

# ERNESTO DE LEÓN

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## EDUCATION

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### University of Bern, Bern, CH

*August 2020 – Ongoing*

Doctoral degree (Dr.) in Political Communication

Dissertation centers on the relationship between news consumption and political attitudes in today's high-choice media environment through a mix of survey-based and computational methodologies.

### University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam, NL

*2018 – 2020*

Master of Science in Research in Social Sciences (graduated Cum Laude)

Final Average: 8.34/10

Focus on quantitative research methodology applied to political science.

Thesis takes a political communication approach to address the role of controversy in selective exposure.

### Monterrey Institute of Technology and Higher Education, Queretaro, MX

*2013 – 2018*

Bachelor of Arts in International Relations.

Final Average: 9.4/10

Recipient of High Academic Performance Programme and Dominican Government scholarships

## RESEARCH

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### IKMB<sup>1</sup>

August 2020 - Present

*PhD Student*

- Researcher on the project “Populist radical-right attitudes and political information behavior. A longitudinal study of attitude development in high-choice information environments” led by Silke Adam.
- Tasks focus on the application of computational methods to webtracked data collected within the project. This includes conducting automated content analysis through the use of machine learning for the team in order to identify political material, as well as detecting populist radical right attitudes.

### ASCoR<sup>2</sup>

August 2019 - July 2020

*Intern/Coauthor*

- Presented preliminary research findings at the Etmaal van de Communicatiewetenschap (ETMAAL2020) communication conference in February 2020, and is currently working on article manuscript with Damian Trilling (PI) and Susan Vermeer where full findings will be addressed.
- Leads a project supervised by Professor Damian Trilling, exploring the relationship between news-sharing on social media and contextual variables in the case of the 2018 Mexican elections.
- Tasked with using Python to create large scale web scrapers to collect over 150,000 Mexican news articles, pairing each with social media data extracted using Facebook's own API, as well as a third-party API (CrowdTangle).
- Trained multiple Supervised Machine Learning Classifiers to automate the labelling of articles by key characteristics crucial to the research process, including article topic and journalistic frame, as well as using dictionary methods for content analysis.

### Integrating Diversity in the European Union (InDivEU), MLG<sup>3</sup>

February - July 2020

*Research Assistant*

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<sup>1</sup>Institute for Communication and Media Science, University of Bern

<sup>2</sup>Amsterdam School of Communication Research, University of Amsterdam

<sup>3</sup>Multi-layered Governance in Europe and Beyond, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

- Research assistant for the InDivEU Project [🔗](#) led by Professor Catherine de Vries and Lisanne de Blok, which examines Differentiated Integration of EU member states.
- Tasked with coding Spanish government positions on differentiated integration, and conducting both quantitative and qualitative content analysis on speeches, parliamentary debates, and party manuscripts.
- Published final report detailing fluctuations in the position taken by Spanish governments, as well as the shape and form of the national debate regarding differentiated integration.

### **Understanding Migration Policy Inconsistency, AISSR<sup>4</sup>**

October 2019 - Present

*Coauthor/Research Assistant*

- Coauthor of mixed-method working paper *The Inconsistency of Immigration Policy: Exploring New Theoretical Explanations* with Professor Darshan Vigneswaran (PI), which explores moments of inconsistency in restrictiveness in migration policies throughout 45 countries.
- Tasked with design and execution of quantitative methodology into the mixed-method approach, including data wrangling and visualization in R, as well as statistical model building used to identify key moments of inconsistency in migration policy databases.

### **RIGHTS Project, AISSR**

April - November 2019

*Research Assistant*

- Worked as a research assistant for the RIGHTS Project [🔗](#) led by Professor Evelyn Ersanilli, which investigates why governments protect their nationals who go abroad.
- Tasked with creating a dataset that codes policies, bilateral agreements, and initiatives taken by Latin American and African states to protect their low-skilled migrants abroad, and writing an R programme that aggregates all the information into a single Stata database.
- Entrusted with developing a programme in R to produce quality data visualizations that map the migration policy relationships between countries around the globe.

## **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

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### **Institute of Communication and Media Studies**

January 2021 - Present

*Lecturer*

- Designed and taught an undergraduate Spring 2021 course titled “Online Political Communication”, which focused on understanding the transformational power of the internet for the discipline of political communication. Average teaching evaluation score: 5.3/6
- Currently designing a Fall 2021 course titled “Text as Data and Online News”, which seeks to teach students how to analyze news on the internet through the use of text-as-data methodologies in R.

### **Human Rights Ombudsman in Queretaro, Mexico**

August - December 2017

*Intern*

- Led an investigation on femicides and violence against women in the state of Queretaro, detailing the fluctuations of its occurrence throughout the last two decades in comparison to the rest of the country.
- Produced a report analyzing the public initiatives of the state government in the area of prevention of violence against women, evaluating the implementation and shortcomings of policies, and issuing recommendations.
- Fostered relations with stakeholders in both civil society and government institutions by establishing communication pipelines as well as incorporating their efforts and perspectives into the final report.

### **Globo World Education, Mexico**

February 2016 - August 2017

*English Teacher/Translator*

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<sup>4</sup>Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Research, University of Amsterdam

- Designed course work for Basic I, Basic II, Pre-Intermediate, and Advanced courses using a student-centered approach to learning.
- Modified methods to meet student needs in a variety of class settings, whether business-based, multi-level classes or tutoring, to age groups including teenagers, young professionals, and older publics.
- Translated numerous human resources documents for a portfolio of Queretaro-based companies, as well as transnational corporations.

**Secretary of Foreign Affairs Office, Mexico**

January - May 2017

*Intern*

- Directly supported the head of the Consular Protection department and Directorate in administrative functions, including stakeholder relations.
- Produced reports sent to the Foreign Ministry, embassies, and consulates, through the Integral System of Consular Protection and diplomatic bag.
- Systematically assisted applicants in person, giving cases follow up as well as opening new ones, and registering relevant data.
- Performed a gender diagnosis in the delegation, writing a report with observations and key suggestions to promote greater gender equality within the Delegation, as well as organizing a gender workshop for all staff.

**Dominican Embassy in The Netherlands, The Netherlands**

May - July 2016

*Intern*

- Produced reports for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding the meetings attended by the representation in the various international bodies to which the Dominican Republic is member to, including the International Court of Justice, the CELAC, and EU-LA Joint Summits.
- Executed everyday administrative functions of the embassy, including assisting Dominicans in need of consular support.
- Translated the consular section of the embassy's webpage from Spanish to English.

**Ciudad y Poder Newspaper, Mexico**

September 2014 - August 2015

*Editor, Writer, Translator*

- Tasked with assembling the English section of the webpage, as well as designing and executing a social media communications strategy aimed at an English-speaking public.
- Wrote investigative journalism pieces in both Spanish and English for political and social sections.
- Translated daily local news articles from Spanish to English with accuracy and eloquence.

## LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

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**Institute of Communication and Media Studies**

February 2021 - Present

*Research Project Leader*

- Leads project to develop and test a computational image recognition tool that would allow researchers to capture news use on mobile applications in an ethical and privacy-sensitive manner.
- Organized and wrote a grant application in coordination with Mykola Makhortykh (University of Bern), Aleksandra Urman (University of Zurich), and Philipp Krieter (University of Bremen).
- Was awarded a 7,000 CHF (7,558 USD) grant to develop this application and conduct initial testing from the Förderverein Kommunikations- und Medienwissenschaft der Universität Bern (fkmb).

**Institute of Communication and Media Studies**

January 2021 - Present

*Library Liaison*

- In charge of administrative responsibilities linking the Institute to the University library.

- These include selecting and maintaining academic journal subscriptions, book selection and ordering, and general library balance budgeting.

## **Institute of Communication and Media Studies**

January 2021 - Present

*Institute Twitter Administrator*

- Responsible for the regular updating of the Institute's Twitter account [🔗](#) with recent publications, events, and Institute updates.
- Designed and is currently implementing an internationalization strategy to reach a broader academic audience on the platform.

## **FANZINE RI Magazine, Mexico**

August 2015 - May 2018

*Editor*

- Served as head editor for all articles published in English for FANZINE RI, a bi-monthly student magazine on international relations, actively participating in the production of special issues on the topics of propaganda [🔗](#) , Latin America [🔗](#) , electoral democracy [🔗](#) , and terrorism [🔗](#) .
- As head of communications and web editor, led transition from printed magazine to Fanzinia.com [🔗](#) , directing a team of writers and editors to publish over 80 written pieces, as well as designing a readership expansion strategy based on social media.

## **TECHNICAL STRENGTHS AND LANGUAGES**

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<b>Languages</b>	English and Spanish: native-level proficiency
<b>Statistical Software</b>	R & STATA for Statistical Modelling, Data Wrangling, and Visualization
<b>Python Programming</b>	Web scraping and Data Retrieval, Text Analysis and Natural Language Processing, and Machine Learning
<b>Markup Languages</b>	LaTeX

## **PUBLICATIONS**

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- de León, E., Makhortykh, M., Gil-López, T., Urman, S., Adam, S. (2020). On the Conditional Relationship between Political Trust and Media Consumption: the Case of Threat Perceptions and the COVID-19 Rally Effect in Switzerland. *Manuscript submitted to the Journal of Politics*.
- Makhortykh, M., de Leon, E., Urman, A., Gil-López, T. (2021). Where did you come from, where did you go? Pathways to news in Germany and Switzerland. *Manuscript in Preparation*
- de León, E., Vermeer, S. (2021). Caring is sharing? Comparing online political news publication and dissemination patterns across election and routine periods. *Manuscript under review at Digital Journalism*.
- de León, E., Trilling, D. (2020). Political News, Facebook Reactions and Sharing Behaviour: A Study of Emotions and Political News Sharing. *Manuscript under review at Social Media and Society*.
- de León, E., Vermeer, S., Trilling, D. (2020). Electoral News Sharing: A Study of Changes in News Coverage and Facebook Sharing Behaviour During Elections in Mexico. *Manuscript under review at Information, Communication and Society*.
- Vigneswaran, D., de León, E. (2020). The Inconsistency of Immigration Policy: Exploring New Theoretical Explanations. *Manuscript under review at International Migration Review*.

## **CONFERENCES**

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- de León, E., Makhortykh, M., Gil-Lopez, T., Adam, S. (2021). Rally Round what Flag? The Role of Media Consumption during the COVID-19 Pandemic for the Development of Political Trust in Switzerland (Unpublished). In: 71st Annual ICA conference (Mass Communication Division)

- “Engaging the Essential Work of Care: Communication, Connectedness, and Social Justice”. Virtual. 27.05-31.05.2021.

Makhortykh, M., Adam, S., Maier, M., Urman, S., Gil-Lopez, T., Christner, C., de León, E. (2021). News at the time of crisis: Comparing desktop- and mobile-based browsing behavior during COVID-19 pandemic (Unpublished). In: Three-Country Conference for Communication Science (DACH 21). On-line. April 07-09, 2021.

de Leon, E., Makhortykh, M., Urman, A. (2021). Where did you come from, where did you go? Pathways to news in Germany and Switzerland (Unpublished). In: 71st Annual ICA conference (Journalism Division) - “Engaging the Essential Work of Care: Communication, Connectedness, and Social Justice”. Virtual. 27.05-31.05.2021.

de León, E., Vermeer, S., Trilling., D (2020). How context matters to news sharing: Comparing the predictors of Facebook interactions with news items in electoral and routine periods (Unpublished). In: Etmaal van de Communicatiewetenschap (ETMAAL2020); Feb 6-7, 2020

Attendee at the 5th International Conference on Computational Social Science, July 2019, University of Amsterdam