



Universiteit  
Leiden



Dear colleagues

Allow me to draw your attention to the following

### **Masterclasses Causal Questions in Public Law by Professor Mila Versteeg**

Mila Versteeg - Professor of Law at Virginia School of Law in the United States - has recently joined the Department of Constitutional and Administrative Law at Leiden University as [distinguished fellow](#).

Professor Versteeg, trained as a lawyer in the Netherlands, has for several years been one of the most prominent and innovative researchers in the field of constitutional and administrative law worldwide. Professor Versteeg is one of the leading researchers in the field of empirical (comparative) constitutional law: a true innovator in research in constitutional and administrative law, and more generally in public law, with a worldwide renown.

Constitutional and administrative law research is rapidly developing in new directions in the Netherlands and Belgium. Comparative method has become standard issue equipment, but interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches to research are also rapidly gaining ground. And the newest horizon is that of Empirical Legal Studies. Interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary and/or empirical research methods are usually not part of the standard equipment of legally trained researchers. If they want to give these approaches a place in their research, they will need to know more about them. The tricky part is that those other disciplines and approaches employ a different 'disciplinary language' than the legal one. That is often a big hurdle to overcome.

Perhaps no one is better suited to help us with that translation than Professor Mila Versteeg, who, as a lawyer, has developed this approach in her own research. We have found professor Versteeg willing to teach four Masterclasses, to be held between 19 and 22 June in Leiden. On June 23, Professor Versteeg will give a separate public lecture.

The masterclasses that professor Versteeg will teach (in English) concern the following theme:

### **Leiden Masterclass Causal Questions in Public Law**

Public law is full of causal questions. Why do states become parties to international legal regimes? What causes states to adopt particular kinds of constitutional provisions? Do international human rights treaties make a difference? Does constitutional law change outcomes in a way that we can measure? While these questions are easy to identify, answering them is a much harder task. In four lectures, we will address how to identify and start answering causal questions.

The topics of the classes, held at the venue of Leiden Law School (Steenschuur 25, Leiden) are as follows:

1. Monday 19 June: 13:30-15.00 hrs. – A1.44 (Lorentztaal) *Research Design and Large-N data.*
2. Tuesday 20 June: 13:30-15.00 hrs. – A1.44 (Lorentztaal) *Quantitative Methods and their Limitations*
3. Wednesday 21 June: 13:30-15.00 hrs. – A1.44 (Lorentztaal) *Case selection*
4. Thursday 22 June: 13:30-15.00 hrs. – A0.51 (Grotiuszaal) *Experimental Methods*

**Public Lecture** 23 June 13.30-14.30 – A0.51 (Grotiuszaal)

The idea of the master classes is that the participants register (via the form below this link) and prepare for the classes on the basis of the following proposed literature.

- Adam S. Chilton & Mila Versteeg, *How Constitutional Rights Matter* (2020)
- Melissa Carlson, Elena Kempf, Katerina Linos, *Qualitative Methods in Comparative Human Rights Law*, in *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Human Rights Law* (Neha Jain & Mila Versteeg eds, 2023 forthcoming)
- Matthew Beckman & Richard Hall, *Elite Interviewing in Washington DC*
- Eric Bleich & Robert Pekkanen, *How to Report Interview Data*

Parts of this literature will be sent to you upon registration.

The master classes are offered to you free of charge by the Department of Constitutional and Administrative Law in Leiden. The master classes are open to all interested junior (PhD students) and advanced researchers in the field of public law, in particular constitutional and administrative law. You can register for the entire series, but also for individual master classes (here again the registration form).

We hope we may welcome you on one or several occasions between 19 and 23 June.

Until that moment, best regards,

Prof. Wim Voermans, Chair of the Department of Constitutional and Administrative Law in Leiden