

Otto Carlo Hofer, PhD

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PROFILE

Quantitative political scientist (PhD, University of Warwick, pass with no corrections). Research on media, geography, and political attitudes in Europe, combining panel data, causal-inference designs, geospatial analysis, and survey experiments. Currently postdoctoral researcher at Queen Mary University of London on the Horizon Europe DEMETRA project.

CURRENT POSITION

Postdoctoral Research Associate, Queen Mary University of London

May 2024 – Present

Horizon Europe DEMETRA project on deliberative policy-making · PI: Prof. Maria Grasso

- Coordinate scientific work across 11 institutions and 7 countries against fixed European Commission deadlines; end-to-end ownership of project-wide deliverables, including two policy briefs co-developed with four work-package leaders and addressed to a mixed audience of EC stakeholders, national and local policymakers, municipalities, and practitioners.
- Drafted the project's ethics plan, data management plan, communication plan, and dissemination & exploitation plan; prepared the periodic project report for the European Commission reviewers.
- Central ethics-approval lead for the consortium: QMUL is the project's host institution, so I run ethics applications across all work packages and liaise with partner institutions on local approvals.
- Field researcher on the qualitative work package: semi-structured interviews and participant observation in deliberative settings.
- Lead organiser of two QMUL-hosted events: the DEMETRA consortium meeting (May 2024) and the Politics and Society Workshop co-sponsored by DEMETRA and the DESPO ERC project (Mar 2026); built and run the project's external presence (website, multi-platform social media, partner video content).

EDUCATION

PhD, Quantitative Political Science, University of Warwick

2020 – 2026

Thesis: *Exposure structures and intergroup attitudes in the UK: Linking media infrastructure and residential environments to affective polarisation and immigration attitudes.*

Supervisors: Prof. Vincenzo Bove, Dr Andreas Murr. Examiners: Prof. Peter Thisted Dinesen (Copenhagen), Prof. Özlem Atikcan (Warwick). Outcome: pass with no corrections (highest UK outcome).

Two empirical projects on the British Election Study Internet Panel (2015–2020, 100,000+ observations across 11 waves): (i) the link between online information consumption and political affective polarisation, using within-person fixed-effects, an instrumental-variables design exploiting local broadband performance, and Granger-inspired cross-lagged panel models; (ii) the link between neighbourhood ethnic segregation and immigration attitudes, using indices of evenness and exposure computed at the MSOA level (geolocated panel, ~7,200 areas), matched to LTIM migration flows and Townsend deprivation.

MSc, Management, Ca' Foscari University of Venice

2018 – 2020

110/110 cum laude (highest Italian grade) · GPA 29.5/30 · dissertation on education and political participation (full marks).

BSc, Business with Computer Science, Technical University of Munich

2014 – 2018

Bachelor's thesis grade 1.0 (top 1%); monetary prize from AutoScout24 for industry-partnered dissertation.

Visiting Research Positions

University of Amsterdam (Jun–Aug 2024) · King's College London (Jan–Jun 2024) · EUTOPIA Visiting PhD, University of Gothenburg (Apr–May 2023).

PUBLICATIONS AND WORKING PAPERS

Refereed journal articles

Co-author. "Polarising punchlines: The influence of intergroup humour on partisan affective polarisation." Revise & resubmit, *Political Studies*.

In preparation

Sole-authored. "Downloading polarisation: Online information consumption and political affective polarisation in the UK." PhD project, target submission 2026.

Sole-authored. "Good neighbours? Neighbourhood segregation and attitudes toward immigration in the UK." PhD project, target submission 2026.

Lead author. "Breaking the ice: The impact of humorous communication on climate change attitudes and political participation." Working paper from the ESRC humour project.

Co-author. "'OK Boomer': The influence of humour on intergenerational hostility and polarisation." Working paper from the ESRC humour project.

Lead author. "Ecological and economic cost of terror: The impact of terrorist attacks on London commuting patterns." Working paper from the Home Office–advised project (Warwick, 2022).

Policy briefs and data deposits

- Two DEMETRA project policy briefs (co-developed with the consortium; addressed to European Commission stakeholders, national and local policymakers, municipalities, and practitioners; revised versions resubmitting June 2026).

- Four datasets from the ESRC humour project deposited on UK Data Service ReShare (survey + three pre-registered survey experiments; in final editorial review).

EARLIER ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

Research Associate, Queen Mary University of London

Oct 2023 – Apr 2024

ESRC project “The Impact of Political Humour on Political Attitudes and Behaviours” · PI: Prof. Maria Grasso

- Co-designed one survey and three pre-registered survey experiments on climate communication, intergroup humour, and intergenerational hostility; led ethics applications and roll-out.
- Lead-authored working paper on humorous climate communication; co-authored two further papers (one under R&R at Political Studies).
- Deposited four study datasets on the UK Data Service ReShare repository (in final editorial review).

Research Associate (UK Home Office advisory), University of Warwick

Jul – Dec 2022

ESRC project on terrorism and well-being · PI: Prof. Vincenzo Bove

- Quantified the impact of terrorism on London public transport using high-frequency TfL ridership data (15-minute check-in/check-out); briefed Home Office officials on the results.
- Built the project's geospatial layer in Python and the Google Maps API (road distance/travel time between stations); estimated radius of effect via a non-parametric procedure.

Senior Graduate Teaching Assistant, University of Warwick

Sep 2021 – Sep 2023

- Sole tutor (under the module leader) for Introduction to Quantitative Political Analysis I and II (BSc Politics) in 2021–22, leading all seminars and computer classes.

Research Assistant, Ca' Foscari University of Venice (Banca IFIS engagement)

May – Nov 2019

- Quantitative screening of 700+ SME financial statements; co-designed and conducted the qualitative interview phase with selected business owners; contributed to the PI's final presentation to Banca IFIS senior management.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS AND WORKSHOPS

- “Breaking the ice: The impact of humorous communication on climate change attitudes and political participation.” MPSA Annual Conference, Chicago (2024); PSA Annual Conference, Glasgow (2024); Politics and Society Workshop (DEMETRA & DESPO ERC), QMUL (2026).
- “Media consumption and affective polarisation.” SISP General Conference, Genoa (2023); EPOP Annual Conference, Newcastle (2022); ECPR General Conference, Innsbruck (2022); in-house seminars, University of Gothenburg and University of Warwick (2022).
- “Segregation and anti-immigration attitudes.” SISP General Conference, Genoa (2023); EPOP Annual Conference, Southampton (2023).
- “Economic and ecological cost of terror in London.” UK Home Office internal conference, London (2023).
- Invited project talks: DEMETRA progress and findings presented to sister Horizon Europe consortia — RETOOL project meeting (Feb 2025), RETOOL synthesis workshop (Jun 2025), and CO-SUSTAIN stakeholder webinar (Mar 2026).
- DEMETRA project meetings: QMUL (May 2024, organiser), online (Oct 2024), Uppsala University (Apr 2025), online (Oct 2025), University of Lille (Apr 2026).
- ECPR Summer School “Quasi-experimental Methods for Causal Inference” with Elias Dinas (2020).

ACADEMIC SERVICE AND ORGANISING

- Lead organiser: DEMETRA consortium meeting, QMUL (May 2024); Politics and Society Workshop co-sponsored by DEMETRA and the DESPO ERC project, QMUL (Mar 2026).
- Organising committee and chair, international conference “Terrorism, Public Attitudes and Individual Well-being,” University of Warwick (2022).
- Co-founder and co-chair, Quantitative Solutions & Networking Series, University of Warwick (2022); co-chair, CRIPS graduate working group, Warwick (2020–21).

FUNDING AND AWARDS

- PhD scholarship (full fees + living stipend), University of Warwick (2020–2024).
- EUTOPIA Visiting PhD scholarship (€5,000), University of Gothenburg (2022).
- Doctoral College Fund, University of Warwick.
- Research assistant scholarship, Ca' Foscari University of Venice (2019).
- AutoScout24 monetary prize (€1,000) for BSc dissertation with full marks (top 1%), 2018.

METHODS, TOOLS, AND LANGUAGES

Quantitative methods: panel-data analysis · within-person fixed-effects · cross-lagged / dynamic panel models · instrumental variables · survey design and pre-registered survey experiments · geospatial analysis (100m–MSOA scales) · segregation indices (dissimilarity, Theil's H, isolation).

Qualitative methods: semi-structured interviewing · participant observation · field research.

Tools: R · Stata · Python · SQL · Google Maps API · LaTeX · Git · Markdown.

Qualifications: GRE General 333 (top 2%) · IELTS Academic 8.5 (C2).

Languages: Italian (native) · German (native) · English (C2) · Dutch (C1, conversational and capable of teaching) · Spanish (B2) · French (B1) · Mandarin (A2).