

Magdalena Breyer

POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCHER · POLITICAL SCIENCE

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Education

University of Zurich, Switzerland

PHD IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

09/2019 - 05/2023

- Title of dissertation: Social status politics - The role of shifting cultural hierarchies
- Advisors: Prof. Tarik Abou-Chadi, Prof. Silja Häusermann
- Committee: Prof. Noam Gidron, Prof. Tarik Abou-Chadi, Prof. Silja Häusermann
- Grade: *Summa cum laude*, Defense: 24 May 2023

University of Amsterdam, Netherlands

VISITING PHD RESEARCHER

08/2021 - 01/2022

- Host: Prof. Sarah de Lange
- Program group: Challenges to Democratic Representation

Freie Universität Berlin, Germany

MASTER OF ARTS IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

10/2016 - 08/2019

- Master thesis: Mainstream parties and their use of populism in Germany and Austria, 1990-2018
- Supervised by Prof. Thorsten Faas and Prof. Dieter Ohr

University of Freiburg, Germany

BACHELOR OF ARTS IN POLITICAL SCIENCE AND HISTORY

10/2012 - 09/2016

- Erasmus stay at Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Poland (2015)

Academic Positions

- Since 08/2023 **Postdoctoral researcher**, Institute of Political Science, University of Basel, in the SNSF project 'Class identity politics: The (new) political role of social class in Western Europe' (with Prof. Denise Traber)
- 2019-2023 **PhD Researcher**, Department of Political Science, University of Zurich in the SNSF project 'Social Status and the Transformation of Electoral Behavior' (with Prof. Tarik Abou-Chadi)
- 2017-2019 **Tutor for Methods of Political Science and Data Analysis**, Research Group Methods of Empirical Research, Freie Universität Berlin
- 2013-2015 **Research Assistant**, Chair for Comparative Politics, University of Freiburg
- 2013-2014 **Tutor for Statistics and Methods of Political Science**, University of Freiburg

Publications

PEER-REVIEWED

Breyer, Magdalena, Tabea Palmtag, Delia Zollinger (2025): Narratives of backlash? Perceptions of changing status hierarchies in open-ended survey responses. *Comparative Political Studies*, DOI: 10.1177/00104140251392533.

Breyer, Magdalena (2025): Perceptions of the social status hierarchy and its cultural and economic sources. *European Journal of Political Research* 64:2, pp. 810-833, DOI: 10.1111/1475-6765.12712.

Breyer, Magdalena (2024): Backlash or progressive mobilization? Voter reactions to perceived trajectories of women's representation. *Comparative Political Studies* 57:13, pp. 2193-2224, DOI: 10.1177/00104140231223745.

Breyer, Magdalena (2023): Populist positions in party competition: Do parties strategically vary their degree of populism in reaction to vote and office loss? *Party Politics* 29:4, pp. 672-684, DOI: 10.1177/13540688221097082.

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Berger, Valentin, Liv Bjerre, **Magdalena Breyer**, Marc Helbling, Friederike Römer, and Malisa Zobel (2024): The Immigration Policies in Comparison (IMPIC) Dataset: Technical Report V2. *WZB Discussion Paper SP VI 2016–201r*.

Abou-Chadi, Tarik, **Magdalena Breyer**, Theresa Gessler (2021): The (re)politicization of gender in Western Europe. Gender Update, in: *European Journal of Politics and Gender* 4(2), p. 311-314, DOI: 10.1332/251510821X16177312096679 . Added to 'Most Read' collection of the journal.

WORKING PAPERS

Progressive momentum and the dynamics of political competition: The case of #metoo (with Theresa Gessler and Tarik Abou-Chadi). *Under review*.

The mobilising effect of class appeals to the new and old working class (co-authored with Robin Weisser and Denise Traber). *Conference paper*.

'Undeserved winners' or 'more deserving losers'? Two types of societal discontent and their relation to radical right and left voting (co-authored with Tabea Palmtag and Delia Zollinger). *Conference paper*.

The political consequences of competing identities in the working class (co-authored with Garret Binding, Denise Traber, and Robin Weisser). *Conference paper*.

Class identity, class-based appeals and political decision-making (co-authored with Robin Weisser, Garret Binding, and Denise Traber). *Conference paper*.

DISSERTATION

Social Status Politics: The Role of Shifting Cultural Hierarchies. Cumulative PhD Thesis, Department of Political Science at the University of Zurich, defended in May 2023. DOI: 10.5167/uzh-234049.

Grants & Awards

2025	Early Career Award - 3rd prize , Swiss Academy of Humanities and Social Sciences for the 2024 article in Comparative Political Studies	CHF 3,000
2023	Award for best PhD Thesis , at the Department of Political Science at the University of Zurich in the academic year 2023	CHF 500
2021	Inequality Research Fund (with Delia Zollinger) , by the University Research Priority Program 'Equality of Opportunity', University of Zurich	CHF 12,000

Outreach

Participant in the panel discussion *Authoritarians, right-wing populists, and women's rights* at the **Polit-Forum Bern**, [URL](#), September 2025.

Media appearances in the context of the 2025 German elections for the Swiss public broadcaster **SRF**, [URL](#) and the **Basler Zeitung**, [URL](#), February 2025.

Appearance on the **podcast Political Science? No problem et al.!**: Episode 3 - Magdalena Breyer on Women's Representation and its Effects on Political Behavior, March 2024, [URL](#).

Blog post on **DeFacto**, a Swiss science communication blog, December 2023: *Wieso Identität, «Wokeness» und Gender mit Status und Anerkennung zusammenhängen.*, [URL](#).

Public presentation for an event of the **Anny-Klawa-Morf Foundation**, November 2023: *Disappointed citizens and the re-action of institutionalized democracy - experiences from Switzerland, Germany and France*.

Interview for **student newspaper** of the University of Zurich, *Zürcher Studierendenzeitung*, on the status anxiety of radical right voters, October 2023, [URL](#).

Interview on the blog **Populism Observer**, October 2022: *The strategic use of populism.*, [URL](#).

Presentations

INVITED TALKS

April 2025. *The mobilising effect of class appeals to the new and old working class.* Invited talk: MZES Mannheim Speaker Series.

June 2024. *Perceptions of the social status hierarchy and its cultural and economic sources.* Invited talk: Democracy Seminar, Johannes Gutenberg University of Mainz.

February 2023. *Narratives of backlash? Perceptions of changing status hierarchies in open-ended survey responses.* Invited talk: Connected Politics Seminar Series, University College Dublin.

April 2022. *Are shifting gender relations perceived as a social status threat?* Invited talk: Conference cycle of the GREC research group, Université de Lausanne.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

EPSA (European Political Science Association) Annual Conference 2021, 2022, 2024, 2025

APSA (American Political Science Association) Annual Conference 2023

ECPR (European Consortium for Political Research) Joint Sessions of Workshops 2023, 2025

ECPR General Conference 2022

ECPG (European Conference on Politics and Gender) 2022, 2024

COMPTEXT Annual Conference 2022, 2024

MPSA (Midwest Political Science Association) Annual Conference 2022

SPSA (Swiss Political Science Association) Annual Conference 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025

DVPW (German Political Science Association) 2018, 2024

European Graduate Network Conference, European University Institute, Florence, 2022

Conference on Populism, Gender and Feminist Politics, Scuola Normale Superiore Florence, December 2020

Teaching Experience

Instructor **R for basic social science statistics**, PhD-level block course, University of Zurich, *Fall 2025*

Instructor **Class, voting, and representation: Applied quantitative analysis of social change**, Master Seminar, University of Basel, *Spring 2025*

Instructor **Gender and the radical right: Assessing parties, voters, and issues in Western Europe**, Undergraduate Seminar, University of Basel, *Spring 2024*; University of Zurich, *Spring 2022 & Fall 2020*

Tutor **Methods of Political Science**, University of Freiburg and FU Berlin, *Fall 2013, 2017-2019*

Tutor **Data Analysis**, FU Berlin, *Spring 2017 and 2018*

SUPERVISION

Master thesis supervision at the University of Basel: 2 in progress

Master oral examination at the University of Basel: 1 in progress

Bachelor examination at the University of Basel: 1

Seminar papers at the Universities of Zurich and Basel: 50+

DIDACTICAL TRAINING

- 2025 **Activating students**, University of Basel
- 2024 **Planning kick-off events in teaching**, University of Basel
- 2020 **Introduction to University Teaching**, University of Zurich
- 2020 **Introduction to Course Design**, University of Zurich

Skills & Professional Development

SKILLS

- Software **R, L^AT_EX**
- Languages **German**, Native speaker
English, Fluent
French & Spanish, Intermediate

FURTHER TRAINING

Summer School for Women in Political Methodology, University of Basel, July 2023

ECPR Aarhus Summer School on Political Parties 2021

Essex Summer School in Social Science Data Analysis 2020: Causal Inference

ECPR Winter School in Methods and Techniques 2020: Conjoint Experiments and Logistic Regression

Courses on Quantitative Text Analysis, Computational Social Science, Data Visualization at the University of Zurich

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

European Political Science Association (EPSA)

Swiss Political Science Association (SPSA)

Service

Co-director of a workshop at the 2025 *European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR) Joint Sessions* (with Peter Egge Langsæther) titled: Inequality and the politics of class in the 21st century

Representative of the PhD Students and Postdocs in the management of the *Department of Social Sciences*, University of Basel, since November 2024

Representative of the PhD Students and Postdocs in the hiring committee for the Assistant Professorship in Democratic Representation at the *Department of Political Sciences*, University of Zurich, 2022

Organised Seminar: *Zurich Political Economy Seminar Series*, Fall semester 2022

Peer group and women's group at the Center for Comparative and International Studies (CIS) in Zurich, 2019-2023

Referee for: American Political Science Review, Comparative Political Studies, Political Science Research and Methods, West European Politics, European Journal of Political Research, British Journal of Political Science, European Journal of Politics and Gender, Journal of European Public Policy, Legislative Studies Quarterly, Party Politics, Swiss Political Science Review, Acta Politica, Journal of Contemporary European Studies, Sexuality Research and Social Policy, International Journal of Public Opinion Research, European Political Science Review.

External reviewer for grants: Icelandic Research Fund

Non-Academic Professional Experience

- 2019-2021 **Infratest dimap**, Freelance work to analyze and visualize election day survey results conducted for the German public broadcaster ARD, for the European Parliament elections 2019 and the German Bundestag elections 2021 Berlin
- 2018 **Infratest dimap/Kantar Public**, Internship at polling institute for three months Berlin
- 2016 **Mediendienst Integration**, Internship and freelance work at online editorial/science communication platform for six months Berlin