

# Ilona Lahdelma

Assistant Professor (tenure track) in political science and political methodology at the Carlos III University, Madrid, Spain, and research fellow at the Juan Linz Institute. Editorial Board member of the *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*. Visiting researcher at Aalto University School of Business, Department of Economics.

## Education

- 2016–2020 **DPhil (PhD) in Political Science**, Department of Politics and International Relations, University of Oxford, UK.  
Thesis title: *Refugees and Local Politics: Elite and Citizen Responses to Asylum Seekers*. A paper-based thesis in Political Sociology.
- 2012–2014 **Erasmus Mundus Master's degree in Regional Development**, École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris, France.
- 2011–2013 **Master's degree in History**, University of Tampere, Finland.
- 2008–2012 **Bachelor's degree in International Relations**, minoring in Political Science, University of Tampere, Finland.
- 2007–2011 **Bachelor's degree in History**, University of Tampere, Finland.  
Visiting scholarships
- Spring 2019 Visiting student, European University Institute, Florence, Italy.
- 2010–2011 Erasmus exchange, Sciences Po, Paris, France.

## Publications

- 2026 *Evolution of Women's Descriptive and Substantive Representation: Evidence from 70 years of parliamentary debates*, with Jeremias Nieminen, Janne Tukiainen and Salla Simola. Accepted at the **European Journal of Political Economy**.  
Using Finnish parliamentary speech data from 1948 to 2018, this paper shows that gender differences in parliamentary speech widen once women surpass 10–20% of seats, and that changes in women's speech track context rather than tenure.
- 2024 *Land reform and agrarian socialism in interwar Europe: Evidence from 1930s Spain before civil war*, with Jordi Domènech and Pablo Martinelli. **Explorations in Economic History**, 94.  
This paper estimates the electoral impact of the Second Republic's land reform on Socialist voting with detailed constituency-level data.
- 2023 *Do local economic benefits of asylum seekers lead to more support for local refugee intake?* **Journal of Politics**, 85(4), 1229–1244.  
This paper implements a difference-in-differences design to estimate the impact of housing asylum seekers on refugee policies at the local level.
- 2016 *Radicalism in Hungarian Civil Society, in Eternal Return? The Specter of Radicalism among Young People in Europe and Hungary*.

## Research in Progress

*After the arrivals: How rural and urban citizens differ in their responses to asylum seekers.* Working paper, under journal review.

An original survey relying on the as-if-random allocation of asylum seekers across Finnish municipalities measures how witnessing arrivals shaped immigration preferences in rural and urban areas.

*The TikTok factor: Young voters and the support for the populist right*, with Janne Tukiainen, Mika Maliranta, Risto Rönkkö and Juho Saari. *Labore Working Papers* 351 (2025).

Studies how young voters are socialised into populist-right support through new media, with evidence from the 2023 Finnish elections.

*Intergenerational effects of forced displacement on personality traits and human capital*, with Dominik Hangartner, Matti Sarvimäki and Maarit Olkkola.

A spatial regression discontinuity design with Finnish registry data traces how forced displacement shapes personality traits and human capital across generations.

*Social desirability bias and EU attitudes.*

A conjoint difference-in-differences design studying to what extent social desirability bias affects EU-attitudes in Germany.

*In close contact: How degrees of exposure to refugees explain immigration attitudes.*

An original survey administered in Finland to rural and urban dwellers to gauge their receptivity to refugees in the aftermath of the 2015 refugee crisis.

*The repercussions of unequal political representation on later party choices: How Swedish pre-1911 democratic inequality shaped later politics.*

A study using historical inequality and voting data to explore the spread of rural Social Democracy in the interwar period in Sweden.

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## Projects

2026–2030 **Immigration Policy and Multidimensional Integration**, Research Council of Finland (PI: Hanna Pesola; EUR 597,041). Co-investigator, with Matti Sarvimäki, Tuomo Virkola and Dominik Hangartner.

Studies immigrant integration with Finnish registry data, using regression discontinuity designs based on refugee arrival dates.

ongoing **The inter-generational effects of forced displacement.** Co-PI with Maarit Olkkola; with Elias Dinas, Dominik Hangartner and Matti Sarvimäki.

An original survey of 15,000 descendants of Finland's displaced Karelian population, conducted in collaboration with Statistics Finland, examines how war-time displacement affects political preferences across generations.

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## Grants Awarded

2022 **Yrjö Jahnsson Foundation** EUR 3,300 towards data access and travel costs for studying forced displacement of Finnish Karelian refugees.

2020 **Emil Aaltonen Foundation** EUR 5,000 towards running a survey.

2019 **The Association for the Enhancement of Karelian Culture** EUR 13,000 towards a survey.

2018 **The Ella and Georg Ehrnrooth Foundation** EUR 26,000 towards my PhD project.

2018 **The Finnish Konkordia League** EUR 8,000 towards my PhD project.

2018 **The Karelian Culture Foundation** EUR 10,000 towards a survey.

2018 **The Karelian League** EUR 2,000 towards a survey.

2017 **The Ella and Georg Ehrnrooth Foundation** EUR 24,000 towards my PhD project.

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## Scholarships

2019 **Oxford Scatcherd European Scholarship**, GBP 1,500 towards a term at the EUI.

2018 **Oxford Q-Step Graduate Scholarship**, GBP 6,000.

2017–2019 **Brasenose College Senior Hulme Scholarship**, GBP 250/annum + dining rights.

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## Teaching Experience

Graduate teaching experience

2022–present **Causal Inference**, Master in Computational Social Sciences, Universidad Carlos III, Madrid.

2024–present **Advanced Research Methods**, Master in Social Sciences, Universidad Carlos III, Madrid.

Spring 2022 **Advanced Research Methods in Social Sciences: Experimental Designs**, Universidad Carlos III, Madrid.

Fall 2019 **Teaching assistant: Introduction to Statistics**, University of Oxford.

Assisting Dr Nelson Ruiz by teaching and preparing the lab sessions for the course.

Fall 2018 **Teaching assistant: Introduction to Statistics**, University of Oxford.

Assisting Dr Nelson Ruiz and Professor Robin Harding by teaching and preparing the lab sessions for the course. Teaching involved private tutorials for a visually impaired student.

August 2018 **ECPR Summer School in Methods and Techniques**, Budapest, Hungary.

Teaching assistant to Professor Elias Dinas for the course Causal Inference in the Social Sciences II: Difference in Difference, Regression Discontinuity and Instruments.

Undergraduate teaching experience

2021–present **Evaluation of Public Policies**, Universidad Carlos III, Madrid.

2021–2022 **Interdisciplinary Research Design in the Social Sciences**, Universidad Carlos III, Madrid.

January 2024 **Introduction to Research Design and Causality**, Alliance University Global Leaders' Program, Bangalore, India (20-hour intensive course).

2018–2020 **Tutor in Political Sociology**, University of Oxford.

2017–2019 **Tutor in Comparative Government**, University of Oxford.

Spring 2019 **Tutor in Political Methodology**, University of Oxford.

Supervision

2021–present Supervisor of 27 BA theses and 2 MA theses, Universidad Carlos III, Madrid.

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## Conference and Workshop Presentations

June 2026 *Intergenerational effects of forced displacement on personality traits and human capital*, presented at the workshop The Economics of Health and Human Capital, Ramón Areces Foundation, Madrid.

May 2026 *Intergenerational effects of forced displacement on personality traits and human capital*, presented at the workshop Historical Legacies of Forced Displacement, University of Gothenburg, Sweden.

July 2024 *The repercussions of unequal political representation on later party choices*, presented at the 2024 EPSA annual conference, Cologne, Germany.

July 2024 *The intergenerational effects of forced displacement*, presented at the 2024 EPSA annual conference, Cologne, Germany.

- December 2023 *In close contact: How degrees of exposure to refugees explain immigration attitudes*, presented at the Uppsala Urban Lab annual workshop, Uppsala University, Sweden.
- October 2023 *After the arrivals*, presented at the workshop Research on Rural–Urban Divides, Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany.
- September 2023 *Intergenerational effects of forced displacement*, presented at the 6th Madrid Political Economy Workshop, CUNEF, Madrid.
- June 2022 *Taking our jobs? Foreign labour contributions and native preferences for banning laws*, presented at the 2022 EPSA conference, Prague.
- March 2022 *After the arrivals*, presented at the workshop Hosting Refugees: National Policies and Local Communities, Bicocca University, Milan.
- June 2021 *After the arrivals* and *Taking our jobs?*, presented at Virtual EPSA.
- April 2021 *After the arrivals*, presented at Virtual MPSA.
- Dec. 2019 *To take or not to take? Pre-election pledges about refugee intake in rural and urban areas*, presented at the Conference on Comparative Research on Political Elites, Hertie School of Government (with a travel grant by organizers), Berlin.
- June 2019 *To take or not to take?*, presented at the 2019 EPSA annual conference, Belfast, UK.
- June 2018 *Asylum seekers and political representation*, presented at the 2018 EPSA annual conference, Vienna, Austria.
- April 2018 *Asylum seekers and political representation*, presented at the 2018 ECPR joint sessions (with ECPR grant), Nicosia, Cyprus.

## Invited Talks and Discussant Roles

- Dec. 2025 *Social desirability bias and EU attitudes*, departmental seminar, University of Oslo. Invited by Professor Bjørn Høyland.
- Dec. 2024 *The TikTok factor: How young people socialize into the radical right*, Åbo Akademi, Turku. Invited by Professor Inga Saikkonen.
- Dec. 2024 *Intergenerational effects of forced displacement*, Turku Economics Seminar, University of Turku. Invited by Professor Janne Tukiainen.
- Sept. 2024 Invited expert speaker on immigration and political behaviour in rural areas, rural development conference, **Parliament of Finland**.
- Oct. 2022 *Forced displacement affects personality traits across generations*, PolSek research seminar, Uppsala University. Invited by Marcus Österman.
- Feb. 2022 *After the arrivals*, WZB Berlin, Transition of Democracies Series. Invited by Professor Daniel Ziblatt (online).
- June 2021 Discussant at the EPSA 2021 panel Rural Foundations of the Populist Vote (virtual).
- April 2021 Discussant at the MPSA 2021 panel Immigration Attitudes (virtual); discussant at the 2nd EBRD & King's College London Workshop on the Economics and Politics of Migration, invited by Cevat Giray Aksoy, Konstantinos Matakos and Pierre-Louis Vezina (online).

## Service

- 2024– Editorial Board member, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*.
- 2023– Track Chair for Immigration Policies, European Political Science Association (EPSA).
- 2023– Convener of the Internal Seminar of the Juan Linz Institute, Universidad Carlos III de Madrid.

Reviewer for the Journal of Politics, British Journal of Political Science, Political Behavior, Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, Journal of Immigrant and Refugee Studies, and the Journal of the Finnish Economic Association.

## Impact

- 2024 Invited expert at the **Parliament of Finland's** conference on rural development.
- 2021 The largest Finnish daily newspaper **Helsingin Sanomat** published an extensive Sunday Supplement article about the findings of my thesis, discussing how rural areas in Finland are willing to take immigrants.
- 2020 Invited expert in the Finnish Broadcasting Company's documentary *Finland is rural*, discussing rural areas' willingness to accommodate refugees.
- 2018–2019 **European Commission, Enlightenment 2.0 Project**: state-of-the-art literature review on immigration attitudes to better understand European political behavior.
- Nov. 2019 The Finnish Social Democratic Party's annual memorial lecture of late President Mauno Koivisto, keynote speech titled *Is populism good for democracy?*

## Technical Skills

Statistical software    Stata, R

## Languages

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| Finnish   | Native    |
| Hungarian | Native    |
| English   | Excellent |
| French    | Excellent |
| Spanish   | Fluent    |
| Swedish   | Good      |
| German    | Basic     |