

Using Experiments to Study the Political Psychology of Economic Inequalities

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1. Research Interests
2. Works in Progress
3. POLINEQUAL: Ways Forward

- Research Questions:
 1. What is the effect of (mis)information and information environments on affective polarization?
 2. What is the effect of (mis)information and (mis)perceptions on preferences for public policies?
 3. How effective, durable, and scalable are approaches to changing (mis)perceptions in order to increase public support for liberal democracy and social justice?

- Research Approach:
 1. Experiments (survey, conjoint, panel, online, field)
 2. Large cross-sectional and panel data (survey, behavioral)

1. Experimental studies:

- a. The effects of individual motivations and the structure of information environments on affective polarization and the proliferation of fake news on social media.
- b. The effects of factual information, framing, emotions, and partisan cues on preferences for public policies.
- c. The effects of framing on economic inequality, *in the framework of the ERC-funded POLINEQUAL program at Sciences Po Grenoble.*

2. Correlational studies:

- a. The association between political efficacy and political participation.
- b. The association between economic and cultural attitudes and public support for national and EU institutions.
- c. The association between political values and attitudes toward immigration.
- d. The association between personality traits and belief in conspiracy theories.

- Study of persuasion effects under threatening conditions, i.e., terrorism, pandemics, natural disasters, and climate change
- Overall, the public exhibits five characteristics in the way it updates its opinions:
 1. Citizens change their views by a small amount.
 2. Citizens' opinions move in the same direction (backlash effects are rare).
 3. Attitude change occurs in parallel, regardless of background characteristics.
 4. Citizens' belief systems exhibit low dynamic constraint, except when their emotions are targeted.
 5. Attitude- and identity-based cross pressures may introduce only minimal bias.

➤ Broader Implications:

1. Citizens form understandable opinions and update them in a predictable manner.
2. Political communication strategists should invest resources in issue-specific campaigns.
3. Emotional appeals can help coordinate idea-elements within belief systems.
4. The public follows its leaders.
5. Parallel updating and polarization are not necessarily incompatible.

- The Politicisation of Economic Inequality:
 1. The effect of equivalency framing of numbers related to economic inequality on perceptions of and attitudes toward inequality, social welfare, and redistribution.
 2. The effect of baseline category for social comparisons on perceptions of self-esteem and inequality and justification of political system/violence.

- The Politicisation of Economic Inequality:
 3. The effects of framing and counterframing of economic inequality on perceptions of and attitudes toward inequality, social welfare, and redistribution.
 4. The effect of selective exposure to ideological frames of economic inequality on affective and political polarization.

- Services to the research program:
 1. Design survey questionnaires
 2. Design online survey experiments
 3. Oversee the data collection
 4. Analyze observational and experimental data
 5. Write high-quality scholarly papers
 6. Present findings in international conferences

Thank you