

Peter Luca Versteegen, PhD

Postdoctoral Fellow

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Positions

July 2026 – ongoing

Postdoctoral Fellow, Department of Social Sciences, Chair of Democratic Political Decision-Making, University of Hamburg

September 2024 – June 2026

Postdoctoral Fellow, Department of Government, University of Vienna

June 2024 – August 2024

Research Fellow, Department of Political Science, University of Gothenburg

June 2017 – May 2018

Research Assistant, Presencing Institute Germany (Business Consultancy)

March 2016 – June 2016

Research Assistant, Department of Educational Psychology and Motivation, University of Hamburg

February 2014 – August 2014

Research Assistant, Presencing Institute Germany (Business Consultancy)

Education

September 2020 – June 2024

PhD in Political Science, University of Gothenburg

On People and Their Passions: The Role of Identities and Emotions in Radical Political Behavior

Advisors: Maria Solevid & Jacob Sohlberg

Committee: Matthijs Rooduijn (University of Amsterdam), Jonathan Polk (Lund University), Cathrin Wasshede (University of Gothenburg), Nicholas Charron (University of Gothenburg)

- Featured in [Gothenburg University Press Release](#), May 16, 2025.

September 2023 – December 2023

Visiting Scholar, SNF Agora Institute, Johns Hopkins University

July 2019 – August 2019

Visiting Scholar, Department of Psychology, Northwestern University

September 2018 – June 2020

Research Master's Social and Behavioral Sciences (M.Sc.), Tilburg University

Master's Thesis: *When Inclusion Becomes a Necessity: Distinguishing Assimilation from Inclusion in Optimal Distinctiveness Theory* (with distinction)

February 2018 – April 2018

Visiting Scholar, Department of Psychology, New York University

September 2016 – June 2017

Erasmus year in undergraduate Psychology Studies (B.Sc.), University of Southampton

October 2014 – July 2018

Bachelor's Psychology (B.Sc.), University of Hamburg

Bachelor's Thesis: *A Needle in a Haystack: The Influence of Future Thought on Delay Discounting in an Online Context* (Grade: 1.0)

Peer-Reviewed Publications

- 10 Turnbull-Dugarte, S., Versteegen, P.L., Devine, D., & Winter, O. (forthcoming). Partisan Responsiveness in Real Time. *Political Science Research and Methods*.
- 9 Versteegen, P.L., Phillips, J., & Mason, L. (2026). Cool Citizens? How Affectively Unpolarized Citizens View and Participate in Democracy. *Political Behavior*. Online first. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-026-10190-3>
- 8 Lawall, K., Versteegen, P.L., & Tsakiris, M. (2026). How does affective polarization feel? A comparative description. *European Journal of Political Research*. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1475676526101170>
 - Katharina & Luca share first authorship.
 - Preprint: https://osf.io/preprints/psyarxiv/xym8z_v1
- 7 Kubin, E., Versteegen, P. L., & Gray, K. (2025). How Self-Disclosure Bridges Divides: A Tool for Increasing Political Respect and Willingness to Interact. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*. Online first. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/02654075251371397>
 - Emily & Luca share first authorship.
 - Featured in [Character & Context](#), January 5, 2026.
- 6 Versteegen, P.L., & Syropoulos, S. (2025). E Pluribus Whom? The Limitations of American Identity in Reducing Racial Conflict. *Political Behavior*, 48, 1–24. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-025-10050-6>
- 5 Versteegen, P. L. & Adams, B. G. (2025). The Inclusion Experience: Just Belonging or Belonging and Uniqueness. *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations*, 28, 1054–1075. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/13684302241312675>
- 4 Versteegen, P.L. (2024). Trump Voters' Social Position in US Society: Uniqueness and Radical Right Support. *Political Psychology*, 46, 145–165. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1111/pops.12984>
 - Featured by [Sage Publishing](#), April 4, 2024.
 - Featured in [PsyPost](#), May 12, 2024.
- 3 Versteegen, P. L. (2024). We Love, They Hate: Emotions in Affective Polarization and How Partisans Use Them. *Political Psychology*, 45, 1031–1049. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1111/pops.12955>
 - Featured in [Character & Context](#), April 8, 2024.
- 2 Versteegen, P.L. (2023). The Excluded Ordinary? A Theory of Populist Radical Right Supporters' Position in Society. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 53, 1327–1342. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.2977>
- 1 Versteegen, P.L. (2023). Those Were the What? Contents of Nostalgia, Relative Deprivation, and Radical Right Support. *European Journal of Political Research*, 36, 259–280. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-6765.12593>
 - Featured in [The Conversation](#), November 20, 2023.

- Featured in [Weekendavisen](#), November 10, 2025.

Books and Book Chapters

- 1 Mason, L. & Versteegen, P.L. (2025). *Social sorting and affective polarization*. In M. Torcal & E. Hartevelde (Eds.), *Handbook of Affective Polarization* (pp. 232–249). Edward Elgar Publishing.

Other Publications

- 3 Versteegen, P.L. (2024). What the media still get wrong about Trump Voters. [L.A. Times](#).
- 2 Versteegen, P.L. (2023). Populist radical right voters do not have a monopoly on nostalgia! *The Loop – ECPR's Political Science Blog*.
- 1 Versteegen, U. & Versteegen, P.L. (2020). *Social Fields As An Awareness-Based Approach To Reconnect Self, Other, and Whole*. In O. Gunnlaugson (Ed.), *Advances in Presencing*, Volume 3. Vancouver, Can: Trifoss Business Press.

Work in progress

- 9 Rathje, S., Asimovic, N., Ventura, T., Mughal, S., Robertson, C. E., Barrie, C, The Global Social Media Experiment Team (incl. Versteegen, P.L.), Tucker, J. A., & Van Bavel, J. J. (in-principle accepted registered report). Testing the causal effect of social media usage around the globe. *Nature*.
- 8 Versteegen, P.L., & Mason, L. (R&R). Do Citizens' Democratic Views Depend on How They Feel? Probably Not.
- Preprint: https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/hz2mt_v1
- 7 Versteegen, P. L. & Sohlberg, J. (R&R). All Hands On Deck: In Societal Crises, Compassion Makes Citizens Assign Responsibility to Many Actors.
- 6 Leuschner, E., & Versteegen, P.L. (under review). An Immediate Reward: Participating in Minority Protest Makes Majority Members Feel Better.
- Preprint: <https://osf.io/preprints/psyarxiv/jczes>
- 5 Kubin, E., Versteegen, P.L., Pratt, S. Puryear, C., & Gray, K. (in prep.). The Truth of Victimhood as a Driver for Moral Disagreement and Partisan Animosity.
- 4 Versteegen, P.L. (in prep.). The Contents of American National Identity.
- 3 Versteegen, P.L. & Turnbull-Dugarte, S. (in prep.). The MAGA-Trade-Off.
- 2 Versteegen, P.L., Gross, G., & Mason, L. (in prep.). Society and I: What Evaluations of Sociotropic and Egotropic Conditions Reveal About Citizens' Understanding of Society.
- 1 Versteegen, P.L., & Wratil, C. (in prep.). How Citizens Recall, Process, and Share Experiences of Political Representation.

Research and Travel Grants (total ~ €500,000.00).

Major grants

December 2025/May 2026 – German Science Foundation (DFG) Project Grant: *What Citizens Think They Should and Can Do in Democracies* (~ €449,740.00) (originally granted by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF), transferred to the DFG).

Smaller grants

October 2025 – Hochschuljubiläumsfonds (€8,000.00).

October 2023 – Adlerbertska Travel Grant (~ €1,700.00).

August 2023 – Small Grants Award of the Society for the Study of Peace, Conflict, & Violence (~ €2,300.00).

June 2023 – Stiftelsen Wilhelm och Martina Lundgren Vetenskapsfonds (~ €6,500.00).
 January 2023 – Lars Hiertas Minne (€2,700.00).
 October 2022 – Adlerbertska forskningsstiftelsen (~ €6,600.00).
 June 2022 – Helge Ax:son Johnsons Stiftelse (~ €4,700.00).
 May 2022 – Stiftelsen Wilhelm och Martina Lundgren Vetenskapsfonds (~ €5,400.00).
 June 2021 – Stiftelsen Siamon (~ €2,500.00, together with Gefjon Off).
 June 2021 – Stiftelsen Siamon (~ €2,400.00).
 April 2021 – Donationsnämndens stipendier (~ €1,200.00).
 July 2019 – Tilburg University travel grant (€1,000.00).
 February 2018 – DAAD hamburglobal travel grant (€1,200.00).
 September 2016 – Erasmus+- Grant (~ 600.00€ monthly for 12 months).

Teaching Experience (~ 1,100 hours teaching in total).

Master's level:

- How Political Psychology Explains Polarization and Anti-Democratic Sentiment (Vienna: Spring 2026; Hamburg: Winter 2026)
- Political Psychology: Can Humans Address Societal Crises? (Vienna: Winter 2025)
- Methods of Political Science (Vienna: Winter 2024)
- Citizens, Politicians and the Media: Evaluating Democratic Processes (Gothenburg: Spring 2023)
- Introduction to Applied Research Design and Quantitative Research Methods for Social Scientists (Gothenburg: Autumn 2022)
- Supervision of 10 MA theses (8 in Gothenburg, 1 in Vienna, 1 in Hamburg)

Bachelor's level:

- Introduction to political science (Hamburg: Winter 2026)
- Bachelor's Seminar and Bachelor's Thesis (Vienna: Summer 2025)
- Humans in Politics or Politics in Humans? An Introduction to Political Psychology (Vienna: Winter 2024, Winter 2025; Hamburg: Winter 2026)
- Swedish Politics in a Comparative Perspective (Gothenburg: Spring 2021, Autumn 2021, Spring 2022, Autumn 2022, Spring 2023)
- Science Communication (Gothenburg: Spring 2023, Autumn 2023, Spring 2024)
- Supervision of 29 BA theses (6 in Gothenburg, 23 in Vienna)

Prizes & Awards

August 2025 – nominated by Gothenburg University as one of three candidates to become a fellow at the Swedish Collegium for Advanced Study (SCAS)
 November 2022 – 2nd at [EUTOPIA Science Slam](#), Ljubljana (Representing Gothenburg University)
 May 2022 – Competitor at the [3 Minutes Competition](#) of Gothenburg University, Gothenburg.

Conferences and Workshops

APSA (2022, 2024)
 ECPR (2021, 2022, 2024)
 EPSA (2023, 2024, 2025)
 ISPP (2021, 2022, 2023, 2025)
 MPSA (2021, 2023)

Invited Talks and Roundtables

December 2025. Does Apolitical Affect Affect Affective Polarization? *External Speaker Series*, University of Innsbruck.

November 2025. Harris or Trump? Roundtable on the US elections, *Vienna University of Economics and Business*.

October 2024. Does Apolitical Affect Affect Affective Polarization? *Deepest Beliefs Lab, UNC Chapel Hill* (online).

October 2023. How to Cope with Status Threat. *Minority Politics Workshop, Michigan State University & University of Michigan*.

September 2023. How to Cope with Status Threat. *SNF Agora Graduate Workshop, Johns Hopkins University*.

June 2022. Exclusion at the Center: A Theory of Populist Radical Right Voters' Position in Society. *Hot Politics Lab, University of Amsterdam* (online).

Workshops

PARTISAN Workshop (2026)

MULTIREP Workshop (2025)

PARTISAN Workshop (2025)

Political Psych Network (2024)

Gothenburg Research Group on Elections, Public Opinion and Political Behavior (2022-2024)

Pluralistic Societies Workshop (2023)

EUTOPIA Postgraduate Conference in Political Science and International Studies (2021)

Essex Workshop "Methods for Comparative Politics (2021)

Swedish National Methods Workshop of Political Science PhD Students (2021)

Media Coverage

July 2024 – [Göteborgs Posten](#): On the rhetoric against Donald Trump

July 2024 – [Göteborgs Posten](#): On the attack on Donald Trump

January 2023 – [The Global Inn Radio](#): The Rise of the Far-Right in Europe

November 2022 – [Frekvenca X](#): On Polarization and Emotions in Politics

October 2022 – [GU-Journalen](#): Bike Demonstration Against Threatened Research

September 2022 – [Universitetsleraren](#): Luca cyklade för att samla pengar till utsatta forskare

Memberships

European Political Science Association (EPSA)

Midwestern Political Science Association (MPSA)

American Political Science Association (APSA)

International Society of Political Psychology (ISPP)

Association for Psychological Science (APS)

Other skills

Cultural Competence: Certificate Intercultural Competence

Languages: German (mother tongue), English (Academic fluent), French (Advanced), Italian (Beginner), Spanish (Beginner), Dutch (Beginner), Swedish (Beginner)

IT Skills: Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, Power Point), LaTeX

Data Analysis: SPSS, Qualtrics, R, STATA

Service

February 2025 – April 2026 – Chair of the Departmental Research Seminar at the Department of Government, University of Vienna.

July/August 2024 – in connection to my mountain marathon in Idre, I conducted a [crowdfunding campaign](#) for Scholars at Risk

June/July 2022 – while cycling to the ISPP conference in Athens, I conducted a [crowdfunding campaign](#) for Ukrainian Scholars at Risk to raise money and awareness for Ukrainian researchers affected by the Russian invasion.

September 2021 – August 2023: Secretary in the PhD council of doctoral students, Department of Political Science, University of Gothenburg.

September 2021 – August 2022: Representative for all PhD students at the Faculty of Social Sciences in the council of PhD students at University of Gothenburg.

December 2015 – September 2016: Member of student council, University of Hamburg

January 2025 – present: Member of the Editorial Board at *Political Psychology*.

Reviewer for Journals (once or several times): *American Journal of Political Science*; *American Political Science Review*; *British Journal of Political Science*; *British Journal of Social Psychology*; *Comparative Political Studies*; *Current Psychology*; *Electoral Studies*; *European Journal of Political Research*; *European Political Science Review*; *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations*; *Journal of Peace Research*; *Journal of Politics*; *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion & Parties*; *PLOS ONE*; *Political Psychology*; *Politics, Groups, and Identities*; *Public Opinion Quarterly*; *Research and Politics*

Reviewer for Positions: Social Sciences PhD program, University of Vienna

References

Ph.D. Maria Solevid (First dissertation advisor)

Department of Political Science, University of Gothenburg
maria.solevid@pol.gu.se

Ph.D. Jacob Sohlberg (Second dissertation advisor)

Department of Political Science, University of Gothenburg
jacob.sohlberg@gu.se

Ph.D. Lilliana Mason

SNF Agora Institute, Johns Hopkins University
lmason23@jhu.edu

Miscellaneous

Always: please call me Luca.

July 2016 – present: active Buddhist practitioner.

January 2014 – August 2015: Licensed fitness coach for High Intensity Fitness Classes, Les Mills Grit Germany

June 2013 – November 2013: Host of Sports and Entertainment, alltours Flugreisen (tourist company), Cala Ratjada.

Marathons

April 2015 – Hamburg Marathon. Time: 03.39.13 hours

October 2022 – Gothenburg Marathon. Time: 03.28.13 hours

June 2023 – Stockholm Marathon. Time: 03.31.35 hours

October 2023 – Baltimore Marathon. Time: 3.14.07 hours (no clue what happened...)

May 2024 – Copenhagen. Time: 3.33.51 hours.

August 2024 – Idre Mountain Marathon (44.6km up and down, it was awful (but fun)). 6.11.28 hours.

April 2025 – Vienna Marathon. Time: 3.22.40 hours

September 1, 2026