

# Dr. Rebecca C. Kittel

## Curriculum Vitae

Free University of Berlin  
Garystr. 55  
14195 Berlin, Germany  
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🌐 [rebecca-kittel.eu](http://rebecca-kittel.eu)

### Research Interest

Elite Communication, Representative Democracy, Populism, Parliamentary Behaviour, Political Participation, Protest Behaviour, Text-As-Data, Image-As-Data, Survey Experiments

### Current Positions

- Oct. 2023 – **Post Doctoral Researcher**, FREE UNIVERSITY OF BERLIN, Berlin, Germany, Present  
ERC-Project LOOPS, PI: Anna Fruhstorfer
- Oct. 2023 – **Research Affiliate**, WZB BERLIN SOCIAL SCIENCE CENTER, Center for Civil Society Research, Berlin, Germany, Host Faculty: Swen Hutter

### Education

- Sep. 2019 – **Ph.D. in Political and Social Sciences**, EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE, Florence, Italy, *The New Politics of Party Signalling: Language, Positioning and Electoral Dynamics*, Examining Board: Ellen Immergut (supervisor), Simon Hix, Amy Catalinac, Sven-Oliver Proksch
- Sep. 2021 – **Visiting Researcher**, NEW YORK UNIVERSITY, New York City, USA, Host faculty: Amy Catalinac
- Jun. 2022
- Sep. 2019 – **M.Res. in Social and Political Science**, EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE, Florence, Italy
- Aug. 2020
- Oct. 2016 – **M.A. in Political Science**, UNIVERSITY OF COLOGNE, Cologne, Germany, *How Do They Talk? A Comparison of Left-Wing and Right-Wing Populists' Speeches in Parliament*, Supervision: Sven-Oliver Proksch
- Aug. 2019
- Aug. 2017 – **Visiting Student**, SCIENCES PO, Paris, France
- Dec. 2017
- Oct. 2012 – **B.Sc. in Social Sciences**, UNIVERSITY OF COLOGNE, Cologne, Germany, *Temporal Distance between European and National Elections – Exploring the Performance of Eurosceptic Parties*, Supervision: André Kaiser
- Mar. 2016
- Aug. 2014 – **Visiting Student**, DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY, Pittsburgh, USA
- Dec. 2014

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## Publications

### Peer-Reviewed Journal Article

**Kittel, Rebecca C.** (2025). Let's Talk Populist? A Survey Experiment on Effects of (Non-) Populist Discourse on Vote Choice. *European Journal of Political Research*: 64: 719-743

**Kittel, Rebecca C.** (2025). Simply Speaking? Language Complexity among (Non-)Populist Actors in Parliamentary Debates. *Government and Opposition*: 60(4): 1336-1366.

### Dissertation

**Kittel, Rebecca C.** (2023). The new politics of party signalling: language, positioning, and electoral dynamics. *European University Institute*.

### Contributions to Edited Volumes

**Kittel, Rebecca C.** (Forthcoming). Effects of Discursive Elements of (non-) Populist Messages. In: *Research Handbook on Populist Communication*, eds. Susana Salgado. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing.

### Special Issues Edited

**Kittel, Rebecca C.**, Michelle Torres and Anna Fruhstorfer (Guest Editors) (Forthcoming). Digital Communication and Computational Approaches to Understanding Social Movements in the Social Media Era. *Computational Communication Research*

### Other Publications

Groß, Greta and **Rebecca C. Kittel**. (2025). Reden und Rechnen – Wie Sprachmodelle helfen, Politik im Parlament zu verstehen. *WZB Mitteilungen*, 190: 41-44.

**Kittel, Rebecca C.**. (2025). Ein Mensch, ein Wort – Veränderung der Komplexität von Sprache im Deutschen Bundestag. *WZB Mitteilungen*, 187: 27-30.

Fruhstorfer, Anna, Ismael Benkrama and **Rebecca C. Kittel**. (2024). Körper und Widerstand - Protestcamps in autoritären Regimen. *WZB Mitteilungen*, 186: 44-47.

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## Work in Progress

**Kittel, Rebecca C.** and Bruno Castanho Silva. *Shall We Make It Easy? Strategic Language Complexity in Politicians' Parliamentary and Online Communication*. Under Review.

Fruhstorfer, Anna and **Rebecca C. Kittel** and Ismael Benkrama. *The Impact of Protest Camp Infrastructure on the Mobilization of Vulnerable Groups*. Under Review.

**Kittel, Rebecca C.** and Mirko Wegemann. *Federalism in Crisis? The Role of Party Affiliation and Government Status in Sub-National Crisis Management*. In preparation for review process.

**Kittel, Rebecca C.**, Ismael Benkrama, Birce Altin and Anna Fruhstorfer. *Protest Camp Infrastructure between collective action and external pressure*. Draft available upon request.

Carmo Duarte, Mariana and **Rebecca C. Kittel**. *Ill-Informed or Up-To-Date? How National Parliamentary Discourse Affects Public Opinion on the European Union*. Presented at COMPTXT 2024, APSA 2024, EPSA 2025.

**Kittel, Rebecca C.** and Konstantin Vössing. *Identifying and Explaining Politicians' Policy Explanations: A method and a Case Study of the Covid-19 Debate*. Presented at DVPW 2024.

Wolfgang Minatti and **Rebecca C. Kittel**. *The Rhetorics of Zeitenwende: Germany and the Legitimation of European Security Governance*. Presented at ECPR General Conference 2025.

**Kittel, Rebecca C.** and Konstantin Vössing *How politicians explain themselves and why it works (or not)* , Pre-Analysis Plan.

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## Datasets

**Kittel, Rebecca C.** and Mirko Wegemann. *Dataset on Press Releases from National and Sub-National Party Fractions in Germany*. Dataset available upon request.

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## Previous Positions

- Oct. 2022 – **Research Associate**, HANS-BOECKLER STIFTUNG & CITY UNIVERSITY OF
- Oct. 2023 LONDON, Political explanations and their effects on public opinion and political behavior by Ellen Immergut and Konstatin Vössing, Florence, Italy
- Sep. 2020 – **Research Assistant**, EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE, Responding to
- Sep. 2022 COVID-19: Government Action, Government Rhetoric, and Public Trust by Ellen Immergut and Tamara Popic, Florence, Italy
- Apr. 2018 – **Student Research Assistant**, CHAIR FOR EUROPEAN AND MULTILEVEL
- Jul. 2019 POLITICS, Sven-Oliver Proksch, Center for Comparative Politics, University of Cologne, Cologne, Germany
- Sep. 2018 – **Student Assistant Work**, GERMAN ACADEMIC EXCHANGE SERVICE
- Dec. 2018 (DAAD), Bonn, Germany
- Apr. 2014 – **Student Research Assistant**, CHAIR FOR COMPARATIVE POLITICS, André
- Sep. 2018 Kaiser, Cologne Center for Comparative Politics, University of Cologne, Cologne, Germany
- Apr. 2018 – **Research Assistant Work**, LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND POLITICAL
- Jul. 2018 SCIENCE, for Sara B. Hobolt and Christopher Wratil about EU Council Deliberations

- Jan. 2018 – **Intern**, GERMAN ACADEMIC EXCHANGE SERVICE (DAAD), Bonn, Germany  
 Apr. 2018
- Jun. 2016 – **Intern**, WORTWERT - DIE WIRTSCHAFTSREDAKTION, Journalism Bureau,  
 Jul. 2016 Cologne, Germany
- Aug. 2011 – **Freelance Journalist**, WESTFÄLISCHE NACHRICHTEN – LOCAL NEWSPAPER,  
 Mar. 2016 Münster, Germany

## Scholarships and Competitive Grants

- 2025 – 2026 **Mentee at ProFiL** – Mentoring Program for Women in Academia from the Berlin University Alliance, Mentor: Heike Klüver
- 2025 **Attendance and Travel Grant** – MZES-DVPW Conference “Methods of Political Science”
- 2024 **Berlin University Alliance: X-Student-Research Group** – Teaching Grant for the Research Seminar “Online Communication and Political Rhetoric”, Winter Term 2024
- 2024 **Kongressreisenprogramm German Academic Exchange Service – DAAD** – Travel Grant for APSA Conference 2024
- 2024 **Berlin University Alliance: X-Student-Research Group** – Teaching Grant for the Research Seminar “Online Communication and the Organisation of Protest Camps”, Summer Term 2024
- 2023 **ECPR Grant** for Attending ECPR Joint Sessions in Toulouse
- 2021 **EUI Exchange Programme with NYU** – Travel Grant
- 2020 **EUI Early Stage Researcher Grant** for a Survey Experiment on Language Complexity
- 2020 **ECPR Grant** for the First Virtual ECPR Method School
- 2019 – 2023 **Full PhD Scholarship** of the German Academic Exchange Service – DAAD
- 2012 – 2019 **Study Scholarship** of the Hanns-Seidel-Stiftung, Journalism Programme

## Teaching Experience

- Summer Term 2026 **Web-Scraping and Automated Data Collection**, *Instructor*, SUMMER SCHOOL FOR WOMEN\* IN POLITICAL METHODOLOGY, Hands-On Research Workshop, 4h, Mannheim, Germany (planned for July)
- Summer Term 2026 **Researching the far right: Methods, Challenges and Ethical Reflections**, FREE UNIVERSITY BERLIN, Master Seminar, co-taught with Christin Jänicke, 22.5h, Berlin, Germany
- Summer Term 2025 **Web-Scraping and Automated Data Collection**, *Instructor*, SUMMER SCHOOL FOR WOMEN\* IN POLITICAL METHODOLOGY, Hands-On Research Workshop, 4h, Bremen, Germany
- Winter Term 2024/25 **Online Communication and Political Rhetoric**, *Head of X-Student Research Group*, FREE UNIVERSITY BERLIN – BERLIN UNIVERSITY ALLIANCE, Hands-On Research Seminar, 22.5h, Berlin, Germany

- Summer Term 2024 **Online Communication and the Organisation of Protest Camps**, *Head of X-Student Research Group*, FREE UNIVERSITY BERLIN – BERLIN UNIVERSITY ALLIANCE, Hands-On Research Seminar, 22.5h, Berlin, Germany
- Winter Term 2023 **Applying for PhD Positions and Proposal Writing**, *Co-Instructor*, WZB BERLIN SOCIAL SCIENCE CENTER, Organized with Lennart Schürmann, Student Workshop, 5h, Berlin, Germany
- Summer Term 2023 and 2024 **Introduction to Text-As-Data Methods**, *Instructor*, CITY UNIVERSITY LONDON, Online-Workshop, 6h
- Summer Term 2023 **Party Competition and Political Communication**, *Instructor*, UNIVERSITY OF LUCERNE, Master Seminar, 22h, Lucerne, Switzerland
- Summer Term 2023 **Computational Text Analysis**, *Teaching Assistant*, EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE, Course taught by Dr. Jessica di Cocco, Florence, Italy
- Winter Term 2022 **Party Competition and Political Communication**, *Instructor*, HEINRICH-HEINE-UNIVERSITY DÜSSELDORF, Bachelor Seminar, 22.5h, Düsseldorf, Germany (student evaluation: 1.1 on scale from 1.0 to 5.0)
- Winter Term 2013, 2015 and 2016 **Introduction to Comparative Politics: Comparative Analysis of Political Institutions**, *Teaching Assistant*, UNIVERSITY OF COLOGNE, Course taught by Prof. André Kaiser, Chair for Comparative Politics, Cologne, Germany

## Teaching and Skill Training

- 2023 - Present **Dahlem Center for Academic Teaching (DCAT) - Certificate Programme**, FREE UNIVERSITY OF BERLIN, Including courses on *Stimm- und Sprechtraining, Beratung in der Lehre, Präsenzprüfungen (Mündliche Prüfungen und Klausuren) souverän vorbereiten und abhalten* ~ 180h
- 2024 **Teaching Qualification Programme for Researchers in the Student Research Opportunities Programme - Research-Based Learning Techniques**, BERLIN UNIVERSITY ALLIANCE, Teaching Certificate, 19h
- **Project Management in Research**, BERLIN SOCIAL SCIENCE CENTER (WZB), 12. November
- 2022 **Introduction to Teaching and Learning in Higher Education**, EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE, Teaching Certificate, 20h
- 2013 **Tutorenschulung**, UNIVERSITY OF COLOGNE, Teaching Certificate, 10.October

## Public Outreach

“Das Wort Klima ist seltener geworden”: Zwei Wissenschaftlerinnen haben die Sprache in Bundestagsreden untersucht und interessante Mechanismen entdeckt - Newspaper interview with Berliner Zeitung. 25 February 2026.

Politik und Grammatik - Radio interview with Deutschlandfunk, Programme: “Musik und Information”. 11 Mai 2025.

## Methods Training

- 2025 – Algorithm Auditing for Social Science Research, 2nd DIMES Workshop Free University of Berlin
- 2024 – Automated Image and Video Analysis with Python, GESIS Fall course
- 2022 – Introduction to Machine Learning for Text Analysis in Python, GESIS Fall course
  - Quantitative Political Analysis II - Causal Inference, PhD Seminar NYU
- 2021 – Quantitative Political Analysis III - MLE, Bayesian, Machine Learning, PhD Seminar NYU
  - Measurements in Social Sciences, Workshop EUI
  - Survey Analysis and Experiments, Workshop EUI
- 2020 – Computational Text Analysis, Workshop EUI
  - Python Programming for Social Scientists, ECPR Summer School
  - Sequence Analysis in the Social Sciences, Workshop EUI
  - Introduction to Machine Learning for Social Science, Workshop EUI
  - Multilevel Data Analysis, Workshop EUI
  - Causal Inference, Seminar EUI
- 2019 – Theory and Methodology of Discourse Analysis, Workshop EUI
- 2018 – A Primer to Web Scraping with R, Workshop Cologne Center for Comparative Politics (CCCP)

## Conferences and Presentations

- 2026 – ECPR General Conference – Kraków, 8 - 11 September (planned)
  - Vision in Methodology – Hertie School Berlin, 18-20 May (planned)
  - EPSS Conference – Belfast, 18 - 20 June (planned)
  - COMPTXT – Birmingham, 23 - 25 April (planned)
- 2025 – ECPR General Conference – Thessaloniki, 26- 29 August
  - MZES-DVPW Conference "Methods of Political Science" – Mannheim, 27 - 28 March
- 2024 – LOOPS Workshop: How Image-As-Data Approaches Can Help Analyzing Protest and Its Organization: Methods and Applications – Free University of Berlin, 30 September - 1 October
  - DVPW – Göttingen, 17 - 20 September
  - APSA – Philadelphia 5 - 8 September
  - EPSA – Cologne, 4 - 7 July
  - COMPTXT – Amsterdam, 2 - 4 May
  - LOOPS Workshop: Conceptualization of Protest Camp Logistics – Free University of Berlin, 14 - 15 March
- 2023 – WZB-Workshop: Analysing protest in the digital age – Berlin, 7 - 8 December
  - EPSA – Glasgow, 22 - 24 June
  - ECPR Joint Sessions – Toulouse, 25 - 28 April

- MPSA – Chicago, 4 - 7 April
- 2022 – Political Behaviour Colloquium – EUI, 22 November
- CIVICA Data Science Days – Florence, Poster Presentation, 6 - 7 October
- ECPR General Conference - Innsbruck, 22 - 26 August
- EPSA - Prague, 23 - 25 June
- Comparative Politics Workshop – NYU, 16 February
- 2021 – ECPR General Conference - Virtual Event, 30 August - 3 September
- ECPR Standing Group on Parliaments Conference - Virtual Event, 30 - 31 June
- Populism in power and its socioeconomic policies in Europe, Scuola Normale Superiore – Virtual Event, 18 - 19 March
- 2020 – CIVICA PhD Panel on Challenges to Democracy in the EU – Virtual Event, 2 December

### Invited Talks

- 2026 – University of Strathclyde’s Department of Government and Public Policy Speaker Series, March 4
- 2025 – Workshop: Text-as-Data, KI und multimodale Ansätze: Automatisierte Methoden zur Erforschung politischen Verhaltens, Free University of Berlin, 31. October
- Transdisciplinary Workshop: Gemeinsam Politik im föderalen System besser verstehen und analysieren, Vertretung des Landes Schleswig-Holstein beim Bund and Berlin University Alliance, 1. April
- Computational Hub Workshop: Advancements in Text-as-Data Methods for Political Science, University of Milan, 6. -7. March
- 2024 – Connected Politics Lab – Virtual Event, 13. November
- 2024 – Text-As-Data Reading Group – Virtual Event, 10. January
- 2023 – Talk at “Protest und Widerstand Workshop”, MA Research Project w. Prof. Sonja Grimm, University Würzburg – DAM Frankfurt, 8. October
- 2022 – Lunch Talk – Heinrich-Heine-University Düsseldorf, 1. December

### Professional Memberships and Service

- Reviewer British Journal of Politics (2x), European Journal of Political Research, Journal of European Public Policy, Party Politics (2x), Politics of the Low Countries, Political Research Exchange, Political Studies Review, The Journal of Politics, The Sociology Quarterly
- Memberships American Political Science Association, European Political Science Society, German Political Science Association, Midwest Political Science Association, COMPTXT, MethodNet
- Service to Discipline – Co-Organizer: Berlin-Brandenburg Political Behavior Workshop at Free University of Berlin - 29. September 2025

- Full Workshop Organizer and Chair: *How Image-As-Data Approaches Can Help Analyzing Protest and Its Organization: Methods and Applications*, Free University of Berlin, 30. September - 1. October, 2024
- EUI - SPS Mentoring Programme, 2020-2023; Mentor for first year EUI students
- Observer in PhD Programme Selection Procedure (cohorts 2020, 2021, 2023), European University Institute
- Panel Organizer and Chair, ECPR Standing Group on Parliaments Conference, 2021
- Discussant: EPSA (2024), DVPW (2024), Contentious Politics within Civil Society - WZB Workshop (2024)
- Chair: EPSA (2023), ECPR (2025)

## Software Skills

Experienced	R, $\LaTeX$
Advanced	Python, Qualtrics, GitHub
Basic	STATA

## Languages

German	Native
English	Fluent, C2
Italian	Basic, A2

Berlin, 7 April 2026