

The Media, Movements and Politics (M²P) research group of the University of Antwerp is currently (October 2022) looking for **several full-time post-doc researchers**

The core of M²P's research agenda is the link between society and politics. Most of the research in M²P asks the question to what extent and how society and societal actors are connected to the political process or, turned upside down, to what extent and how political actors are linked to society. We empirically study the political behavior of societal and political actors, both individual and collective. Our work addresses citizens, mass media outlets, social movements, parties, and individual political elites, and especially the interaction among them. Most research in M²P employs a quantitative approach using large Belgian and comparative datasets. We mainly focus on publishing our work in international journals, but also invest in knowledge dissemination, by presenting our work to stakeholders and the public at large. Although part of a department of political science, M²P researchers publish their work also in communication and sociology journals. At present, M²P exists of roughly 30 researchers (3 professors, 6 postdocs, 20 PhD-students) that form a small academic community and team. M²P is well-connected internationally, and hosts several comparative projects.

The M²P research group is part of the department of political science (12 professors) of the University of Antwerp. This relatively young university offers academic education to more than 20,000 students and tries to conduct pioneering scientific research. With more than 6,000 employees from 100 different countries, the UA's ambition is to help building tomorrow's world every day. M²P is located in the city of Antwerp, the largest city of Flanders and in the heart of Europe, offering a culturally and historically rich, and ethnically diverse environment. You work on the inner city campus of the University of Antwerp (LN Building) in a stimulating work environment with the possibility of regular homework in mutual consultation with the project leader.

M²P looks for postdoctoral researchers to work on different funded projects (see below). For all positions, the following applies:

- Starting date: 1/01/2023 (or spring 2023)
- Competitive postdoc salary for at least 2 years. Exact salary based on your years of experience as an academic researcher. More info [here](#).
- Required is a PhD in political science, communication, sociology or related disciplines
- Strong substantive connection with one of the research projects (see below) is an asset, but 'free' applications with regard to adjacent topics will be considered
- Willingness to develop a personal research project overlapping with the funded research project is needed
- Willing to support one's project through administrative and scientific coordination as well
- Keen on publishing scientific articles related to the research project (and beyond) is a precondition
- Willingness to take active part in the research and other activities of the M²P research group is required
- PhD supervision (or helping out with PhD supervision) can be asked

- Needed are excellent (English) communication, organizational and writing skills
- Knowledge of Dutch is an asset (or willingness to learn passive use)
- Be motivated and independent, while being able to interact effectively with other members of the team
- Experience with advanced statistics, data management and/or machine learning is a plus
- There will be the opportunity to follow training programs and visit international conferences

For more information about these positions, please contact Stefaan Walgrave (stefaan.walgrave@uantwerpen.be) or Peter Van Aelst (peter.vanaelst@uantwerpen.be)

How to apply? Send us by **10/11/2022**

- a detailed CV
- a letter of motivation describing your interests and contact details of two referees
- Please indicate whether you apply for project 1, 2 or 3. You can indicate that you are interested in multiple projects.

1. Disinformation in a global perspective (Van Aelst)

The aim of the project is to build an operational framework to detect/predict countries' vulnerabilities on Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference (FIMI) in comparative perspective. We start from a (preliminary) theoretical framework by collecting (existing) data across three progressive levels: (1) macro (societal cohesion, stability and state legitimacy), (2) meso (political information environment), and (3) micro (personal resilience). The translation of the theoretical model into an operational/statistical model will be tested in selected countries/regional settings. This implies the creation of a resilience "barometer" that enables comparisons over time and space. The resulting FIMI models should allow stakeholders to observe at a glance which countries are predicted to be most susceptible to FIMI, which foreign actors pose the greatest threat in each target country, and which specific factors contribute most significantly to FIMI vulnerability in each country. This project will be done in collaboration with the [European Union Institute for Security Studies](#) and has direct policy implications.

2. How elected politicians evaluate public opinion (Walgrave)

This international, comparative project looks into politicians' evaluation of public opinion. It aims to lay bare which criteria politicians use to evaluate public opinion signals (negatively or positively) and what behavioral consequences their public opinion evaluation entails. The project currently covers 14 countries and the M²P team coordinates this large effort. More concretely, the project employs surveys, (open) interviews and experiments of/on incumbent politicians in a mainly quantitative approach. The prospective postdoc will join an existing team of about seven researchers all working on the project. The exact task is to be discussed.

3. Communication of politicians (Walgrave/Van Aelst)

M²P hosts one of the UA's so-called research excellence centers—[Research Center of Representatives and their Communication](#) (in collaboration with computer linguists of the UA). Within that center, we are looking for a research manager that can coordinate existing research, initiate new projects, and act as the main hub of the project. To avoid overlap with the postdoc of project 2 above, the hired person is expected to develop own work on the external communication of politicians. That communication can both be directed towards other political actors (in Parliament, e.g.) and towards citizens in general (on social media, e.g.).