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Oberassistentin (Senior Research and Teaching Associate)
Chair of International and Comparative Media Research
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WoS Researcher id: AAA-3938-2019

RESEARCH INTERESTS

International and Comparative Media Research, Media Systems & Media Structures, Journalism, Media Bias, Media Effects, Selective & Cross-cutting Exposure, Political Communication, Public Opinion, Political Behavior, Central and Eastern Europe, Interpersonal Communication

EDUCATION

01/2014 - 12/2017	PhD in Social Sciences DCM - Department of Communication and Media Research Unifr - University of Fribourg, Switzerland Dissertation: Partisan Media Bias, Cross-cutting Exposure and Political Participation: A Cross-National Analysis Summa cum laude, Vigener Award
01/2014 - 12/2017	PhD at the National Center of Competence in Research - Democracy Studies UZH - University of Zurich, Switzerland
07/2016 - 09/2016	Visiting scholar at the Department of Political Science Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel
09/2006 - 09/2008	MA in Political Marketing: Strategies and Political Communication UAB - Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain Title of Master's thesis: Values and political discourse in the 1993 Spanish General Election With high distinction
09/2001 - 09/2005	BA in Political Science (4-year degree) UPF - Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona, Spain
09/1986 - 06/2001	CEIP Costa i Llobera (School and High School), Barcelona, Spain 8.94/10 in University Admission Exam

APPOINTMENTS

12/2020 - today	Adjunct Professor (Professora Col.laboradora) Department of Communication Universitat Internacional de Catalunya
10/2017 - today	Senior Research and Teaching Associate Department of Communication and Media Research University of Zurich (on maternity leave in Fall 2018)
09/2013 - 10/2017	Research and Teaching Assistant Chair of Media Systems and Media Structures Department of Communication and Media Research University of Fribourg
02/2013 - 06/2013	Student Assistant Chair of International and Comparative Media Research Department of Communication and Media Research University of Zurich
05/2008 - 08/2011	Advisor to the Mayor's Office Barcelona City Council
01/2004 - 04/2008	Assistant to the Vice-President Parliament of Catalonia

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

- 2021 *Don't blame the media! The role of politicians and parties in fragmenting the online public debate*
(Raphael Heiberger, Silvia Majo-Vazquez, Laia Castro, Rasmus Kleis Nielsen, Frank Esser)
International Journal of Press/Politics (accepted)
- 2021 *Navigating high-choice European political information environments: A comparative analysis of news user profiles and political knowledge*
(Laia Castro, Jesper Stromback, Frank Esser, Claes de Vreese, Peter Van Aelst, Toril Aalberg, Ana Sofia Cardenal, Nicoleta Corbu, David Nicolas Hopmann, Karolina Koc-Michalska, Jorg Matthes, Christian Schemer, Tamir Sheafer, Sergio Splendore, James Stanyer, Agnieszka Stepinska, Vaclav Stetka, Yannis Theocharis)
International Journal of Press/Politics (accepted)
- 2021 *Measuring Partisan Media Bias Cross-Nationally*
(Laia Castro)
Swiss Political Science Review (accepted)
- 2021 *Selective Exposure in Different Political Information Environments: How Media Fragmentation and Polarization Shape Congruent News Use*
(Desiree Steppat, Laia Castro & Frank Esser)
European Journal of Communication (accepted), recipient of the Top Student Paper Award, ICA Political Communication Division (2020)
- 2020 *News Media Performance Evaluated by National Audiences: How Media Environments and User Preferences Matter*
(Desiree Steppat, Laia Castro-Herrero & Frank Esser)
Media and Communication
- 2020 *Whose Media Are Hostile? The Spillover Effect of Interpersonal Discussions on Media Bias Perceptions*
(Laia Castro, David Nicolas Hopmann & Lilach Nir)
Communications: European Journal of Communication Research
- 2020 *Up in the Air? The Future of Public Service Broadcasting in the Western Balkans*
(Jusik, T.,Puppis, M., Castro, L. & Marko, D.) (eds.)
book accepted for publication at Central European University Press
- 2020 *Challenges and Prospects of Public Service Broadcasting in the Western Balkans*
(Castro, L., Jusik, T., Marko, D & Puppis, M.)
chapter in book accepted for publication at Central European University Press (Jusik, T.,Puppis, M., Castro, L. & Marko, D.) (eds.)
- 2020 *Political Power Sharing and Crosscutting Media Exposure: How Institutional Features Affect Exposure to Different Views*
(Laia Castro & Lilach Nir)
International Journal of Communication
- 2018 *Bridging Gaps in Cross-Cutting Exposure: The Role of Public Service Broadcasting*
(Castro, L., Nir, L., Skovsgaard, M.)
Political Communication, winnner of the Best Paper Award for the ICA Political Communication division (2017)
- 2017 *The Virtue of Moderation: A Cross-National Analysis of Exposure to Cross-Cutting Information and Turnout.*
(Castro, L., Hopmann, D.N.)
International Journal of Public Opinion Research
- 2017 *Rethinking Hallin and Mancini Beyond the West: An Analysis of Media Systems in Central and Eastern Europe.*
(Castro, L., Humprecht, E., Engesser, S., Brüggemann, M.,Büchel, F.)
International Journal of Communication

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

- 2016 *Building Empirical Typologies with QCA: Towards a Classification of Media Systems.*
(Büchel, F., Humprecht, E., Castro, L., Engesser, S., with Brüggemann, M.)
International Journal of Press/Politics
- 2016 *Parties, Ideology, and News Media in Central- Eastern and Western Europe: A Comparison of
Media Bias 20 Years after the Fall of the Iron Curtain.*
(Castro, L., Hopmann, D.N., Engesser, S.)
East European Politics and Societies
- 2014 *Hallin and Mancini Revisited: Four Empirical Types of Western Media Systems.*
(Brüggemann, M., Engesser, S., Büchel, F., Humprecht, E., Castro, L.)
Journal of Communication

CONFERENCES, COLLOQUIUMS AND INVITED TALKS

10/2021 The More We Choose, the Less We Learn? The Impact of Media Polarization and Fragmentation on Political Knowledge in Five Countries

ECREA 2021, Prague, Portugal (with Steppat D., Esser F., Gross, K.)

05/2021 Exploring Perceptual Gaps in Alternative News Media Use in Different Political Information Environments. A Comparative Study of News Users in Five Countries

ICA 2021, Virtual conference (Steppat D., Castro, L., Esser F.)

05/2021 Don't blame the media! The role of politicians and parties in fragmenting the online public debate

ICA 2021, Virtual conference (Raphael Heiberger, Silvia Majo-Vazquez, Laia Castro, Rasmus Kleis Nielsen, Frank Esser)

05/2021 Does a crisis change news habits? A comparative study of the effects of COVID-19 on news media use in 17 European countries

ICA 2021, Virtual conference (Peter van Aelst, Fanni Toth, Laia Castro, Vaclav Stetka, Claes de Vreese, Frank Esser, Laia Castro, Toril Aalberg, Nicoleta Corbu, David Nicolas Hopmann, Karolina Koc-Michalska, Jorg Matthes, Christian Schemer, Tamir Sheafer, Sergio Splendore, James Stanier, Agnieszka Stepinska, Jesper Stromback, Yannis Theocharis)

05/2021 The Anatomy of European Political Information Environments

ICA 2021, Virtual conference (with Jesper Stromback, Frank Esser, Claes de Vreese, Peter Van Aelst, Toril Aalberg, Ana Sofia Cardenal, Nicoleta Corbu, David Nicolas Hopmann, Karolina Koc-Michalska, Jorg Matthes, Christian Schemer, Tamir Sheafer, Sergio Splendore, James Stanier, Agnieszka Stepinska, Vaclav Stetka, Yannis Theocharis)

05/2021 How civil political discussions invigorate online participation: Evidence from 17 EU countries

ICA 2021, Virtual conference (with Yannis Theocharis, Agnieszka Stepinska, Aalberg, T., Cardenal, A., Corbu, N., de Vreese, C., Esser, F., Hopmann, D.N., Koc-Michalska, K., Matthes, J., Schemer C., Sheafer, T., Splendore, S., Stanier, J., Strömbäck, J., Stetka, V., Van Aelst, P.)

05/2021 The More We Choose, the Less We Learn? The Impact of Media Polarization and Fragmentation on Political Knowledge in Five Countries

ICA 2021, Virtual conference (with Steppat D., Esser F., Gross, K.)

09/2020 The Anatomy of European Political Information Environments

IJPP virtual conference 2020 (with Aalberg, T., Cardenal, A., Corbu, N., de Vreese, C., Esser, F., Hopmann, D.N., Koc-Michalska, K., Matthes, J., Schemer C., Sheafer, T., Splendore, S., Stanier, J., Stepinska, A., Strömbäck, J., Stetka, V., Theocharis, Y., Van Aelst, P.)

09/2020 Don't blame the media! The role of politicians and parties in fragmenting the online public debate

IJPP virtual conference 2020 (with Heiberger R., Majo-Vazquez S., Nielsen R. K., Congosto M., Esser F.)

06/2020 The more we choose, the less we learn? The impact of media polarization and fragmentation on political knowledge in five countries

EPSA 2020, Prague, CZ (with Steppat D., Esser F., Gross, K.)

05/2020 Selective Exposure in Different Political Information Environments: How Media Polarization and Fragmentation Shape Congruent News Exposure

ICA 2020 virtual conference (with Steppat D., Esser F.). Winner of the Best Student Paper Award for the Political Communication Division

08/2019 A Three-country Analysis of Online Political Fragmentation Using Topic Modelling

APSA 2019, Washington, USA (with Heiberger R., Majo-Vazquez S., Nielsen R. K., Congosto M., Esser F.)

08/2019 Empowering or Alienating News? News Use and Political Efficacy and Trust across 5 Decades

APSA 2019, Washington, USA (with Esser F., Nir L.)

07/2019 Individual Partisanship and Response to Corrections: Evidence from a Cross-National Experiment

Research seminar, Department of Political Science, Constitutional Law and Philosophy, Universitat de Barcelona, Spain (with Andrew Guess)

07/2019 Political Fragmentation in the Digital Domain: Evidence from a Structural Topic Modelling Approach in France, Germany and the UK

EPSA 2019, Belfast, UK (with Heiberger R., Majo-Vazquez S., Nielsen R. K., Congosto M., Esser F.)

07/2019 Political Fragmentation in the Digital Domain: Evidence from a Structural Topic Modelling Approach in France, Germany and the UK

EPSA 2019, Belfast, UK (with Heiberger R., Majo-Vazquez S., Nielsen R. K., Congosto M., Esser F.)

05/2019 Political Power Sharing and Cross-Cutting Media Exposure: A Comparison between Italy, Mexico and Spain

ICA 2019, Washington, USA (with Nir, L.)

11/2018 The Impact of Cross-Cutting Exposure on Turnout in Referendums and General Elections

ECREA Conference, 2018, Lugano, Switzerland. (with Hopmann, D, Knudsen, E., Steppat, D.)

05/2018 The Spillover Effect of Interpersonal Discussions on Media Bias Perceptions

ICA 2018, Prague, Czech Republic (with Hopmann, D, Nir, L.)

11/2017 Social Networks and Hostile Media Bias Perceptions

ECREA 2017 Political Communication Interim Conference, Zurich, Switzerland (with Hopmann, D, Nir, L.)

05/2017 Bridging Gaps in Cross-Cutting Media Exposure: The Role of Public Service Broadcasting

ICA 2017 Conference, San Diego, USA (with Nir, L., Skovsgaard, M.). Winner of the Best Paper Award for the Political Communication Division

05/2017 The Contribution of the Media to Cross-Cutting Exposure: A Comparison Between Italy, Mexico and Spain

ICA 2017 PhD Pre-conference from the Political Communication Division, San Diego, USA

11/2016 Between Legacies of the Past and Imperatives of the Future: Evaluating PSM's Democratic Functioning in Central and South Eastern Europe

ECREA 2016 Conference, Prague, Czech Republic (with Puppis, M., Marko, D., Jusic, T.)

06/2016 Rethinking Hallin and Mancini Beyond the West: An Analysis of Media Systems in Central and Eastern Europe

ICA 2016 Conference, Fukuoka, Japan (with Brüggemann, M., Engesser, S., Büchel, F., Humprecht, E.)

06/2016 Regulating public service media in a changing media ecology: A comparative analysis of 18 media systems

ICA 2016 Conference, Fukuoka, Japan (with Puppis, M., Schweizer, C.)

08/2015 Rethinking Hallin and Mancini 2004 Beyond the West: A Test of their Dimensions of Media Systems in Central and Eastern Europe
ECREA Political Communication 2015 Conference, Odense, Denmark
(with Brüggemann, M., Engesser, S., Büchel, F., Humprecht, E.)

07/2015 Uncovering the Nature of Media Bias: The Role of Media Structures
IAMCR 2015 Conference, Montreal, Canada. (with Puppis, M.)

05/2015 Building Empirical Typologies With QCA: Towards a Classification of Media Systems
ICA 2015 Conference, San Juan de Puerto Rico, Puerto Rico (with Büchel, F., Humprecht, E. , Engesser, S., with Brüggemann, M.)

04/2015 La Recerca en Comunicació Política a Suïssa
Taula de Nova Recerca DCM, Universitat Pompeu Fabra (UPF), Barcelona, Spain

03/2015 How to Identify Partisan Media Bias in News
SGKM 2015 Conference, Bern, Switzerland

02/2015 Separating the Wheat from the Chaff: A Measure of Partisan Media Bias in 24 EU Countries
Re-Inventing Journalism Conference, ZHAW, Winterthur, Switzerland

01/2015 Partidos, Medios y Democracia: Los Efectos del Partidismo de Medios en el Voto
DCM, Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB), Bellaterra, Spain

12/2014 A New Measure of Partisan Media Bias
Research Colloquium of the International and Comparative Media Research Division, IPMZ, University of Zurich, Switzerland

12/2014 How to Find Partisan Media Bias in News Coverage
Centre for Journalism, University of Southern Denmark, Odense, Denmark

11/2014 Some Disagreement is Engaging: An Analysis of Cross-cutting News Exposure and Turnout
ECREA 2014 Conference, Lisbon, Portugal (with Hopmann, D.N.)

05/2014 When the Media Make a Difference: A Cross-National Analysis of Exposure to Cross-Cutting News and Turnout
ICA 2014 Conference, Seattle, USA. (with Hopmann, D.N.)

04/2014 Media Crisis and Media Bias: Uncovering the Nature of Biased Coverage in Current Media Environments
SGKM 2014 Conference, Zurich, Switzerland (With Puppis, M.)

06/2013 Parties, Ideology, and News Media in Central-Eastern and Western Europe
ICA 2013 Conference, London, UK (with Hopmann, D.N., Engesser, S.)

05/2013 Parties, Ideology, and News Media in Central-Eastern and Western Europe
21. Tagung junger Osteuropa-Experten, Berlin, Germany (with Hopmann, D.N., Engesser, S.)

12/2012 News Media Bias in Central and Eastern Europe
Doktoranden-Kolloquium des Gastprofessor
Institut für Publizistikwissenschaft und Medienforschung, University of Zurich

TEACHING

Fall semester 2020 Research seminar "Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose? Political communication in multi-platform media environments" (BA Degree, University of Zurich)

Spring semester 2020 Seminar "Comparative Political Communication Research" (BA Degree, University of Zurich)

Fall semester 2019 Seminar "Studying Political Communication and Public Opinion in the Digital Age" (BA Degree, University of Zurich)

Spring semester 2019 Seminar "Medien, Politik und öffentliche Meinung" (BA Degree, University of Zurich)

Spring semester 2018 Seminar with Prof. Frank Esser "Internationale Mediensysteme - Aktuelle Trends" (BA Degree, University of Zurich)

Spring semester 2018 Research seminar with Dr. Edda Humprecht "Fake News, Bots and Trolls: Politische Kommunikation im Netz" (Master Degree, University of Zurich)

Fall semester 2017 Vorlesung with Prof. Manuel Puppis "Comparing Media Landscapes" (Master Degree, University of Fribourg)

Spring semester 2017 Seminar with Prof. Manuel Puppis "Media Industries: Between Culture and Commerce" (Master Degree, University of Fribourg)

Fall semester 2016 Vorlesung with Prof. Manuel Puppis "Comparing Media Landscapes" (Master Degree, University of Fribourg)

Spring semester 2016 Seminar with Prof. Manuel Puppis "Journalism in the 21st Century: Chronicle of a Death Foretold?" (Master Degree, University of Fribourg)

Fall semester 2015 Vorlesung with Prof. Manuel Puppis "Comparing Media Landscapes" (Master Degree, University of Fribourg)

Spring semester 2015 Vorlesung with Prof. Manuel Puppis "Media Systems and Media Structures" (Master Degree, University of Fribourg)

Fall semester 2014 Seminar with Prof. Manuel Puppis "Mr. Gates Isn't Calling the Shots Anymore: The Influence of News Organizations and Routines on Journalism" (Master Degree, University of Fribourg)

Spring semester 2014 Vorlesung with Prof. Manuel Puppis "Media Systems and Media Structures" (Master Degree, University of Fribourg)

Fall semester 2013 Seminar with Prof. Manuel Puppis "Media Crisis - Policy Solutions?" (Master Degree, University of Fribourg)

REFeree WORK

Reviewer for the Journal of Politics, Political Communication, the International Journal of Press/Politics, the International Journal of Public Opinion Research, Electoral Studies, Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly, the International Journal of Communication, Media and Communication, Studies in Communication Sciences, the Political Communication and Journalism Sections of ICA, and for ECREA and SGKM.

GRANTS, AWARDS AND RESEARCH MERITS

2020	Beatriu de Pinós Postdoctoral Fellowship (international mobility postdoctoral programme, co-funded by the European Commission under the Marie Curie COFUND action)
2020	Juan de la Cierva Postdoctoral Fellowship (Juan de la Cierva-Incorporación). Ministry of Science and Innovation, Government of Spain
2020	Tenure Track Lecturer (Lector) Accreditation, Agència per la Qualitat del Sistema Universitari de Catalunya (AQU), Generalitat de Catalunya
2020	Top Student Paper Award, ICA Political Communication Division, Virtual conference, 2020 (with Desiree Steppat (lead author) & Frank Esser)
2019	GRC-University of Zurich grant for a research stay at George Washington University
2018	Prix Vigener for the best dissertation in the Social Sciences, Fribourg, 2018
2017	Top Paper Award, ICA Political Communication Division, San Diego, 2017 (with Lilach Nir & Morten Skovsgaard)
2014 - 2017	NCCR Doctoral grant of the Doctoral Program Democracy Studies - NCCR
2016	Jean Nordmann Foundation grant for a research stay at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem
2013	3-year PhD grant at the Center for Journalism - University of Southern Denmark (declined)
2013 - 2014	Travel grants of the International Communication Association and the Swiss Academy of Humanities and Social Science

PROJECTS

- 2019 - Assistant Coordinator
Project on news media use and political attitudes in different political information environments
(Comparative two-wave survey study in 16 countries)
Network of European Political Communication Scholars (NEPOCS)
PIs: Claes de Vreese and Frank Esser
- 2017 Research Associate
Project "Catmón. The International News Coverage of the Independence of Catalonia"
University Pompeu Fabra (UPF)
Research project funded by University Pompeu Fabra and the autonomous Government of Catalunya
PI: Carles Pont
- 2014 - 2017 Research Associate
Project "The prospect and development of public service media:
Comparative study of PSB development in Western Balkans in light of EU integration"
University of Fribourg and Analitika
Research project funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNF)
PIs: Manuel Puppis and Tarik Jusic
- 2013 Project assistant
Project "Framing Climate Change"
Research project funded by the University of Zurich
PIs: Michael Brüggeman and Sven Engesser
- 2012 - 2016 Communications Manager
Social Innovation on Active and Healthy Ageing (SIforAge)
Research project funded by EU Commission FP7 Programme
PIs: Antoni Font and Elena Urdaneta

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Advanced user of STATA, SPSS, WinEdt/Overleaf, Mplus and R (frequent user of STATA, R, SPSS, Overleaf; occasional user of Mplus)
Basic understanding of Gephi, SAP and HTML programming

ADDITIONAL TRAINING AND SUMMER SCHOOLS

Experiments in the Study of Public Opinion

University Pompeu Fabra, Spain

Introduction to Webscraping

University of Zurich, Switzerland

Social Media Research/Big Data

University Pompeu Fabra, Spain

Introduction to R

University Pompeu Fabra, Spain

Workshop on R statistical software

University of Fribourg, Switzerland

Workshop on SNA

University of Fribourg, Switzerland

Mediation and Moderation

University of Zurich, Switzerland

Doing Social and Political Research in the Digital Age

University of Amsterdam, Netherlands - University of Zurich, Switzerland

Swiss Summer School Democracy Studies

University of Zurich, Switzerland

Multilevel Modelling

University of Zurich, Switzerland

Structural Equation Modelling with Mplus

University of Essex, UK

Multilevel Analysis for the Social Sciences

University of Oxford, UK

Project Management for Research

UZH – University of Zurich, Switzerland

Introduction to STATA

UZH – University of Zurich, Switzerland

American Popular Culture

University of California, Berkeley, US

Advertising America

University of California, Berkeley, US

FURTHER ACADEMIC SERVICE, ACTIVITIES AND MEMBERSHIPS

Organizer "Applying for a Job in Academia", Workshop at University of Zurich (August 21, 2017)

Co-organizer "Doing Social and Political Research in the Digital Age", Workshop at University of Zurich (November 5-6, 2015)

Member of ICA, ECREA and SGKM

2013-2014 Representative of the researchers of the Department of Mass Media and Communication Research at University of Fribourg in the departmental council

ACADEMIC REFERENCES

available upon request