

Alberto Stefanelli

PHD CANDIDATE

Faculty of Social Sciences, KU Leuven, Parkstraat 45, Leuven

✉ alberto.stefanelli@kuleuven.be | 🌐 www.albertostefanelli.com | 🐦 @sergsagara

Education

KU Leuven

FWO PHD FELLOW

- Advisor: Prof. Bart Meuleman
- Co-Advisor: Prof. Koen Abts

Belgium

2020 - 2024

Yale University & New York University

FULBRIGHT VISITING RESEARCHER

- Host Yale: Prof. Milan Svolik
- Hosts NYU: Prof. Bart Bonikowski

United States

2022 - 2023

KU Leuven

MS IN STATISTICS

- Advisor: Prof. Patrick Onghena
- GPA: 86/100 (*magna cum laude*)

Belgium

2020 - 2023

Central European University

MA IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

- Advisor: Prof. Gabor Toka
- GPA: 3.83/4 (*distinction*)
- Rank/Class size: 1/11

Hungary

2016 - 2018

University of Padua

BA IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

- Advisor: Prof. Marco Almagisti
- GPA: 28.5/30
- Final mark: 110/110 (*magna cum laude*)

Italy

2012 - 2015

Publications

PUBLISHED

Stefanelli, A., Meuleman B., Abts K., 2023. The Ontological Core of Political Radicalism. Exploring the role of Antagonist, Dogmatic, and Populist Beliefs in Structuring Radical Ideologies. *Contemporary Politics*, DOI: 10.1080/13569775.2023.2269664.

Stefanelli, A., 2023. The Conditional Association Between Populism, Ideological Extremity, and Affective Polarization. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 35(2), p.edad014. DOI: 10.1093/ijpor/edad014.

Musa, S., Cilovic-Lagarija, S., Kavazovic, A., Bosankic-Cmajcanin, N., **Stefanelli, A.**, Scott, N.A., Scherzer, M., Kiss, Z. and Bach Habersaat, K., 2022. COVID-19 Risk Perception, Trust in Institutions and Negative Affect Drive Positive COVID-19 Vaccine Intentions. *International Journal of Public Health*, 67, DOI: 10.3389/ijph.2022.1604231.

Almagisti M. and **Stefanelli, A.**, "Costi della Politica e Finanziamenti: il Livello Locale [The Costs of Politics and Political Finance Rules: the Local Level]," *Il finanziamento alla politica in Italia*, Piccio R. D, Eds., Carocci editore, 2018, ISSN: 8843086766.

Stefanelli, A., "The Electoral Consolidation of the Five Star Movement," *Quaderni di Scienza Politica*, vol. Il Movimento Cinque Stelle: Prospettive di Ricerca a Confronto, no. 3, Almagisti M. and Graziano P. R., Eds., 2017, ISSN: 1124-7959.

Almagisti M. and **Stefanelli, A.**, "Dove Soffia il Vento del Nord?[Where the Northern Wind Blows?]," in *Cambiamento o Ass'estamento? Le Elezioni Amministrative Del 2016*, Istituto Carlo Cattaneo, 2016, pp. 9–22, ISBN: 978-88-941126-2-7.

Almagisti M. and **Stefanelli, A.**, "Voto al Candidato Presidente e Liste Personali e Regionali. Il Veneto in Prospettiva Comparata. [Split-ticket Voting and Local Politics. Veneto in a Comparative Perspective]," *Democrazia e Diritto*, no. 3, pp.

UNDER REVIEW

Freedom for all? Populism and the Instrumental Support of Freedom of Speech *(first author, with B. Meuleman & K. Abts)*

We argue that populist individuals tend to understand free speech as a counter-hegemonic device that can be instrumentally used to advance policies that are considered good for “the people”. We test this argument in Belgium using an original survey question and a split-ballot experiment. Results show that populist individuals on both sides of the L-R continuum employ “double standards” and protect free speech only when it is not at odds with their ideological interests.

Unaffected Polarisation? Populism and Affective Polarization in comparative perspective *(first author, with Bruno Castanho Silva)*

This paper provides the most encompassing comparative account of the relationship between populism and affective polarisation at the individual level. We show that both populist attitudes and populist vote choice are generally not related to higher levels of affective polarisation. We also find a substantial amount of heterogeneity across the selected country cases. This suggests that populist polarisation is conditional and by no means a generalised feature of advanced democracies.

Subjects, Trials, and Levels: Statistical Power in Conjoint Experiments *(first author, with M. Lukac)* OFS Working Paper

Based on a large simulation study, we explore the statistical properties of conjoint designs and develop a web application that can be used by researchers to achieve adequate power for a wide range of conjoint designs. Contrary to the assumption that conjoint experiments “free us from power constraints”, we show that they are not well suited to draw inferences for designs with large numbers of experimental conditions.

IN PREPARATION

The Visibility and Framing of LGBT Issues in Parliament: How MP Characteristics and the Media Structure Substantive Representation *(shared first author, with Laura Jacobs, Cecil Meeusen & Arno Van Hootegeem – advanced drak)*

We scraped all the parliamentary interrogations and collected all television news broadcasts concerning LGBT issues over a thirty-year time period (1994-2022) in the Dutch-speaking part of Belgium. Results show (1) a growing polarization on how LGBT issues are framed and (2) a strong agenda-setting potential of TV news on MPs’ behaviour in parliament.

Destroying Liberal Democracy in Name of the People? *(first author, with B. Meuleman & K. Abts – early drak)*

This paper aims to examine the relationship between populism and the dual character of liberal democracy. Our empirical findings show that populist individuals tend to endorse a majoritarian conception of democracy characterised by anti-pluralistic tendencies and a preference for direct governance. Simultaneously, we find that populist individuals exhibit less support for individual freedom and checks and balances, believing that the government should have unhindered rule.

Populist Authoritarianism: Left, Right, and Center *(shared first author, with Milan Svolik – data collection completed)*

The goal of this study is to examine heterogeneity in citizens’ commitment to democratic principles by their i) left, centre, or right political orientation; ii) populist or mainstream political tendencies. We use a candidate-choice survey experiment fielded in 7 different Latin American countries. Results show that individuals trade off democracy for different policy preferences and priorities (i.e. the left for leftist policies; the right for rightist policies; the centre for centrist policies).

The Entrance in parliament of PRRP on attitudes towards immigration and European integration *(first author, with Bart Bonikowski – early drak)*

We test whether the entrance of populist parties in parliament changes the way citizens think about immigration and European Integration. Making use of exogenous variation created through differences in electoral thresholds, we causally assess that the representation of populist parties is associated with changes in attitudes. The results suggest the presence of attitude polarisation across the L-R ideological spectrum: left-wing individuals move towards more progressive positions while right-wing voters become more conservative.

Awards, Fellowships, & Grants

2022	Scholarship to visit Yale University and New York University Fulbright-Schuman Association	€20,000
2021	Best Poster Award for Innovations in Causal Inference and Experimental Research (w Martin Lukac) Centre for Experimental Social Science (CESS), Oxford	€500
	Award for outstanding pedagogy (Dirk Berg-Schlosser Award) European Consortium for Political Research	€500
2020	PhD fellowship for fundamental research Flemish Research Foundation (FWO), Belgium	€150.000
2019	Best MA thesis in electoral studies Celso Ghini Award, Italian Electoral Studies Association, Rome	€1.500
2018	Research Grant for a candidate-choice conjoint experiment Central European University, Budapest, Hungary	€500
	Tuition waiver for methods training European Consortium for Political Research	€800
	Full tuition MA Scholarship Central European University, Budapest, Hungary	€35.000

Teaching Experience

INSTRUCTOR

2020 - 2023	Introduction to Conjoint Experiments [Course Materials]	<i>ECPR, Innsbruck University</i>
2019	Workshop on Propensity Matching	<i>Hebrew University of Jerusalem</i>

TEACHING ASSISTANT

2020 - 2023	Lab sessions for Structural Equations, [Course Materials]	<i>KU Leuven</i>
	Machine Learning for Social Sciences	<i>ECPR, MethodsNet</i>
	Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) & Multilevel SEM	<i>ECPR</i>
	Advanced Multilevel Regression Modelling	<i>ECPR</i>
	Automated Collection of Web and Social Data	<i>ECPR</i>
	Logistic Regression and Generalised Linear Models	<i>ECPR</i>
	Intro to R	<i>ECPR</i>

Software

cjsimPWR

R-PACKAGE

Simulate conjoint data, calculate power, Type S and Type M error for forced-choice conjoint experiments that use the Hainmueller, J., Hopkins, D., & Yamamoto, T. (2014) framework.

Outreach & Professional Development

SERVICE AND OUTREACH

- 2022 - Present **Founding member of Methods Excellence Network (MethodsNet)**
Global network dedicated to inclusive methods training.
- 2021 - Present **President of Meth-Lab**
An initiative to encourage methodological pluralism and learning.
- 2019 - Present **Member of the Team Surveys of Team Populism**
A project that brings together renowned scholars from Europe and the Americas to study the causes and consequences of populism.

PEER REVIEW

European Political Science Review
International Journal of Public Opinion Research
Law & Economics
Evaluation and Program Planning

Relevant Work Experience

ZK Analytics, Oxford Centre for Innovation

United Kingdom

EXTERNAL CONSULTANT AND DATA SCIENTIST

2018 - Present

- World Health Organization (External Expert)
- Education Endowment Foundation
- World Organization of the Scout Movement
- Ministry of Transportation of the United Kingdom

Institute for Social and Political Opinion Research (KU Leuven)

Belgium

RESEARCH ASSOCIATE

2018 - 2020

Questionnaire design, sampling & data collection, and quality control for the 2019 Belgian National Elections Study.

European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR)

United Kingdom

CONSULTANT AND DATA ANALYST

2018 – 2021

Survey analysis and consulting for the ECPR Methods School.

Other

LANGUAGE SKILLS

ITALIAN: Native speaker

ENGLISH: Professional

FRENCH: Independent

PROGRAMMING SKILLS

ADVANCED: R, R Markdown, Qualtrics, Shiny App, Mplus, Docker, Github, L^AT_EX

INTERMEDIATE: Python, HTML, CSS, QGIS

BASIC: STATA, MySQL, PHP, SPSS

Academic References

Bart Meuleman (KU Leuven, PhD supervisor)

Milan Svolik (Yale, visiting host)

Bart Bonikowski (NYU, visiting host)

Josh Kalla (Yale)

Fredrik Sävje (Yale)

Koen Abts (KU Leuven, co-supervisor)