

The Politics of Spatial Inequalities*

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WS 2024-2025

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Class Hours: Wed 08:30–10:00

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Learnweb: [\[link\]](#)

HIS: [\[link\]](#)

Course Description

In most (if not all) advanced democracies, political attitudes and voting behavior are strongly geographically stratified. Which views residents hold on salient socio-political issues and which parties they support at the ballot box varies markedly at various geographical levels: Across subnational regions within countries, between rural and urban localities within regions, and even across neighborhoods within the very same localities. What drives these geographical differences and what are their political consequences?

To address these questions, this course offers a systematic overview of the political causes and consequences of spatial inequalities. We will explore empirical studies of subnational disparities in attitudes and vote choice, and link these to theories of residential choice, mobility, and exposure. Among other things, we will study empirical contributions that emphasize the role of regional economies, local housing markets, and place-based policies. In the final part of the course, we will investigate the consequences of spatial heterogeneity in attitudes and preferences for election outcomes, representation, and policy delivery. Seeing as we will strongly engage with quantitative empirical contributions, statistical literacy and prior undergraduate-level quantitative methods training is strongly recommended.

Prerequisites

This class is directed at postgraduate students with prior instruction in **comparative politics** and social science **research methods**, including statistical literacy and the ability to critically assess research strategies in published work.

Diversity statement

This class brings together students of diverse personal backgrounds and with different levels of prior knowledge of the subject matter. We strive to create an **inclusive and respectful environment** that allows everyone to become part of the conversation and to feel safe in asking questions and voicing problems.

Should you, for any reason, feel like this class does not offer a safe and inclusive learning experience for yourself or others, please feel free to reach out to me (e.g., by emailing me with a request for office hours via Zoom). All concerns will be treated confidentially.

*This version: **October 16, 2024**. Syllabus is subject to change.

Schedule

Week	Date	Time	Title	Readings
1	2024-10-09	08:30-10:00	Orientation week	
2	2024-10-16	08:30-10:00	Introduction	
3	2024-10-23	08:30-10:00	Subnational inequalities in postindustrial countries	Rickard (2020), Bauluz et al. (2023)
4	2024-10-30	08:30-10:00	Residential sorting and political polarization	Mummolo and Nall (2017), Martin and Webster (2020), Lueders (2024a)
5	2024-11-05	20:15-21:45	Places in decline: status threat	Cramer (2016), Rodríguez-Pose (2018), Bolet (2021)
6	2024-11-13	08:30-10:00	Do people change places or do places change people?	Maxwell (2019), Brown (2022), Lueders (2024b), Consiglio and Kurer (2024)
7	2024-11-20	08:30-10:00	Local economies: markets, trade exposure, and shocks	Broz, Frieden, and Weymouth (2021), Colantone and Stanig (2018a), Colantone and Stanig (2018b), Autor et al. (2020)
8	2024-11-27	08:30-10:00	Local housing markets	Ansell (2014), Ansell et al. (2022), Abou-Chadi, Cohen, and Kurer (n.d.), Dancygier and Wiedemann (n.d.)
9	2024-12-04	08:30-10:00	Ethnic exposure and ethnic competition	Hangartner et al. (2019), Bolet (2020), Evans and Ivaldi (2021), Dancygier et al. (2022)
10	2024-12-11	08:30-10:00	The local context of radical right support	Arzheimer and Bernemann (2023), Arzheimer et al. (2024), Harteveld et al. (2022)
11	2024-12-18	08:30-10:00	Shrinking places: emigration and the left-behind	Dancygier et al. (2024), Patana (2022), Sánchez-García, Rodon, and Delgado-García (2024)
12	2025-01-08	08:30-10:00	Policy reactions: how and why	Chou and Dancygier (2021), Wiedemann (2024)
13	2025-01-15	08:30-10:00	Policy effects: place-based policies	Lang, Redeker, and Bischof (2023), Gold and Lehr (2024)
14	2025-01-22	08:30-10:00	Presentations I	
15	2025-01-29	08:30-10:00	Presentations II + Wrap-Up	

Reading assignment

Per your vote on October 16, we will randomly assign *primary* and *secondary* readings in Weeks 4-13. You are expected to carefully read your assigned primary reading and be prepared to answer your peers' questions about the reading in class. You should skim your secondary readings such that you know the questions, arguments, and main findings.

Expectations and assessment

Grading (*Prüfungsleistung*)

Your *Prüfungsleistung* is a **final paper** (research paper or research proposal). More information on the commonalities and differences between the two formats and guidance on how to tackle them will be provided in class. The most important points to consider are:

- Both research papers and research proposals widely share the structure of an empirical-analytical article (introduction, theoretical argument, empirical strategy, results, summary and discussion). Exception: Research proposals do not contain empirical results. Instead, they should contain an extended discussion of the feasibility, potentials, and challenges of the proposed empirical strategy.
- Both research papers and research proposals must develop *explanatory* theoretical arguments. Toward this end, they should deductively theorize *one* theoretical mechanism directed at explaining an outcome, briefly motivate and situating the corresponding argument against the background of the existing literature, and derive clear and testable theoretical expectations (hypotheses).
- Submissions can be halfway between the two formats: You can conduct, present, and discuss preliminary empirical research (as in a research paper) and describe and discuss additional analyses that you would conduct if you had more time (as in a research proposal).

Submissions must be prepared individually – no collaboration allowed. Your submission should be between **4,000** and **5,000** words in length, excluding title page, references, and appendices.

If you do not wish to submit a final paper, you will not receive a numeric grade but a simple pass/fail assessment. You will pass this class if you complete the participation requirements listed below.

Participation requirements (*Studienleistungen*)

1. **Attendance and active participation:** Active participation is central to this class. You are expected to come to class prepared. I encourage you to use the *Discussion Forum* on the Learnweb to post questions of any sort (clarification or discussion) in advance of the weekly sessions.
2. **Discussion memo:** Each participant is required to prepare and submit **one written discussion memo** of 400-500 words, featuring (a) a short summary of the most important points, (b) a critique, and (c) a set of clarification and/or discussion questions on the week's reading(s).
3. **Research pitches/peer reviews and presentations/discussions:**
 1. *For students submitting a Prüfungsleistung:* En route to your final paper (research paper/proposal), you must submit a **short research pitch** of 450-600 words, sketching your research question, theoretical argument, initial hypotheses, as well as proposed research design, data, and methods. Following initial feedback, you will **present** your research pitch in class.
 2. *For students not submitting a Prüfungsleistung:* I will send you 1-2 research pitches authored by your peers. You should write a **short peer review**, highlighting the strengths of the pitch, constructively engaging with potential problems, and making suggestions for improvement. You will then act as **discussant** after your peers presented their research in class.

Formal requirements for all written assignments

- Please make sure your submission fully complies with Daniel Bischof's [formatting guide](#) at the Chair of Comparative Politics [DE/EN].

- Please use this [Word template](#) for your submissions.

Submissions

Please upload all written assignments via the respective submission modules on the [Learnweb](#).

Deadlines

Date	Day	Time	Assignment	Subgroup
Choose a week	Mon	9:00 AM	Discussion memo	all
2024-12-20	Fri	9:00 AM	Research pitch	graded
2025-01-10	Fri	9:00 AM	Peer review	ungraded
2025-01-22	Wed	8:30 AM	Presentation slots 1	all
2025-01-29	Wed	8:30 AM	Presentation slots 2	all
Mid-to-late February	Exact date tbd.	9:00 AM	Final paper	graded

Academic integrity

Plagiarism

Students must comply with the [university policy on academic integrity](#). You are expected to be familiar with the policy and must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic misconduct.

Responsible use of AI

Artificial intelligence productivity tools, including large language models (LLMs) and generative pre-trained transformers (GPTs), are permeating our daily work routines and will continue to do so in the future. While I encourage you to use these tools frequently and extensively, it is important that you also do so responsibly:

- Adhere to **best practice advice** as, for instance, formulated in this talk by [Olga Kononykhina](#) ([slides](#), [video recording](#))
- **Be transparent:** When using AI productivity tools for generating knowledge, code, or text, you must list the full prompts and answers in a separate appendix. Failure to fully disclose the use of AI for these purposes will be penalized. You do not need to list the use of AI for language editing, grammar corrections, or code debugging.
- Remember: **You own the contents of your submissions, including any mistakes contained therein.** If your submission includes AI-generated contents that contain factually incorrect statements, misattributions of others' work, or plagiarism, these will not be treated as shortcomings of the AI but as your own.

Detailed course plan

October 09, 2024 (08:30-10:00): Orientation week

No class.

October 16, 2024 (08:30-10:00): Introduction

Introductory session. We will get to know each other, discuss the course, collectively vote on aspects of the syllabus, and clarify any questions you may have.

October 23, 2024 (08:30-10:00): Subnational inequalities in postindustrial countries

Main readings:

- Stephanie J. Rickard (2020). "Economic Geography, Politics, and Policy". In: *Annual Review of Political Science* 23, pp. 187–202.
- L Bauluz et al. (2023). "Spatial Wage Inequality in North America and Western Europe: Changes Between and Within Local Labour Markets 1975-2019". In: *Kiel Working Paper* 2253.

Further reading:

- OECD (2023). *OECD Regional Outlook 2023: The Longstanding Geography of Inequalities*.

October 30, 2024 (08:30-10:00): Residential sorting and political polarization

Main readings:

- Jonathan Mummolo and Clayton Nall (2017). "Why partisans do not sort: The constraints on political segregation". In: *Journal of Politics* 79.1, pp. 45–59.
- Gregory J. Martin and Steven W. Webster (2020). "Does residential sorting explain geographic polarization?" In: *Political Science Research and Methods* 8.2, pp. 215–231.
- Hans Lueders (2024b). "Rooted at Home: How Domestic Migration Separates Voters into National and Local Electorates". In: *SSRN Electronic Journal*.

Further reading:

- Melanie Arntz, Eduard Brüll, and Cäcilia Lipowski (2023). "Do Preferences for Urban Amenities Really Differ by Skill?" In: *Journal of Economic Geography* 23.3, pp. 541–576.

November 05, 2024 (20:15-21:45): Places in decline: status threat

It's US Election Night! Instead of our Wednesday morning class, we meet Tuesday night to talk about left-behind places in the US and Europe. After class, all participants are invited to join for the IfPol's US Election Night, which commences at 22:30.

Main readings:

- Katherine J. Cramer (2016). *The politics of resentment. Rural consciousness in Wisconsin and the rise of Scott Walker*. Chicago, London: University of Chicago Press.
- Andrés Rodríguez-Pose (2018). "The revenge of the places that don't matter (and what to do about it)". In: *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society* 11.1, pp. 189–209.
- Diane Bolet (2021). *Drinking Alone: Local Socio-Cultural Degradation and Radical Right Support—The Case of British Pub Closures*. Vol. 54. 9, pp. 1653–1692.

Further reading:

- Anne Kathrin Stroppe (2023). "Left behind in a public services wasteland? On the accessibility of public services and political trust". In: *Political Geography* 105. November 2022, p. 102905.

November 13, 2024 (08:30-10:00): Do people change places or do places change people?

Main readings:

- Rahsaan Maxwell (2019). "Cosmopolitan Immigration Attitudes in Large European Cities: Contextual or Compositional Effects?" In: *American Political Science Review*.
- Jacob R Brown (2022). "Partisan Conversion Through Neighborhood Influence: How Voters Adopt the Partisanship of their Neighbors and Reinforce Geographic Polarization". In.
- Hans Lueders (2024a). "(When) Does Voters' Political Behavior Change After a Move?" In: *Working Paper*.
- Valentina Consiglio and Thomas Kurer (2024). "Seeking Opportunity in the Knowledge Economy: Moving Places, Moving Politics?" In: *Equality of Opportunity Research Series* 54.

Further reading:

- Rahsaan Maxwell (2020). "Geographic divides and cosmopolitanism: Evidence from Switzerland". In: *Comparative Political Studies* 53.13, pp. 2061–2090.

November 20, 2024 (08:30-10:00): Local economies: markets, trade exposure, and shocks

Main readings:

- J. Lawrence Broz, Jeffry Frieden, and Stephen Weymouth (2021). "Populism in Place: The Economic Geography of the Globalization Backlash". In: *International Organization* 75.2, pp. 464–494.
- Italo Colantone and Piero Stanig (2018a). "Global Competition and Brexit". In: *American Political Science Review* 112.2, pp. 201–218.
- Italo Colantone and Piero Stanig (2018b). "The Trade Origins of Economic Nationalism: Import Competition and Voting Behavior in Western Europe". In: *American Journal of Political Science* 62.4, pp. 936–953.
- David Autor et al. (2020). "Importing political polarization? The electoral consequences of rising trade exposure". In: *American Economic Review* 110.10, pp. 3139–3183.

Further reading:

- David H. Autor, David Dorn, and Gordon H. Hanson (2013). "The China syndrome: Local labor market effects of import competition in the United States". In: *American Economic Review* 103.6, pp. 2121–2168.

November 27, 2024 (08:30-10:00): Local housing markets

Main readings:

- Ben Ansell (2014). "The political economy of ownership: Housing markets and the welfare state". In: *American Political Science Review* 108.2, pp. 383–402.
- Ben Ansell et al. (2022). "Sheltering Populists? House Prices and the Support for Populist Parties". In: *The Journal of Politics* 84.3, pp. 1420–1436.
- Tarik Abou-Chadi, Denis Cohen, and Thomas Kurer (n.d.). "Rental market risk and radical right support". In: *Comparative Political Studies* ().
- Rafaela Dancygier and Andreas Wiedemann (n.d.). "The Financialization of Housing and Its Political Consequences". In: *American Journal of Political Science* ().

Further reading:

- Ben Ansell (2019). "The Politics of Housing". In: *Annual Review of Political Science* 22, pp. 165–185.
- Denis Cohen (2023). "Preferences for rent control: Between political geography and political economy". In: *Politische Vierteljahresschrift* 64, pp. 183–205.
- Alexander Held and Pauliina Patana (2023). "Rents, Refugees, and the Populist Radical Right". In: *Research and Politics* 10.2, pp. 1–9.

December 04, 2024 (08:30-10:00): Ethnic exposure and ethnic competition

Main readings:

- Dominik Hangartner et al. (2019). "Does exposure to the refugee crisis make natives more hostile?" In: *American Political Science Review* 113.2, pp. 442–455.
- Diane Bolet (2020). "Local labour market competition and radical right voting: Evidence from France". In: *European Journal of Political Research* 59.4, pp. 817–841.
- Jocelyn Evans and Gilles Ivaldi (2021). "Contextual Effects of Immigrant Presence on Populist Radical Right Support: Testing the "Halo Effect" on Front National Voting in France". In: *Comparative Political Studies* 54.5, pp. 823–854.
- Rafaela Dancygier, Naoki Egami, et al. (2022). "Hate Crimes and Gender Imbalances: Fears over Mate Competition and Violence against Refugees". In: *American Journal of Political Science* 66.2, pp. 501–515.

December 11, 2024 (08:30-10:00): The local context of radical right support

Main readings:

- Kai Arzheimer and Theresa Bernemann (2023). "'Place' does matter for populist radical right sentiment, but how? Evidence from Germany". In: *European Political Science Review*, pp. 167–186.
- Kai Arzheimer, Carl Berning, et al. (2024). "How Local Context Affects Populist Radical Right Support: A Cross-National Investigation Into Mediated and Moderated Relationships". In: *British Journal of Political Science*.
- Eelco Harteveld et al. (2022). "Multiple roots of the populist radical right: Support for the Dutch PVV in cities and the countryside". In: *European Journal of Political Research* 61.2, pp. 440–461.

Further reading:

- Jennifer Fitzgerald (2018). *Close to Home. Local Ties and Voting Radical Right in Europe*. Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, New Delhi, Singapore: Cambridge University Press.

December 18, 2024 (08:30-10:00): Shrinking places: emigration and the left-behind

Main readings:

- Rafaela Dancygier, Sirus H. Dehdari, et al. (2024). "Emigration and radical right populism". In: *American Journal of Political Science*.
- Pauliina Patana (2022). "Residential Constraints and the Political Geography of the Populist Radical Right: Evidence from France". In: *Perspectives on Politics* 20.3, pp. 842–859.
- Álvaro Sánchez-García, Toni Rodon, and Maria Delgado-García (2024). "Where has everyone gone? Depopulation and voting behaviour in Spain". In: *European Journal of Political Research*, pp. 1–24.

January 08, 2025 (08:30-10:00): Policy reactions: how and why

Main readings:

- Winston Chou and Rafaela Dancygier (2021). “Why Parties Displace Their Voters: Gentrification, Coalitional Change, and the Demise of Public Housing”. In: *American Political Science Review* 115.2, pp. 429–449.
- Andreas Wiedemann (2024). “Redistributive Politics under Spatial Inequality”. In: *Journal of Politics* 86.3, pp. 1013–1030.

January 15, 2025 (08:30-10:00): Policy effects: place-based policies

Main readings:

- Valentin Lang, Nils Redeker, and Daniel Bischof (2023). “Place-based Policies and Inequality Within Regions”. In: *OSF Reprints*.
- Robert Gold and Jakob Lehr (2024). “Paying Off Populism: How Regional Policies Affect Voting Behavior”. In: *Kiel Working Paper* 2266.

Further reading:

- Valentin Lang (2024). “The Distributional Effects of Place-Based Policies in the EU”. in: *ZEW Discussion Paper* 06/2024.24-039.
- David Neumark and Helen Simpson (2015). *Place-Based Policies*. 1st ed. Vol. 5. Elsevier B.V., pp. 1197–1287.

January 22, 2025 (08:30-10:00): Presentations I

Student presentations (first batch): Those writing final papers will present their research pitches and receive comments from an assigned discussant and their peers.

January 29, 2025 (08:30-10:00): Presentations II + Wrap-Up

Student presentations (second batch). Wrap-up: We will review what you have learned, collect feedback, and discuss the course evaluations.

References

- Abou-Chadi, Tarik, Denis Cohen, and Thomas Kurer (n.d.). "Rental market risk and radical right support". In: *Comparative Political Studies* ().
- Ansell, Ben (2014). "The political economy of ownership: Housing markets and the welfare state". In: *American Political Science Review* 108.2, pp. 383–402.
- (2019). "The Politics of Housing". In: *Annual Review of Political Science* 22, pp. 165–185.
- Ansell, Ben et al. (2022). "Sheltering Populists? House Prices and the Support for Populist Parties". In: *The Journal of Politics* 84.3, pp. 1420–1436.
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- Arzheimer, Kai, Carl Berning, et al. (2024). "How Local Context Affects Populist Radical Right Support: A Cross-National Investigation Into Mediated and Moderated Relationships". In: *British Journal of Political Science*.
- Autor, David et al. (2020). "Importing political polarization? The electoral consequences of rising trade exposure". In: *American Economic Review* 110.10, pp. 3139–3183.
- Autor, David H., David Dorn, and Gordon H. Hanson (2013). "The China syndrome: Local labor market effects of import competition in the United States". In: *American Economic Review* 103.6, pp. 2121–2168.
- Bauluz, L et al. (2023). "Spatial Wage Inequality in North America and Western Europe: Changes Between and Within Local Labour Markets 1975-2019". In: *Kiel Working Paper* 2253.
- Bolet, Diane (2020). "Local labour market competition and radical right voting: Evidence from France". In: *European Journal of Political Research* 59.4, pp. 817–841.
- (2021). *Drinking Alone: Local Socio-Cultural Degradation and Radical Right Support—The Case of British Pub Closures*. Vol. 54. 9, pp. 1653–1692.
- Brown, Jacob R (2022). "Partisan Conversion Through Neighborhood Influence: How Voters Adopt the Partisanship of their Neighbors and Reinforce Geographic Polarization". In: .
- Broz, J. Lawrence, Jeffry Frieden, and Stephen Weymouth (2021). "Populism in Place: The Economic Geography of the Globalization Backlash". In: *International Organization* 75.2, pp. 464–494.
- Chou, Winston and Rafaela Dancygier (2021). "Why Parties Displace Their Voters: Gentrification, Coalitional Change, and the Demise of Public Housing". In: *American Political Science Review* 115.2, pp. 429–449.
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- Colantone, Italo and Piero Stanig (2018a). "Global Competition and Brexit". In: *American Political Science Review* 112.2, pp. 201–218.
- (2018b). "The Trade Origins of Economic Nationalism: Import Competition and Voting Behavior in Western Europe". In: *American Journal of Political Science* 62.4, pp. 936–953.
- Consiglio, Valentina and Thomas Kurer (2024). "Seeking Opportunity in the Knowledge Economy: Moving Places, Moving Politics?" In: *Equality of Opportunity Research Series* 54.
- Cramer, Katherine J. (2016). *The politics of resentment. Rural consciousness in Wisconsin and the rise of Scott Walker*. Chicago, London: University of Chicago Press.
- Dancygier, Rafaela, Sirus H. Dehdari, et al. (2024). "Emigration and radical right populism". In: *American Journal of Political Science*.
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- Dancygier, Rafaela and Andreas Wiedemann (n.d.). "The Financialization of Housing and Its Political Consequences". In: *American Journal of Political Science* ().
- Evans, Jocelyn and Gilles Ivaldi (2021). "Contextual Effects of Immigrant Presence on Populist Radical Right Support: Testing the "Halo Effect" on Front National Voting in France". In: *Comparative Political Studies* 54.5, pp. 823–854.
- Fitzgerald, Jennifer (2018). *Close to Home. Local Ties and Voting Radical Right in Europe*. Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, New Delhi, Singapore: Cambridge University Press.
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- Harteveld, Eelco et al. (2022). "Multiple roots of the populist radical right: Support for the Dutch PVV in cities and the countryside". In: *European Journal of Political Research* 61.2, pp. 440–461.
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- Lang, Valentin (2024). "The Distributional Effects of Place-Based Policies in the EU". In: *ZEW Discussion Paper* 06/2024.24-039.
- Lang, Valentin, Nils Redeker, and Daniel Bischof (2023). "Place-based Policies and Inequality Within Regions". In: *OSF Reprints*.
- Lueders, Hans (2024a). "(When) Does Voters' Political Behavior Change After a Move?" In: *Working Paper*.
- (2024b). "Rooted at Home: How Domestic Migration Separates Voters into National and Local Electorates". In: *SSRN Electronic Journal*.
- Martin, Gregory J. and Steven W. Webster (2020). "Does residential sorting explain geographic polarization?" In: *Political Science Research and Methods* 8.2, pp. 215–231.
- Maxwell, Rahsaan (2019). "Cosmopolitan Immigration Attitudes in Large European Cities: Contextual or Compositional Effects?" In: *American Political Science Review*.
- (2020). "Geographic divides and cosmopolitanism: Evidence from Switzerland". In: *Comparative Political Studies* 53.13, pp. 2061–2090.
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- Rickard, Stephanie J. (2020). "Economic Geography, Politics, and Policy". In: *Annual Review of Political Science* 23, pp. 187–202.
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- Stroppe, Anne Kathrin (2023). "Left behind in a public services wasteland? On the accessibility of public services and political trust". In: *Political Geography* 105. November 2022, p. 102905.
- Wiedemann, Andreas (2024). "Redistributive Politics under Spatial Inequality". In: *Journal of Politics* 86.3, pp. 1013–1030.