

# Kristen E. Kao

## CURRICULUM VITAE

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### Education

**Ph.D., Political Science.** University of California, Los Angeles. December 2015.

*Committee:* Barbara Geddes, Daniel Posner, Ellen Lust, Leonard Binder, and Rogers Brubaker.  
*Dissertation:* *Electoral Institutions, Ethnicity, and Clientelism: Authoritarianism in Jordan.*

**M.A. Political Science,** University of California, Los Angeles. 2010.

**B.A. Political Science & History.** University of California, San Diego. 2005.  
*Cum Laude* and High Honors.

**University of California Education Abroad Program in France.** 2003-2004.

Le Mirail Université de Toulouse & L'Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Toulouse

### Positions & Affiliations

**2025-Present, Associate Professor (Senior Lektor),** Political Science Department, University of Gothenburg, Sweden (*Maternity leave for the equivalent of 8 months October 2022-October 2023*)

**2025-Present, Affiliated Scholar,** [Global Scholars Network on Identity and Conflict](#) (GSNIC) at Harvard University and Queens University Belfast

**2026-Present, Co-Principal Investigator,** [Bridging Gaps in Mental Health Care](#), The World Bank.

**2025-Present, Member,** [Evidence in Governance and Politics](#) (EGAP) Academic Member.

**2025-Present, Invited Researcher,** Jamal Abdul Latif Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL)

**2021-2024, Research Fellow/Docent,** Political Science Department, University of Gothenburg, Sweden

**2015-2020, Post-Doc/Senior Research Fellow,** Program on Governance and Local Development, University of Gothenburg, Sweden

**Spring, 2014 Visiting Research Fellow,** Department of Political Science, Yale University

**2012 Research Assistant,** The Center for Strategic Studies, University of Jordan

### Peer-Reviewed Publications

Kao, Kristen, Kristin Fabbe, and Michael Bang Petersen. **Revise and Resubmit.** *Journal of Peace Research*. "The Perils of Disproportionate Punishment: Injustice Gaps, Reconciliation, and Revenge."

Kao, Kristen, Kristin Fabbe, and Michael Bang Petersen. 2026. [\*The Irredeemability of the Past: Psychological Determinants of Reconciliation and Revenge in Post-Conflict settings.\*](#) *Political Psychology*, 47, e70142. (Open-Access).

Kristen Kao and Ellen Lust. 2025. [\*Decentralization, Local Governance, and Inequality in the Middle East and North Africa.\*](#) Edited volume. University of Michigan Press. (Open-Access).

Revkin, Mara, and Kristen Kao. 2024. [\*“No Peace Without Punishment? Reintegrating Islamic State Collaborators in Iraq.”\*](#) *The American Journal of Comparative Law*.

Baldwin, Kate, Kristen Kao, and Ellen Lust. 2023. [\*“Is Authority Fungible? Legitimacy, Domain Congruence, and the Limits of Power in Africa.”\*](#) *American Journal of Political Science*. (Open-Access).

Kao, Kristen, Ellen Lust, Marwa Shalaby, and Chagai Weiss. 2023. [\*“Female Representation and Legitimacy: Evidence from a Harmonized Experiment in Jordan, Morocco, and Tunisia.”\*](#) *American Political Science Review*, 1-9. (Open-Access).

Kao, Kristen and Mara Revkin. 2023. [\*“Retribution or Reconciliation? Attitudes Towards Rebel Collaborators After Conflict.”\*](#) *American Journal of Political Science*, 67(2), 358-373. **Winner of the Franklin L. Burdette/Pi Sigma Alpha Best Paper Award for APSA 2019.** (Open-Access).

Ferree, Karen, Boniface Dulani, Adam S. Harris, Kristen Kao, Ellen Lust, Cecilia Ahsan Jansson, and Erica Metheney. 2023. [\*“Symptoms and Stereotypes: Perceptions and Responses to Covid-19 in Malawi and Zambia.”\*](#) *Comparative Political Studies*, 56 (12), 1795-1952.

Kao, Kristen. 2022. [\*“Electoral Institutions and Social-Identity Based Clientelism in Jordan.”\*](#) *Political Research Quarterly*, 76 (3), 1235-1248. (Open-Access).

Kao, Kristen, Ellen Lust and Lise Rakner. 2022. [\*“Vote-Buying, Anti-Corruption Campaigns, and Identity in African Elections.”\*](#) *World Development*, 160:106064. (Open-Access).

Boniface Dulani, Adam Harris, Ellen Lust, Karen Ferree, Kristen Kao, Cecilia Ahsan Jansson and Erica Ann Metheney. 2021. [\*“Elections in the Time of Covid-19: The Triple Crises Around Malawi’s 2020 Presidential Elections.”\*](#) *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion & Parties*, 31(S1), 56-68.

Lust, Ellen, Kristen Kao, and Gibran Okar. 2022. [\*“Voting for Islamists Mapping the Role of Religion,”\*](#) in Melani Cammett, and Pauline Jones (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Politics in Muslim Societies*. Oxford Academic, 213-238.

Ferree, Karen, Adam Harris, Boniface Dulani, Kristen Kao, Ellen Lust, and Erica Metheney. 2021. [\*“Stigma, Trust, and Procedural Integrity: Covid-19 Testing in Malawi.”\*](#) *World Development*, 141:105351.

Kao, Kristen and Lindsay Benstead. 2021. [\*“Female Electability in the Arab World: The Advantages of Intersectionality.”\*](#) *Comparative Politics*, 53(3), 427-451.

Kao, Kristen, Ellen Lust, Boniface Dulani, Karen Ferree, Adam Harris, and Erica Metheney. 2020. [\*“The ABCs of Covid-19 Prevention in Malawi: Authority, Benefits and, Costs of Compliance.”\*](#) *World Development*, 137:105167. (Open-Access).

Benstead, Lindsay, Kristen Kao and Ellen Lust. 2020. [\*“Does it Matter What Observers Say? The Impact\*](#)

[of International Election Monitoring on Legitimacy.](#)” *Mediterranean Politics*, 27(1), 57-78.

Benstead, Lindsay, Kristen Kao, Pierre F. Landry, Ellen M. Lust, and Dhafer Malouche. 2017. “[Using Tablet Computers to Implement Surveys in Challenging Environments.](#)” *Survey Practice*, 10(2), 1-9.

## Working Papers

Gustafsson, Mathilda, Kristen Kao, and Andreas Kotsadam. “From Permanent Residents to Temporary Aliens: A Swedish Permit Policy Reform's Effects on Refugee Integration.” Presented at the Yale University Identity and Conflict Lab Conference in June 2026.

*Short summary: We exploit a transitional provision in Swedish legislation that replaced the presumptive grant of permanence with temporary residence protection to refugees. Initially, families with children were exempted from the new temporary-permit standard, provided they had applied for asylum before November 24, 2015. Because the cutoff date was imposed retrospectively, neither applicants nor caseworkers could manipulate eligibility around the threshold. Using a fuzzy regression discontinuity design among refugee parents qualifying for the transitional provision, we estimate the causal effect of receiving a temporary rather than permanent residence permit on multidimensional integration outcomes.*

Cammett, Melani, Kristen Kao, and Craig Larkin. “From Individual Suffering to Collective Claims: Identity and the Logic of Victimhood Recognition in Post-Conflict Lebanon.” APSA 2026.

*Short summary: This study finds that when Lebanese personally evaluate whether a target is a victim, two factors matter almost equally: the target's objective wartime suffering and their sectarian identity. But when they consider whose suffering others in their own community versus outgroup communities would recognize identity overwhelms all other factors.*

Kao, Kristen. 2025. “How do Injustice Gaps Affect Leader Legitimacy in Post-Conflict Settings? Quasi-Experimental Evidence from Iraq.” Presented at the University of Amsterdam 2024, APSA 2024, XCEPT at Kings College London 2024, American University of Kurdistan 2024, at University of Bergen 2024, and at the [Weatherhead Research Cluster on Identity Politics](#), Harvard University 2025. Under review. Working paper available upon request.

Akbiyik, Ahmet, Karen Ferree and Kristen Kao. “[Neighborhood Segregation Preferences Among Migrants and Host Community Members in Turkey.](#)” Social Science Research Network Working Paper Series. Presented for Evidence in Governance and Politics at NYU Washington, DC 2024, APSA 2024, and Brandeis University 2025.

Kao, Kristen. Under Review. “[Legal Pluralism and Fragmented Sovereignty: A Survey Experiment in Iraq.](#)” 2022. Quality of Government Institute Working Paper Series, 2022:5. Presented at APSA online 2024, ISA 2022, MPSA 2022, and EuroWeps 2022.

Mousa, Salma, Kristen Kao, and Trevor Incerti. Under Review. “Boosting Civic Behaviors: Experimental Evidence from a Lebanese Recycling Program.” Presented at APSA 2023, Yale University 2022 and UCLA 2023 Comparative Politics Workshops. Working paper available upon request.

Fjelde, Hanne, Kristen Kao, Megan Turnbull, and Tore Wig. “(Non-)State Authority and Legitimate Violence: A Survey Experiment on Police Versus Vigilante Legitimacy in Nigeria.” Presented at Washington University 2024 and University of Uppsala 2024. Under review. Working paper available upon request.

Camarena, Kara Ross, Nils Hägerdal, and Kristen Kao. “[Democratic Transitions and Refugee Return:](#)

[Evidence from Sweden.](#)” Pre-analysis plan submitted.

Ferree, Karen and Kristen Kao. “[Identity and Inclusion Among Migrants and Host Community Members in Turkey.](#)” Working paper available upon request.

Ferree, Karen, Kristen Kao, and Sigrid Weber. “[Discriminatory Preferences Across Immigrants and Hosts in Turkey.](#)” Pre-analysis plan. Working paper in progress.

Abu Zueiter, Iman, & Kristen Kao. “[To Punish or to Pardon? Attitudes Towards Justice and Reintegration for Europeans who Cooperated with the Islamic State.](#)” Pre-analysis plan. Working paper in progress.

Fabbe, Kristin, and Kristen Kao. “Community Factors on Post-Conflict Reconciliation and Revenge in Iraq.” Early working paper.

## Research Grants and Educational Scholarships

### *Post-PhD Funding*

Principal Investigator. Wallenberg Academy Fellow. “[Bridging Injustice Gaps: Peace Enhancement in the Aftermath of Conflict Engagement \(BIG PEACE\).](#)”

Funder: Knut and Alice Wallenberg Foundation

Amount: 1.5 million SEK per year for 5 years + 750,00 SEK university support (11.25 million SEK/~1.2 million USD).

Principal Investigator. “[Effects of Immigrant Integration Policies on Long Run Outcomes in Three Countries.](#)” With Andreas Kotsadam (Co-PI for Norway), Merlin Schaeffer (Co-PI for Denmark), Mathilda Gustafsson, Iman Abu Zueiter, and Karen Hauge. 2025-2029.

Funder: Nordforsk.

Amount: 10 million NOK (926,500 SEK).

Principal Investigator. “[Integration at the Neighborhood Level: Cross-National Comparisons of Syrian Refugee Segregation](#)” With Karen Ferree and Marcia Grimes. Surveys in Sweden and the US.2024-2028.

Funder: Vetenskapsrådet (Swedish Research Council)

Amount: 5,094,672 SEK (500,000 USD).

Principal Investigator. “The Interactive Role of Political and Social Institutions in the Integration of Refugees in Host Cities” Conference. Conference held Oct 24-25, 2022 with 22 international and national participants.

Funder: Riksbanken Jubileumsfond

Award Amount: 231,982 SEK (22,000 USD).

Principal Investigator. [From Revenge to Forgiveness: Strengthening Durable Peace in Post-Conflict Societies.](#) With Michael Bang Petersen and Kristin Fabbe. 2019-2022.

Funders: Riksbanken Jubileumsfond and the Folke Bernadotte Academy

Award Amount: 3,570,000 SEK (412,000 USD).

Principal Investigator. To Punish or To Pardon? Attitudes Towards Justice and Reintegration for Swedes who Cooperated with the Islamic State. With Peter Esaiasson and Iman Abu Zueiter. 2020-2022.

Funder: Wilhelm & Martina Lundgrens Vetenskapsfond.

Award Amount: 66,000 SEK (7,800 USD).

Co-Principal Investigator. [Refugee Migration and Cities: Social Institutions, Political Governance and](#)

Integration in Jordan, Turkey and Sweden (SIPGI). With Andrea Spehar (Co-PI), Josepha Wessels, Mine Eder, and Isabell Schierenbeck. 2019-2025.

Funder: Vetenskapsrådet (Swedish Research Council)

Award Amount: 17,700,000 SEK (2,000,000 USD).

Co-Principal Investigator. Governance and Local Development in the Middle East and North Africa. Edited Volume, 2018-2022. With Ellen Lust (Co-PI).

Funder: Hicham Alaoui Foundation.

Award Amount: 1,718,100 SEK (200,000 USD)

Co-Principal Investigator. Can partnerships between local government and civil society organizations build environmentally-conscious behaviors? Experimental evidence on recycling in Lebanon. With Salma Mousa (Co-PI). 2020-2022.

Funder: Hicham Alaoui Foundation

Award Amount: 13,500 USD from within the Hicham Alaoui Foundation funding listed above

Participating Researcher. Gendered Panels and Legislative Legitimacy in the Middle East and North Africa. With Marwa Shalaby, Ellen Lust, and Chagai Weiss. 2019-2022.

Funder: Carnegie Corporation of New York,.

Award Amount: 3,000,000 SEK (350,000 USD).

Co-Principal Investigator. “Reintegrating Rebel Collaborators After Conflict” 2018. With Mara Revkin.

Funder: The Program on Governance and Local Development

Award Amount: 26,000 SEK

Participating Researcher. Challenges and Opportunities of Urbanization in Tanzania, Zambia, and Kenya, 2017-2020. With Ellen Lust, Boniface Dulani, Adam Harris, and Pierre Landry.

Funder: FORMAS.

Award Amount: 9.1 million SEK (991,115 USD)

Participating Researcher. Social Institutions and Governance: Lessons from Sub-Saharan Africa, 2017-2021. With Ellen Lust, Adam Harris, Boniface Dulani, and Pierre Landry.

Funder: Vetenskapsrådet (Swedish Research Council)

Award Amount: 7.8 million SEK (860,000 USD).

Principal Investigator. Middle East and North Africa Workshop Research Grant, 2015-2016.

Funder: American Political Science Association

Award: Two weeks funded in Qatar and Kuwait plus \$1,000 grant for data coding

Participating Researcher. Governance and Service with Ellen Lust, Adam Harris, and Boniface Dulani, 2016.

Funder: World Bank

Award Amount: 10,969 USD

### ***PhD Funding***

Alice Belkin Memorial Scholarship, 2014.

Award Amount: 4,000 USD

Doctoral Dissertation Writing Grant, 2014-2015.

Funder: Political Science Department, University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA)

Award: Tuition of 13,000 USD plus a stipend of 19,925 USD.

Charles F. Scott Fellowship, 2013-2014.  
Award: Tuition of 13,000 USD plus stipend of 15,000 USD

Travel Research Engagement Grant, Kuwait, 2013. “Comparing Jordanian and Kuwaiti Electoral Systems.”  
Funder: Project on Middle East Political Science  
Award Amount: 3,000 USD

Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grant, 2012. “Voter Expectations of Candidates in Parliamentary Elections in the Middle East,” Jordan and Kuwait.  
Funder: The National Science Foundation (US)  
Award Amount: 11,990 USD

“Electoral Institutions in Jordan and Kuwait,” 2011-2012.  
Funder: Boren National Security and Education Fellowship  
Award Amount: Tuition of \$13,000 plus stipend of 9,383 USD

Dissertation Grant, 2010-2011.  
Funder: American Center for Oriental Research  
Award: Room and board for 6 months in Jordan plus stipend of 10,200 USD

Summer Dissertation Proposal Development Grant – Syria & Jordan, 2010. “Voting for Islamism vs Tribalism.”  
Funder: Social Science Research Council (US)  
Award Amount: 5,000 USD

Summer Research Mentorship Grant, Syria, 2009. “The Salience of Ethnic Identity in Displacement: Iraqi Refugees in Syria.”  
Funder: Political Science Department, UCLA  
Award Amount: 5,000 USD

Foreign Language & Area Studies Fellowship, Advanced Arabic/Middle East Studies, 2008-2011.  
Funder: Department of Education (US)  
Award: Tuition for 3 years of 12,500 USD plus stipend for 3 years of 15,000 USD.

Critical Language Scholarship, Intensive Intermediate Arabic Summer Program, Oman, 2008.  
Funder: United States Department of State  
Award: 3 months of room and board in Oman

Summer Fieldwork Grant, Egypt, 2008.  
Funder: Political Science Department, UCLA  
Award Amount: 4,500 USD

Fulbright Scholar Program, Egypt, 2006-2007. “Islamic Education and the Cultivation of National Identity.”  
Funder: Institute of International Education  
Award Amount: 20,000 USD

## Policy and Media Engagements

- Invited to speak on a “Gender Equality, Health Equity and Peace” panel at the Quality of Government Institute/Lancet QoG/Lancet Policy Day: Policy Pathways to Sustainable Well-Being and Peace through Investments in Institutional Quality, Health Equity and Gender Equality under Crisis and Conflict, November 25/26, 2024.
- Invited as an expert on “Peace and Justice in the Middle East” at the [Middle East Peace and Peace and Security](#) (MEPS) Forum by Wilton Park, November 18-22, 2024.
- Expert Analysis. 2016-2024. [Freedom in the World Report: Jordan](#). *Freedom House*.
- Invited to speak on a “[Rehabilitation of ISIS-affiliated families](#)” policy panel for the [XCEPT](#) project at Kings College London, October 23, 2024.
- Invited talk on “The Power of the Past: Determinants of Reconciliation and Revenge in Post-Conflict Settings.” United Nations and the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) Behavioral Science Week. June 14, 2023. *Attended by over 190 policy practitioners and academics*.
- Ghassaban, Mina, Iman Abu Zueiter, Sinamis Doughouz and Kristen Kao. 2023. “[A Multidimensional Understanding of Syrian Refugees’ Integration in Jordan, Turkey, and Sweden](#)”. Policy report for the Refugees in Cities: Social Institutions, Political Governance, and Integration Research Environment.
- “Legal Pluralism and Fragmented Sovereignty After Conflict” Uppsala University and The Folke Bernadotte Academy (Swedish Government Agency for Peace, Security and Development) “Ending Islamist Civil Wars” Workshop, Oct 8, 2021.
- Served as an “Ignite” Speaker for a Policy-Research Day with SIDA, the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Folke Bernadotte Academy (Swedish Government Agency for Peace, Security and Development), The International Crisis Group, and others, October 11, 2021.
- Blog post contributor. 2021. “[Elections Series: Iraq – Parliamentary](#).” Evidence in Governance and Politics (EGAP) blog.
- “Challenges for Democracy in Post-Conflict Settings” presentation to the Youth International Think Tank, Lindholmen Visual Arena, Gothenburg, Nov 23, 2021.
- Ahsan Jansson, Cecilia, Jennifer Bergman, Sara Bjernevall, Boniface Dulani, Karen Ferree, Lucas Fischer Madsen, Adam Harris, Marja Hinfelaar, Kristen Kao, Ellen Lust, and Erica Ann Metheny. 2021. “[Fears, Vulnerabilities, and Precautions over Covid-19: A Report on Citizens’ Experiences in Malawi and Zambia](#).” The Program on Governance and Local Development, UG.
- Kao, Kristen and Ezra Karmel. 2020. “[What do Jordan’s Election Results Mean?](#)” *The Washington Post/Monkey Cage*. Picked up and translated [locally](#), discussed on [Al Hurra News](#) Channel and on [Al Jazeera’s Facebook page](#) with thousands of likes and hundreds of comments.
- Shalaby, Marwa, Chagai Weiss, Ellen Lust, Kristen Kao, Eric Vollmann, Sylvia Bergh, Ezra Karmel, Miriam Bohn, Intissar Kherigi, and Zeynep Kadirbeyoglu. 2020. “[The Dynamics of Decentralization in the MENA: Processes, Outcomes, and Obstacles](#)”. The Program on Governance and Local Development Working Paper No. 31, University of Gothenburg.
- Kao, Kristen and Mara Revkin. 2019. “[How the Iraqi crackdown on the Islamic State may actually increase support for the Islamic State](#).” *The Washington Post*.
- Kao, Kristen, Ellen Lust, and Marc Lynch. 2017. “[Are Islamists making a comeback in the Middle East? Here’s why they succeed—and fail](#).” *The Washington Post*.
- Lust, Ellen, Kristen Kao, Adam Harris, Jens Ewald, and Peter Holmgren. 2017. “[Governance in Service Delivery in the MENA](#).” *World Bank*.
- Kao, Kristen. 2017. “[Jordan: Negotiating Political, Economic, and Social Minefields](#).” *IEMed Mediterranean Yearbook. 2017. European Institute of the Mediterranean*.
- Kao, Kristen. 2016. “[How Jordan’s Election Revealed Enduring Weaknesses in its Political System](#).” *The Washington Post*.
- Kao, Kristen. 2015. “[Do Jordan’s Tribes Challenge or Strengthen the State?](#)” *The Washington Post*.
- Kao, Kristen. 2012. “[Jordan’s Ongoing Election Law Battle](#).” *Sada*. Washington, DC: Carnegie

Endowment for International Peace.

## **Additional Academic Publications and Engagements (Selected)**

*I have attended the American Political Science Association annual conference every year since 2014, except for 2022 when I was on full maternity leave. Each year, I usually present at a minimum of two additional EU or international conferences or workshops.*

- Podcast on [Decentralization, Local Governance, and Inequality in the Middle East and North Africa](#) for the [Project on Middle East Political Science](#), April 2025.
- Invited to talk on “Attitudes Towards Accused ISIS-affiliated Displaced Persons in Iraq and Sweden” at the Society of International Affairs in Gothenburg (Utrikespolitiska föreningen i Göteborg), December 10, 2024.
- “Legal Pluralism and Fragmented Sovereignty After Conflict.” Invited talk at Exeter University, Department of Arab and Islamic Studies, March 6, 2024.
- Kao, Kristen and Mara Revkin. 2021. “[To Punish or To Pardon: Reintegrating Rebel Collaborators After Conflict in Iraq](#)”. Project on Middle East Political Science (POMEPS) Podcast.
- Kao, Kristen. 2021. “[Post-Conflict Reconciliation in Iraq](#).” Governance Uncovered Podcast. The Program on Governance and Local Development.
- Kao, Kristen and Ellen Lust. 2021. “[Do List Experiments Run as Expected? Examining Implementation Failure in Kenya, Zambia, and Malawi.](#)” *The Program on Governance and Local Development Working Paper Series*, No. 57, University of Gothenburg. Presented at the EPSA 2021.
- “Retribution or Reconciliation: Post-Conflict Attitudes Towards Enemy Collaborators” Middle East Initiative, Harvard Kennedy School, Boston, USA, December 9, 2019; The University of California, San Diego, Comparative Politics Workshop, Dec 2, 2020; The Folke Bernadotte Academy, (Swedish Government Agency for Peace, Security and Development), Stockholm, Sweden, February 6, 2020.
- Carlitz, Ruth, Adam Harris, Kristen Kao, and Ellen Lust. 2018. “[Expectations, Responsiveness, and Electoral Accountability](#)” *APSA Comparative Democratization Newsletter*.
- Harris, Adam, Kristen Kao and Ellen Lust. 2018. “[The Determinants of Local and National Vote Choice: Evidence from a Conjoint Experiment.](#)” *APSA Comparative Democratization Newsletter*, 16(1), pp. 22-26.
- Kao, Kristen, Lise Rakner and Ellen Lust. 2018. “[Money Machine: Do the Poor Demand Clientelism?](#)” *APSA Comparative Democratization Newsletter*, 16(1): 22-26. *The Program on Governance and Local Development Working Paper Series*, University of Gothenburg.
- Kao, Kristen. 2017. “[Electoral Institutions and Ethnic Clientelism.](#)” *APSA Comparative Politics Newsletter*, 17(2): 44–50.
- Kao, Kristen. 2017. “[Review: The Arab Spring: Pathways of and Reform.](#)” By Jason Brownlee, Tarek Masoud, and Andrew Reynolds. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015.” *Perspectives on Politics*, 15(4), 1180-1182.
- Baker, Lauren, Kristen Kao, Ellen Lust, and Marc Lynch. 2017. “[Islam in a Changing Middle East: Local Politics and Islamist Movements.](#)” *Project on Middle East Political Science Publication*.
- Kao, Kristen and Ellen Lust. 2017, August 23. “[Why Did the Arab Uprisings Turn Out as They Did? A Survey of the Literature.](#)” *Project on Middle East Democracy*.
- Carlitz Ruth, Adam Harris, Kristen Kao, Pierre Landry, Ellen Lust, and Lise Rakner. 2017. “[Beyond the State: Measuring Governance at the Community Level.](#)” *APSA Comparative Democratization Newsletter*, 17(2): 26–29.
- Kao, K. (2012). “[Jordan: 1920 to present: Middle East](#)”. In *Cultural Sociology of the Middle East, Asia, & Africa: An Encyclopedia* (Vol. 4, pp. I295-I295). SAGE Publications.

## Panels, Workshops, and Conferences Organized

Organized Conference: “Social Institutions, Political Governance, and Integration of Refugees Closing Conference” October 21-22, 2025. Funded by the Swedish Research Council (Vetenskapsrådet).

Participants: Alexandra Scacco (University of Hamburg), Alice Johansson (Centre on Global Migration and the Quality of Government Institute, University of Gothenburg), Andrea Spehar (Department of Political Science, University of Gothenburg), Ayat Nashwan (Department of Sociology, University of Sharjah), Bader Madi (Department of Social Work, German Jordanian University), Bernd Beber (RWI – Leibniz Institute for Economic Research), Iman Abu Zueiter (Department of Political Science, University of Gothenburg), Josepha Wessels (School of Arts and Communication (K3), Malmö University), Karen Ferree (University of California), Kristen Kao (Department of Political Science, University of Gothenburg), Kristin Fabbe (Florence School of Transnational Governance, European University Institute), Mohammed Torki Bani Salameh (Political and International Studies Department, Yarmouk University), Peter Van der Windt (New York University Abu Dhabi), Sigrid Weber (Stanford University; incoming Assistant Professor at IE University), Sura Al-Harashseh (Department of Applied Earth and Environmental Sciences, Al al-Bayt University), Tolga Sinmazdemir (Department of Politics and International Studies, SOAS, University of London; visiting fellow at the LSE European Institute), and Walid Alkahtib (Center for Strategic Studies, University of Jordan).

Organized Workshop: Book launch for *Decentralization, Local Governance, and Inequality in the Middle East and North Africa* Edited by Kristen Kao and Ellen Lust. The Governance and Local Development Institute (GLD) of Göteborg University and the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR International), April 22, 2025. Funded by the Hicham Alaoui Foundation.

Organized Conference: “The Politics of Revenge, Reconciliation, and Transitional Justice in Post-Conflict Settings,” October 16-17, 2023. Funded by Riksbanken Jubileumsfond.

Participants: Amanda Gouws (Stellenbosch University), Everett Worthington (Virginia Commonwealth University), Lesley-Ann Daniels (University of Oslo), Kristin Fabbe (European University Institute), Maria Vidali (Harvard Business School), Abbey Steele (University of Amsterdam), Megan Stewart (University of Michigan), Alexandra Hartman (UCL–London’s Global University), Narmin Butt (University of California, San Diego), Tamara Aldemasi (IIACSS), Sigrid Weber (Stanford University), Sarah Daly (Columbia University), Mara Revkin (Duke University), Kit Rickard (ETH Zurich), Amelie Godefroidt (KU Leuven), and Jeffrey Sonis (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill).

Organized Panel: “Reintegration and Reconciliation in the Wake of Islamist Armed Conflicts” APSA, September 2, 2023.

Participants: Austin Knuppe (University of Texas, Austin), Mara R. Revkin (Duke University), Sarah Z. Daly (Columbia University), Jonathan Hall (Uppsala University), and Peter Vining (Naval Postgraduate School).

Organized Panel: “The Refugee Crisis from Both Sides: Attitudes towards and of Syrian Refugees” APSA, September 2, 2023.

Participants: Rahsaan Maxwell (New York University), Rawan Arar (University of Washington),

Claire Leslie Adida (UCSD), Oliver Lang (University of Wisconsin, Madison), Adeline Lo (University of Wisconsin, Madison), Oguzhan Turkoglu (Hertie School), Ahmet Akbiyik (Harvard University), Melani Cammett (Harvard University), and Karen E. Ferree (University of California, San Diego).

Organized Conference: “The Interactive Role of Political and Social Institutions in the Integration of Refugees in Host Cities,” October 24-26, 2022. Funded by Riksbankens Jubileumsfond.

Participants: David McKenzie (World Bank), Ayhan Kaya (Istanbul Bigli University), Wendy Pearlman (Northwestern University), Ellen Lust (University of Gothenburg), Josepha Wessels (Malmö University), Ezgi Irgil (University of Gothenburg), Andrea Spehar (University of Gothenburg), Isabell Schierenbeck (University of Gothenburg), Kristin Fabbe (Harvard University), Ezgi Haliloğlu Kahraman (Çankaya University in Turkey), Walid Al-Khatib (Center for Strategic Studies, University of Jordan), Ayat Nashwan (Yarmouk University, Jordan), Fulya Memişoğlu (Yıldız Technical University, Turkey), Scott Williamson (Bocconi University, Italy), Maissam Nimer (Istanbul University), Ala Alrababah (postdoctoral fellow at ETH Zurich, Switzerland), Sule Yaylaci (postdoctoral fellow at the University of Pennsylvania, US), Ezgi Irgil (postdoctoral fellow at Utrikespolitiska Institutet), Oguzhan Türkoglu (postdoctoral researcher at the Hertie School in Berlin, Germany), and Ahmet Akbiyik (PhD Student Harvard Kennedy School in the US).

Organized Workshop: “From Revenge to Reconciliation”, August 23-26, 2022, Toulouse, France.

Participants: Michael Bang Petersen (Aarhus University, Denmark) and Kristin Fabbe (Harvard University). Funded by Riksbankens Jubileumsfond.

Organized Meeting: “SIPGI Steering Committee,” Virtual, December 13, 2021.

Participants: David McKenzie (World Bank), Ayhan Kaya (Istanbul Bigli University), Wendy Pearlman (Northwestern University), Ellen Lust (University of Gothenburg), Josepha Wessels (Malmö University), Daniel Masterson (University of California, Santa Barbara), Ezgi Irgil (University of Gothenburg), Alexander Jung (University of Gothenburg), Andrea Spehar (University of Gothenburg), Isabell Schierenbeck (University of Gothenburg), Mine Eder (Boğaziçi University, Turkey), Joseph Anderson (University of Gothenburg)

Organized Panel: “Clientelism and Formal Political Institutions in Developing Countries”, APSA, October 2 2021,

with Dominika Koter, Adam Auerbach, Horacio Larreguy, Anders Woller, Mogens K. Justesen, Jacob Gerner Hariri, Mariela Daby and Mason W. Moseley

Co-organized Panel: “Governance, Law, and Conflict: Legal Pluralism in Post-Conflict Settings,” APSA, October 2 2021.

Participants: Liana Eyres (Rice University), Mara Revkin (Georgetown University), Jennifer Murtashvili (University of Pittsburgh), Tanisha Fazal (University of Minnesota), Robert Blair (Brown University), Manuel Moscoso (Brown University), Andrés Vargas (Yale University), and Michael Weintraub (Universidad de los Andes/PRIIO)

Organized Panel: “The State and Traditional Governance Nexus: Empirical Evidence from Africa”, APSA, September 28 2021.

Participants: Kate Baldwin, Ellen Lust, Lauren MacLean, Peter Van der Windt, Martha Wilfahrt, Natalie Letsa, Soeren Henn, George Ofosu, and Sarah Brierley

Leader of “Understanding and Measuring Punishment, Revenge, and Forgiveness in Post-Conflict Settings” workshop. February 19, 22, & 23, 2021.

Participants: Kristin Fabbe (Harvard University) and Michael Bang Petersen (Aarhus University), Michael McCullough (University of California; San Diego); James Gibson (Washington University); Daniel Posner (University of California, Los Angeles); Everett Worthington (Virginia Commonwealth University); Alexandra Hartman (University College London); Muslih Irwani (Salahaddin University-Erbil, Iraq); Karin Dyrstad (Norwegian University of Science and Technology); Salma Mousa (Yale University); Fotini Christia (Massachusetts Institute of Technology); and Marsin Alshamary (Brookings Institution).

Co-Leader of “Governance and Local Development in the Middle East and North Africa” weekly seminar series with Ellen Lust. September 22 – December 15, 2021.

Presentations from: Christina Parreira (Harvard University); Steven Brooke with Monica Komer (University of Wisconsin, Madison); Aytug Sasmaz (Harvard University) with Julia Clark (World Bank) and Alexandra Blackman (NYU Abu Dhabi); Prisca Jöst (University of Gothenburg); Marika Sosnowski (University of Melbourne), Intissar Kherigi (Jasmine Foundation); Ahmed Al Mukheini (Independent Researcher – Oman); Kristen Kao (University of Gothenburg) and Salma Mousa (Yale University) and Ala’ Alrababa’h (Stanford University); Marwa Shalaby (University of Wisconsin, Madison) with Carolyn Barnett (Princeton University); Lindsay Benstead (Portland State University); Matt Buehler (University of Tennessee); Sylvia Bergh (International Institute of Social Sciences) with Francesco Colin (Erasmus University).

Co-Leader of “Dynamics of Decentralization” workshop March 2-3, 2020

Inputs from: Ellen Lust (UG), Marwa Shalaby (University of Wisconsin-Madison), Chagai Weiss (University of Wisconsin-Madison), Erik Vollman (Friedrich-Alexander-University of Erlangen-Nürnberg), Sylvia I. Bergh (Erasmus University Rotterdam), Ezra Karmel (University of Guelph), Miriam Bohn (Friedrich-Alexander-University of Erlangen-Nürnberg), Intissar Kherigi (Sciences Po Paris), and Zeynep Kadirbeyoglu (Bogazici University). The workshop resulted in this report: <https://gld.gu.se/media/1736/gld-working-paper-31.pdf>.

Organized Panel: “Power and Promotion: Local Governance in the MENA” APSA, 2020, with Steven Brooke

(University of Wisconsin-Madison), Monica Komer (University of Wisconsin-Madison), Marwa Shalaby (University of Wisconsin-Madison), Sylvia Bergh (Erasmus University of Rotterdam), Francesco Colin (Erasmus University of Rotterdam), Matthew Buehler (University of Tennessee), Freddy Gerges (University of Tennessee), Scott Williamson (Stanford University), and Allison Hartnett (Harvard University)

Co-Organized Panel: “Local governance, service provision and social cohesion: Lessons from the Arab

World” APSA, 2020, with, Alexandra Blackman, New York University – Abu Dhabi, Julia Clark, University of California, San Diego, Aytug Sasmaz, Harvard University, Prisca Jost (Mannheim University). Christiana Parreira, Stanford University, and Salma Mousa, Stanford University, Steven Brooke (University of Wisconsin-Madison), and Melani Cammett (Harvard University)

Co-Leader. Governance and Local Development in the MENA – GLD/HAF Workshop, Sarajevo, August 7-9, 2019.

Inputs from: Ellen Lust (UG), Julia Choucair-Vizoso (Arab Reform Initiative), Marwa Shalaby (University of Wisconsin-Madison), Lindsay Benstead (Portland State University), Robert Parks (Centre d'Études Maghrébines en Algérie), Laryssa Chomiak (Centre d'Études Maghrébines à Tunis), Jacob Mundy (Colgate University), Rabab El Mahdi (American University in Cairo), Prisca Jost (Mannheim University), and Intissar Kherigi (Sciences Po Paris).

Co-Organizer. Policy Dialogue Day, Gothenburg, Sweden, May 22, 2019. Co-organized with GLD, V-Dem, QoG and UCDP.

Co-Organizer. Third GLD Annual Conference: Routes to Accountability, Varberg, Sweden, May 23-24, 2019.

Co-Organizer. Second GLD Annual Conference: Layered Authority, Gothenburg, Sweden, May 31- June 1, 2018.

Co-Organizer. Policy Dialogue Day, Gothenburg, Sweden, May 30, 2018. Co-organized with GLD, V-Dem, QoG and UCDP.

Co-Organizer. Islamists and Local Politics Workshop, Brastad, Sweden, June 13-15, 2017: Project on Middle East Political Science (POMEPS) and the Program on Governance and Local Development at the University of Gothenburg.

Resultant Publication: “Islam in a Changing Middle East: Local Politics and Islamist Movements.” The Program on Governance and Local Development Working Paper, 13. Available At: <http://gld.gu.se/media/1297/islam-in-a-changing-middle-east.pdf>

Co-Organizer. First GLD Annual Conference: Seeking Solutions, Hindås, Sweden, May 11-12, 2017.

Co-Organizer. Policy Dialogue Day: From Knowledge to Action, Gothenburg, Sweden, May 10, 2017. Co-organized with V-Dem, QoG and UCDP.

Co-Organizer. Toward a Better Measurement and Understanding of Radicalization, Support for Violence, and Adherence to Political Groups, Gothenburg, Sweden, Apr. 26, 2017. Co-organized with the UN Development Program and the Oslo Governance Centre.

Co-Organizer. Measuring Radicalization, Marseilles, France, March 15-16, 2017. Co-organized with the Center for Mediterranean Integration (CMI) and the World Bank.

## Teaching

I have advised two PhD students, 18 Master's students, and 4 undergraduate students who have completed their degrees in IAGG, European Studies, Sustainable Governance, and Political Science. I am the Course Coordinator for the International Administration and Global Governance Masters program, teaching on global migration governance, international peace interventions, and social science methods. I been involved in designing, teaching, and grading for 13 courses in total across Political Science, European Studies, and International Administration and Global Governance (IAGG) programs at GU; serving on the PhD student search committee for GU's Department of Political Science in 2020 and 2026; and serving as a course evaluator of the Theoretical and Historical Perspectives on Global Governance in 2018.

## Service to the Field and Department

Served as a reviewer for: *American Political Science Review*, *American Journal of Political Science*, *Comparative Political Studies*, *Comparative Politics*, *Journal of Peace Research*, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, *Nature Communications*, *Political Research Quarterly*, *Middle East Law and Governance*, *Journal of Peace Research*, *Mediterranean Politics*, *International Labor Review*, *Justice Quarterly*, *British Journal of Middle East Studies*, and *Studies of Comparative International Development*

2016-Present Coder and Report Writer for Freedom House for Jordan

2024 Danish Institute of International Studies Search Committee, Ukrainian political economy.

2024 Reviewer of a National Science Foundation (United States) grant application.

2016-2023 Coder for the Varieties of Democracy Institute

2019-2021 Member of the Governance and Local Development (GLD) Institute Steering Committee

2020-2021 Served as Department of Political Science (GU) nominee to the university-wide Research Leader (REAL) Initiative involving 12 seminars and workshops on becoming a team leader in research over a year-long period.

2020 Served on the PhD student search committee for the University of Gothenburg Political Science Department

2018 Course Evaluator for "Theoretical and Historical Perspectives on Global Governance" University of Gothenburg International Administration and Global Governance Masters Program

2018 & 2021 Reviewer of APSA Centennial Grant Applications

2018 Served as Governance and Local Development Short-Term Grants reviewer

Served as an 80% PhD Thesis Opponent for two students at the University of Gothenburg and one student at Copenhagen Business School

2016-2019 Organizer of the Junior Researcher Working Group. Department of Political Science, University of Gothenburg.

## Datasets

- With Kate Baldwin and Ellen Lust. “Domain Congruence, and the Limits of Power in Africa,” <https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/QBKXT3>, Harvard Dataverse
- With Ellen Lust; Marwa Shalaby; Chagai Weiss, 2023, “Replication Data for: Female Representation and Legitimacy: Evidence from a Harmonized Experiment in Jordan, Morocco, and Tunisia,” <https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/5GP5SI>
- With Mara Redlich Revkin, 2021, “Replication Data for: Retribution or Reconciliation? Post-Conflict Attitudes Toward Enemy Collaborators,” <https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/0ONBF6>, Harvard Dataverse.
- With Ellen Lust; Boniface Dulani; Karen Ferree; Adam Harris; Erica Metheny. “Supplementary Data for: The ABCs of Covid-19 Prevention in Malawi: Authority, Benefits, and Costs of Compliance”, <https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/KLHFBI>, Harvard Dataverse, UNF:6:q10MgwT9A6kRUR4mw4bIrQ== [fileUNF]
- With Ellen Lust, Boniface Dulani, Adam Harris, Karen Ferree, and Erica Ann Metheny. “The First GLD-IPOR Covid-19 Survey in Malawi.” The Program on Governance and Local Development, University of Gothenburg: 2020. [www.gld.gu.se](http://www.gld.gu.se)
- With Ellen Lust, Boniface Dulani,, Adam Harris, Karen Ferree, Erica Ann Metheny, and Marja Hinfelaar. “The First GLD-Saipar Covid-19 Survey in Zambia.” The Program on Governance and Local Development, University of Gothenburg: 2020. [www.gld.gu.se](http://www.gld.gu.se)
- With Lust, Ellen; Landry, Pierre F.; Harris, Adam; Dulani, Boniface; Metheny, Erica Ann; Nickel, Sebastian; Carlitz, Ruth; Gakii Gatua, Josephine; Jöst, Prisca; Mechkova, Valeryia; Mujenja, Maxim Fison; Tengtenga, John; Grimes, Marcia; Ahsan Jansson, Cecilia; Alfonso, Witness; Nyasente, Dominique; Ben Brahim, Nesrine; Jordan, Jenna; Bauhr, Monika; Boräng, Frida; Ferree, Karen; Hartmann, Felix; and Lueders, Hans. “The Local Governance and Performance Index (LGPI) Household Survey 2019: Kenya, Malawi, Zambia.” The Program on Governance and Local Development, University of Gothenburg: 2020. [www.gld.gu.se](http://www.gld.gu.se).
- With Lust, Ellen; Harris, Adam; Landry, Pierre F.; Dulani, Boniface; Zgambo, Atusaye; Chiweza, Asiyati; Kayuni, Happy; Muriaas, Ragnhild L.; Rakner, Lise; Wang, Vibeke; Benstead, Lindsay; Hartmann, Felix; and Nickel, Sebastian. “The Local Governance Performance Index (LGPI) Malawi Truncated Dataset.” Program on Governance and Local Development, University of Gothenburg: 2016. [www.gld.gu.se](http://www.gld.gu.se).
- With Ellen Lust and Lindsay Benstead. “Jordanian Post-Election Survey (JPES).” The Transitional Governance Project: 2014.

## Languages

Modern Standard Arabic (Working research fluency), Levantine Arabic (Working research fluency), Egyptian Arabic (Intermediate skills), French (Intermediate skills), Swedish (Intermediate skills)

## Fieldwork

*November 2024 and 2025 Iraq*

One week in spent in northern Iraq to engage in high-level policy dialogues regarding the reintegration of accused Islamic State collaborators and stigmatized internally displaced persons as well as interviews

with local and development practitioners surrounding justice processes regarding these individuals.

*November 2019, May 2022, October 2025 Jordan*

Six weeks in Jordan spent interviewing Jordanians and Syrian refugees as well as local civil society organizations and researchers working on the topic of refugee integration.

*June 2023 Turkey*

Three weeks spent in Adana, Turkey running interviews with Syrian refugees and locals about identity, national belonging, and residential segregation.

*Summer 2019 Tunisia*

Three weeks spent in Tunisia learning about vote buying practices and clientelism.

*Spring 2019 Kenya and Zambia*

Five weeks conducting fieldwork on rural-urban migration, inequalities, and local governance, running trainings for a large-N survey, and programming aspects of the survey to prepare it for launch.

*Spring and Fall 2018 Jordan*

Four weeks in Jordan interviewing tribal leaders, politicians, and development practitioners to update the Freedom in the World Report and inform work on tribalism in the Middle East

*Spring 2017 Lebanon*

Three weeks in Lebanon developing contacts and collecting data as well as running interviews on local governance, refugee governance, and information on public opinion polling options in the country.

*Spring 2016 Malawi*

Three weeks spent implementing a nationwide survey (N=8,000) with GLD.

*Spring 2014 Jordan*

Six weeks spent traveling throughout Jordan spent implementing a nationwide survey (N=1,500) with the Governance and Local Development Program at Yale.

*2010-2013 Amman, Jordan and Kuwait City, Kuwait*

Dissertation fieldwork including over 150 interviews with stakeholders. Completed an intensive advanced Arabic program at the Qasid Institute over the course of 6 months.

*Summer 2010 Damascus, Syria and Amman, Jordan: Social Science Research Council*

SSRC Dissertation Proposal Development Grant “Voting for Islamism versus Tribalism.” Carried out over 50 interviews in Jordan and Syria to develop my dissertation prospectus.

*Summer 2009 Damascus, Syria: UCLA Summer Research Mentorship Fellowship*

“The Saliency of Ethnic Identity in Displacement: Iraqi Refugees in Syria.” Carried out 113 face-to-face surveys in Arabic with Iraqi refugees living in Syria and completed a quantitative, cross-country comparison of the results with World Values Surveys in other Arab countries.

*Summer 2008 Salalah, Oman: U.S. Department of State – Critical Language Scholarship*

Took an intensive Arabic program for three months.

*2006-2007 Cairo, Egypt: Fulbright Student Scholar Program in Cairo, Egypt*

Research Project: “Islamic Education and the Cultivation of Egyptian National Identity.”

Took courses in formal and colloquial Arabic for six months at Kalimat Institute in Mohandiseen, Cairo.

July 2026

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