Elena **Cossu**

SENIOR EVALUATION RESEARCHER AND POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCHER

Paris, France

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I am an experienced political data analyst with a PhD in quantitative political economy. I am currently a postdoctoral researcher at SciencesPo Paris and as part of the the AuthLIB project. In my work, I use Natural Language Processing to map and predict political configurations of parties in Europe using text data. I am also a Senior Policy Evaluation researcher for the National Centre for Social Research, where I specialise in using quasi-experiments or experiments using a wide range of data sources to measure the effect of policies. My research focuses on using machine learning, experiments, and quasi-experiments to assess causality and predict outcomes in social and political settings. I am passionate about everything that is at the intersection of data science and economics, and I have a vast experience in quantitative social research.

Employment

SciencesPo Paris
Paris, France

POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCHER — *Apr. 2023 - Present*

- Postdoctoral researcher for the project "Neo-authoritarianisms in Europe and the liberal democratic response" (AUTHLIB) of the Horizon Europe and funded by the European Commission.
- Using Natural Language Processing (NLP) to map political ideological configurations and dimensions across Europe.
- Writing high- quality publications, drafting and submission of research reports to the European Commission, and organising social impact activities in co-creation with civil society and institutions in Hungary and at the European level.

National Centre for Social Research
London, United Kingdom

SENIOR EVALUATION RESEARCHER — *Nov. 2021 - Present (part-time)*

- Design and implementation of experiments (Randomised Control Trials) and Quasi-Experiments (e.g. Synthetic Control, Propensity Score Matching, etc.) to measure the effect of UK policies on certain segments of the population.
- Clients include the UK Ministry of Justice, The National Lottery Community Fund, the UK Department for Education, the Education Endowment Foundation, the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC), and others.

Corvinus University of Budapest
Budapest, Hungary

ASSISTANT LECTURER — *Sep. 2021 - Jan. 2022*

- Asssistant teacher for Master level courses.

European Commission MSCA
Budapest and London

EARLY STAGE RESEARCHER — *Aug. 2018 - Sep. 2021*

- Researcher as part of the Horizon 2020 European Commission project FATIGUE, a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Innovative Training Network (MSCA)
- Assist with the analysis and the writing of reports and articles for long-term research projects
- Duty stations for the project: (1) the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), Office of the Chief Economist, Transition Impact and Global Economics Team; (2) the Slavonic School of Eastern European Studies (UCL SSEES); (3) Corvinus University of Budapest Institute of World Economy.

Education

Corvinus University of Budapest
Budapest, Hungary

PHD IN ECONOMICS — *Aug. 2018 - Oct. 2023*

- Dissertation title: 'Essays on Conceptualising Policies Linked to Populist Rhetoric in Europe and Measuring their Effects in Hungary'
- Graduate affiliate student at University College London (UCL) during the 2019-2020 academic year
- PhD sponsored by the European Commission Marie Skłodowska-Curie Innovative Training Network (MSCA) to be able to work for the FATIGUE research project

Bocconi University and SciencesPo Paris
Milan and Paris

DOUBLE MASTER'S DEGREE IN INTERNATIONAL ECONOMICS AND MANAGEMENT — *Aug. 2014 - Apr. 2017*

- MA in International Public Management with a specialisation in Global Risks from SciencesPo Paris School of International Affairs (PSIA), with a final dissertation called «Fighting terrorism and fundamental rights»
- MSc in Economics and Management of International and Public Affairs from Bocconi University, with a dissertation called «The Parisian transport system: a best practice of urban mobility»

Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore
Milan, Italy

BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN POLITICAL SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS — *Sep. 2011 - Oct. 2014*

- Final dissertation: «The Hungarian Transition from Planned to Capitalist Economy»
- Erasmus at Pázmány Péter Catholic University in Budapest during the 2013/2014 academic year

Teaching experience

2018 S2   Development Economics Seminar (Corvinus University of Budapest)

2021 S1   Global Economic Trends Seminar (Corvinus University of Budapest)

2021 S1   International Organizations and Economic Diplomacy Seminar (Corvinus University of Budapest)

2022 S2   Impact Evaluation Quasi-Experimental Design (NatCen Course for the Office for National Statistics (ONS))

2023 S2   Impact Evaluation Quasi-Experimental Design (NatCen Course for the Office for National Statistics (ONS))

2023 S2   Democracy in Europe Seminar (SciencesPo Paris)

2023 S2   Text as Quantitative Data PhD Seminar (SciencesPo Paris)

Research output

Peer-Reviewed Publications

2023   **Clustering and Analysing Relevant Policy Dimensions of Populist, Left-Wing, Centrist, and Right-Wing Parties across Europe**
Central European Journal of Public Policy, 17(1), 41–54
`https://doi.org/10.2478/cejpp-2023-0004`

2023   **The Economic Effect Of Populist Rhetoric In Hungary**
Online Journal of Modelling the New Europe, 41, 105–138
`https://doi.org/10.24193/OJMNE.2023.41.05`

2021   **Understanding Contemporary Populism Through the Latin American Experience**
AARMS – Academic and Applied Research in Military and Public Management Science, 20(3), Article 3
`https://doi.org/10.32565/aarms.2021.3.4`

2019   **The Gravity Model for Trade Theory**
Köz-gazdaság, 14(3), Article 3
`https://doi.org/10.14267/RETP2019.03.25`

Under Peer-Review

2024   **Application of Natural Language Processing to the Electoral Manifestos of Parties Characterised by Populist Rhetoric in Central and Eastern Europe**
East European Journal of Society and Politics
`Forthcoming`

Reports

2023   **Literature Review on How to Measure Illiberalism Using Text Data**
Authlib Project and SciencesPo Paris
`https://www.authlib.eu/literature-review-how-to-measure-illiberalism-using-text-data/`

2023   **Yorkshire and Humber COVID-19 campaign pilot**
UK Health Security Agency
`https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/652fe1fc92895c000ddcb9c3/Yorkshire-and-Humber-COVID-19-campaign-pilot-evaluation-report.pdf`

2023   **LNK Educate: Feasibility and pilot study**
Youth Endowement Foundation
`https://youthendowmentfund.org.uk/funding/evaluations/lnk-educate/`

Other Publications

2024	**Populists in Europe: A Political Group with Its Distinct Policy Preferences?**
	AuthLIB Blog
	`https://www.authlib.eu/`
	`populists-in-europe-a-political-group-with-its-distinct-policy-preferences/`

2022	**A Small Country Trying To Go Big, A Big Union Trying Not To Go Small**
	Australian Institute of International Affairs
	`https://www.internationalaffairs.org.au/australianoutlook/`
	`a-small-country-trying-to-go-big-a-big-union-trying-not-to-go-small/`

2021	**Chinese vaccine diplomacy in Latin America could change the international order**
	ECPR The Loop
	`https://theloop.ecpr.eu/`
	`chinese-vaccine-diplomacy-in-latin-america-could-change-the-international-order/`

2020	**Book Review: The Glass Half-Empty: Debunking the Myth of Progress in the Twenty-First Century by Rodrigo Aguilera**
	LSE Review of Books
	`https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/lsereviewofbooks/2020/10/27/`
	`book-review-the-glass-half-empty-debunking-the-myth-of-progress-in-the-twenty-first-century-by-rodrigo-agui`

Presentations

2022	**ECPR General Conference** Assessing the economic performance of a government characterised by populist rhetoric in Hungary: A synthetic control approach
2021	**The Doctoral Student Association of the University of Pécs Conference (PTE DOK)** Macroeconomics and Politics in Hungary: How an Illiberal Government Characterised by Populist Rhetoric Deals With its Public Budget
2021	**inGRID Workshop** Macroeconomics, Policies, and CEE: a Machine Learning Approach to Social Investment and Social Protection Policies
2020	**ASEEES 52nd Annual Convention** A Review of Quasi-Experimental and Predictive Methodologies in Relation to Measuring Populism and its Outcomes
2020	**Science is Wonderful! European Commission Outreach Event** FATIGUE Project Workshop
2019	**WINIR Symposium 2019** Economic populism, fiscal policies and budget deficits: the sustainability implications for Central and Eastern Europe
2019	**RSA Winter Conference** Present and future populist policies in Europe: the Cases of Hungary and Bulgaria
2019	**UACES 49th Annual Conference** The New Populist Policies Prescriptions

Relevant Skills

Data Analysis

- Natural Language Processing (NLP)
- BERT Modelling
- Quantitative Sentiment Analysis
- Data Scraping Techniques
- Cluster Analysis
- Imputation Techniques (K+means and regression analysis inputting)
- Randomized Control Trials (RCTs)
- Matching Methods (including Mahalanobis matching and Kernel matching)
- Propensity Score Weighting (PSW)
- Synthetic Control Methods (SCM)

Programming Languages:

- R
- Python
- SQL
- command-line programming
- Git
- STATA
- SPSS
- HTML

- LaTeX

Natural Languages:

  - English
  - French
  - Italian
  - Spanish
  - Hungarian (basic)

Awards & Achievements

Awards

2023   ACRI Young Investigator Prize   *ECOMOD 2021*

Certifications

2023   **Google** Data Analytics Professional Certificate
          `https://www.coursera.org/account/accomplishments/verify/XZCBSTWMZ3W4`

2022   **Office for National Statistics** Accredited Researcher

2022   **DataCamp** Data Scientist with R Certificate `https://www.datacamp.com/`
          `statement-of-accomplishment/track/6fda0ea43ab0dfbfd376032fd6e1072ca796a097`

2019   **Centre for Microdata Methods and Practice** Policy Evaluation Methods