as a driver of democratic transformation. Using an original dataset of European Commission progress assessments for the different countries of the Western Balkans, it demonstrates a decoupling between gradual improvements in formal compliance with membership criteria and stagnating, if not declining, democratic performance. The article explains the limited impact of the EU's political conditionality in the Western Balkans with rampant state capture and proceeds to set out three mechanisms that explain how EU conditionality has effectively contributed to the consolidation of such detrimental governance patterns. First, EU pressure for simultaneous economic and political reforms opened opportunities for business actors to build powerful clientelist networks that reach into politics. Second, top-down conditionality has weakened political competition and mechanisms of internal accountability and deliberation. Finally, formal progress towards membership and high-level interactions with EU and member state officials legitimize corrupt elites. The article attracted considerable attention in the Western Balkans region as well as at the EU level and I was invited to share the main findings at events in Belgrade and at a high-level policy meeting with European Commission officials.

4. Chiru, M. and Wunsch, N. (2023): Democratic backsliding as a catalyst for polity-based contestation? Populist radical right cooperation in the European Parliament, *Journal of European Public Policy* 30(1): 64-83.

This article sets out a new research agenda that explores how trends of democratic backsliding in several EU member states is affecting governance at the European Union level.

Focusing on the rise of populist radical right actors in the European Parliament, it examines the extent and substance of populist polity-based contestation of European integration by studying the co-sponsorship and contents of parliamentary questions and roll-call vote cohesion among populist radical right representatives between 2009 to 2019. The article's findings indicate that overall levels of populist cooperation remain low and concentrated within European party groups, suggesting that ideological divergences between populist radical right actors and their institutional fragmentation within the European Parliament still hamper their formal cooperation at the European level. Despite these reassuring findings, the article singles out different avenues through which democratic backsliding may affect EU-level governance in the future, connecting the study of declining democratic quality to the institutional dynamics of European integration.

5. Wunsch, N. (2018). *EU Enlargement and Civil Society in the Western Balkans: From Mobilisation to Empowerment?* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan (Studies in European Union Politics).

This monograph is based on my doctoral research. It examines the phenomenon of civil society empowerment throughout the EU enlargement process. Its central research interest is to investigate whether, how and to what extent civil society actors in EU candidate countries have been able to use the membership negotiations to strengthen their position at the domestic level. With a focus on the rule of law, it compares the mobilisation strategies of NGOs in Croatia, Montenegro, and Serbia and analyses their outcomes in terms of their formal integration into the policy-making process and the substantial influence they wield over policy outcomes. Supplementing the top-down approach prevalent in European Union enlargement studies with insights from social movement theory and interest group research, the book puts forward a theoretical framework that emphasizes the role of domestic agency in processes of differential empowerment. It highlights the presence of strategic mobilisation among domestic actors and thereby advocates for a more dynamic, actor-focused understanding of the Europeanisation process. Furthermore, it underscores the importance of transnational learning and horizontal exchanges between accession countries when it comes to shaping mobilisation strategies and transferring lessons learned between different enlargement rounds. The book has informed both academic studies in the field of civil society support and the strategies of NGO actors on the ground with whom I shared my findings as they devised their own approach to engaging in their countries' EU accession process.

## Human capacity development

**PhD/MA supervision and examination** My involvement in PhD and MA supervision to date has supported the careers of a number of junior scholars. I have supervised one PhD student and two MA students to completion, all of whom have moved on to competitive positions in the following:

- Between 2020 and 2023, I was PhD supervisor to Marc Jacob, who wrote his thesis on citizens' responses to democratic backsliding in the framework of the SNSF

Ambizione grant I obtained. Marc has since joined the Polarization Lab at Stanford University as a Postdoctoral Research Fellow.

- From 2020-2021, I supervised Laurenz Derksen's MA thesis on citizens' democratic preferences in illiberal regimes, also in the framework of the SNSF Ambizione grant I obtained. Laurenz subsequently joined the PhD programme at ETH Zurich.
- From 2020-2021, I supervised Juraj Pala's MA thesis that adopts a democratic theory perspective on processes of democratisation in the context of EU enlargement. Juraj has since joined the European University Institute as a PhD student.
- In 2023, I co-examined Sofija Malbasic's MA thesis on democratic values in conflicted societies. Sofija has since received an offer for a PhD programme at Oxford University.

**Administrative roles** I serve as the co-director of the Centre for European Studies at the University of Fribourg. The centre serves as a platform for interdisciplinary exchanges related to European topics within the university and also hosts multiple events with external speakers that attract students as well as a more general public.

## Scientific impact

**Contributing to the growth of subfields** Since 2018 I have been a member of the Steering Committee for the ECPR Standing Group on the European Union, becoming the group's Co-Chair (2020-2022) and its Chair from 2022 onwards. The group is by far the largest of the ECPR's standing groups with over 1300 members as of August 2023 and its own biannual conference that draws around 500 participants.

**Support to junior scholars** I have supported multiple junior colleagues in the pursuit of their academic careers, providing mentoring and advice on applications and job talks. In my capacity as (co-)Chair of the ECPR Standing Group on the EU, I have introduced Early Career Workshops as a new format enabling junior scholars to obtain funding to organise academic events and attend the group's biannual conference.

**Contributing to peer review** I am a member of the editorial board of the *Journal of European Public Policy* and have received over thirty journal articles, three academic monographs, and four project applications to national or international funding bodies.

## Broader society

I have contributed broadly to policy-related discussions on EU enlargement and democracy promotion through my affiliation as an Associate Fellow with the German Council on Foreign Relations and my membership in the Balkans in Europe Policy Advisory Group. In these capacities, I have written multiple policy briefs and engaged with policy-makers in multiple member states, candidate countries, and at the EU level.

Between 2013 and 2017, I provided more than ten training programmes to think tanks and civil society organisations in the Western Balkans region to enhance their ability to provide meaningful input into their countries' EU accession negotiations.

I remain engaged in the think tank world in my capacity as a member of the Scientific Advisory Board of the German Council on Foreign Relations and the Scientific Advisory Committee of the Institute for European Policy.