Dr. IGOR TKALEC

Assistant Professor in Social Data Science, University College London (UCL)

Gower Street, WC1E6BT, London, United Kingdom

i.tkalec@ucl.ac.uk Personal Website UCL profile LinkedIn Google Scholar

EXPERIENCE

10/2022 →	**Assistant Professor in Social Data Science**, University College London (UCL), Social Data Institute (SODA), London, UK
01/2022 →	**Adjunct Lecturer**, Sciences Po Paris, France
09/2021 - 10/2022	**Research Fellow**, European University Institute, Robert Schuman Centre of Advanced Studies, GlobalStat project; Florence, Italy
12/2019 - 09/2021	**Research Associate**, European University Institute, Robert Schuman Centre of Advanced Studies, GlobalStat project; Florence, Italy
01/2017 – 02/2021	**Doctoral Researcher**, University of Luxembourg, Institute of Political Science; Esch-sur-Alzette, Luxembourg

OTHER APPOINTMENTS

05/2024	**Visiting Researcher**, University of Copenhagen, Copenhagen Center for Social Data Science (SODAS), Denmark
10/2022 - 04/2024	**Visiting Fellow**, European University Institute, Robert Schuman Centre of Advanced Studies, Florence, Italy (non-stipendiary; remote)
09/2022 - 09/2023	**Consultant**, University of Leeds, Project: QCA Evaluation of JumpStart, Leeds, UK
12/2020 →	**Adjunct Lecturer**, LUISS School of Government and CIFE (Rome and Berlin)
01/2018 – 09/2019	**Research Scholar**, The Evropaeum Association, Oxford, UK

EDUCATION

09/2021 - 09/2023	**MSc (*1st honours, with distinction*) in Computer Science with Data Science**, University of Wolverhampton, United Kingdom (viva: 01/09/2023)
01/2017 – 02/2021	**Ph.D. in Political Science**, University of Luxembourg, supervisor: Prof. David Howarth; Esch-sur-Alzette, Luxembourg (viva: 12/02/2021)
09/2015 – 06/2016	**MA (*with merit*) in Political Science** Central European University, Department of Political Science; Budapest, Hungary
10/2011 – 06/2015	**BA (*summa cum laude*) in Political Science**, University of Zagreb, Faculty of Political Science; Zagreb, Croatia; autumn semester 2014/2015 **Erasmus+**, Vilnius University, Institute of International Relations; Vilnius, Lithuania

FUNDING

1.[Principal investigator] 2024: UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) Digital Research Infrastructure (DRI) (UKRI307): Data Storytelling for Digital Research Infrastructure **(530,000 GBP)**
2.[Co-investigator] 2024: ESRC Impact Acceleration Account (ES/X004627/1): UCL Knowledge Broker Academy **(4,350 GBP)**
3.[Co-lead] 2024: UCL Faculty of Social and Historical Sciences: Artificial Intelligence in Research and Higher Education **(5,000 GBP)**
5.[Principal investigator] 2017: Luxembourg National Research Fund (FNR): Doctoral research grant **(135,000 EUR)**

AWARDS and FELLOWSHIPS

1. 2022-2024: European University Institute, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies: Visiting fellowship
2. 2023: Innovation in Methods Teaching Awards (ECRM 2023): Finalist
3. 2021: Pierre Werner Foundation Luxembourg: Pierre Werner Scholarship **(6,500 EUR)**
4. 2020: European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR): ECPR Raising Star Award 2020 nominee
5. 2018: Evropaeum Association: Evropaeum Scholars Program Scholarship **(4,000 EUR)**
6. 2015: Central European University: Partial CEU MA Fellowship 2015/2016 **(16,000 EUR)**
7. 2013-2015: University of Zagreb: Academic excellence scholarship **(1,500 EUR)**; Erasmus+ Scholarship **(1,500 EUR)**; Best Political Science Student Award **(80 EUR)**
8. 2011-2015: Cakovec City Council: Scholarship **(4,800 EUR)**

TEACHING [UG - undergraduate; G - graduate]

2023 →	**University College London (UCL)**
	•Machine Learning for Social Sciences with Python [UG]
	•Data Storytelling: Exploring the Social World [UG]
	•Data, Politics and Society (from 2024) [G]
	•Data Wrangling in R (2023; 2024) [UG]
	•Coding Therapy (2023) [UG]
	•Introduction to Social Data Science (2023) [G]
2022 →	**Sciences Po Paris**
	•Introduction to Econometrics [UG]
	•Data Storytelling (2022; 2023; 2024) [UG]
2020 - 2025	**LUISS School of Government and CIFE**
	•Applied Research for Policy workshop (2025) [G]
	•Data Analysis with R (2024) [G]
	•Quantitative Research Design (2020-2024) [G]
2017 – 2019	**University of Luxembourg**
	•Political Economy of European Integration [G]
	•Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) [G]

PUBLICATIONS

In progress:
[monograph under contract; expected publication January 2027] **Tkalec, Igor**. *Navigating the Wicked Problem of Pensions in the EU: The Role of Pension Funds*. Newcastle: Agenda Publishing.

Tkalec, I. Applied Machine Learning in Political Science: An Overview.

Borgognoni, E., Guarduancich, I. and **I. Tkalec**. Ageing and pensions in the EU: The European Semester and the sustainability-adequacy trade-off.

Published:
Guarduancich, I., Borgognoni, E. and **I. Tkalec** (2025). Unemployment benefits in the EU: the Commission's approach. *Journal of Common Market Studies*. `https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.13771` [peer-reviewed]

Tkalec, Igor and Umbach, Gaby (eds.; forthcoming 2025). *The Elgar Companion to Data and Indicators for the Sustainable Development Goals*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Tkalec, Igor (forthcoming 2025). Data science approach to SDG progress: utility of clustering techniques in Tkalec and Umbach (eds.; forthcoming) *The Elgar Companion to Data and Indicators for the Sustainable Development Goals*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar. [peer-reviewed]

Tkalec, Igor (forthcoming 2025). Effective communication of Sustainable Development Goals (SGDs): a data storytelling approach in Tkalec and Umbach (eds.; forthcoming 2024) *The Elgar Companion to Data and Indicators for the Sustainable Development Goals*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar. [peer-reviewed]

Tkalec, Igor (2023), Millennials and Early Retirement: An Exploratory Study. *Merits*, 3(2), 248-262. https://doi.org/10.3390/merits3020015 [peer-reviewed]

Tkalec, Igor (2023). Is This Clear to You? Statistical Reasoning and Coding in Teaching Quantitative Methods in Remenyi, Dan (ed.) *Innovation in Teaching of Research Methodology Excellence Awards: An Anthology of Case Histories 2023*, Reading: Academic Conferences International, pp. 57-66. [peer-reviewed]

Bowman, H., Mufti, S., Chapel, F., **Tkalec, I.**, & Whitfield, J. (2023). *A small-n study using Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) to understand the combination of factors that contribute to a rise in self-reported confidence in participants on a non-accredited preentry programme*. TASO Report; University of Leeds, Lifelong Learning Centre. December 2023. `https://bitly.ws/34GCt` [internal review]

Umbach, Gaby **Tkalec, Igor** (2022), Evaluating e-Governance through e-Government: Practices and Challenges of Assessing the Digitalisation of Public Governmental Services. *Evaluation and Program Planning*, 93, 102118. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.evalprogplan.2022.102118 [internal review]

Tkalec, Igor (2022). Interaction between the economic and social dimensions of the EU economic governance: a tension in Ligeti Katalin and Brodersen Kei Hannah (eds.) *Studies on Enforcement in Multilevel Regulatory Systems*, Baden-Baden: Nomos, pp. 119-149. [internal review]

Tkalec, I. & Umbach, G. (2022). *NextGenerationEU Under a Social Equity Lens.* Policy Briefs 2022/36, Global Governance Programme, Robert Shuman Centre for Advanced Studies at European University Institute, April 2022.

Umbach, G. & **Tkalec, I.** (2021). Social investment policies in the EU: Actively Concrete or Passively Abstract. *Politics and Governance* 9(2), 403-414. DOI: https://doi.org/10.17645/pag.v9i2.4079. [peer-reviewed]

Tkalec, I. (2021). "The European Social Model and an Economy of Well-being: Repairing the Social Fabric of European Societies", edited by G. Bertin, M. Ellison and G. Moro (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2021, ISBN 9781800378063); xii+250pp., £85.00 pb." *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* 59(5), 1341-1341.

Tkalec, I. (2021). *Teacher salary and the complexity of school systems: policy puzzle no.4.* Policy Briefs 2021/48, Global Governance Programme, Robert Shuman Centre for Advanced Studies at European University Institute, November 2021.

Tkalec, I. (2020). Shaping the Prospects for Adequate Pensions: the Effect of Policy Guidelines under the European Semester. *Political Research Exchange*, 2(1). https://doi.org/10.1080/2474736X.2020.1738898 [peer-reviewed]

Tkalec, I. & Umbach, G. (2020). *Politicisation of statistics: policy puzzle no.3.* Policy Briefs 2020/38, Global Governance Programme, Robert Shuman Centre for Advanced Studies at European University Institute, November 2020.

Tkalec, I. (2020). *Dynamics in public health infrastructure: Hospital beds and COVID-19: policy puzzle no.2.* Policy Briefs 2020/28, Global Governance Programme, Robert Shuman Centre for Advanced Studies at European University Institute, June 2020.

Tkalec, I. (2020). *Risks of Colossal Wage Growth: policy puzzle no.1.* Policy Briefs 2020/17, Global Governance Programme, Robert Shuman Centre for Advanced Studies at European University Institute, April 2020.

Chang, M., Martin, S. & **Tkalec, I.**. (2019). Recent Changes in EU Economic Governance: Methodological and Institutional Dynamics. *Journal of Contemporary European Research*, 15(2), 134-142.
https://doi.org/10.30950/jcer.v15i2.1079 [internal review]

Tkalec, I. (2019). The Council's amendments to the Country-Specific Recommendations (CSRs): more than just cosmetics?. *Journal of Contemporary European Research*, 15(2), 212-227. https://doi.org/10.30950/jcer.v15i2.1001 [peer-reviewed]

Tkalec, I. & et al. (2019). *Reconnecting Citizens: European Solutions to Energy Poverty.* Evropaeum Policy Report, September 2019.

Tkalec, I. (2017). The Interplay between Active Ageing and Silver Economy: a QCA Analysis. *Cahiers RESuME.*
https://resume.uni.lu/story/the-interplay-between-active-ageing-and-silver-economy-a-qca-analysi [peer-reviewed]

Link to the list of infographics/data visualisation publications (14) HERE.

SERVICE TO PROFESSION

Committee memberships:
•Member of Education Committee, Faculty of Social and Historical Sciences, UCL (2024 →)
•Member of Social Data Science Curriculum Review Committee, UCL (2023 →)

Editorships:
•The Elgar Companion to Data and Indicators for the Sustainable Development Goals. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar
•Evaluation and Program Planning Journal 2021 "Digitisation and Digitalisation of Public Administration in Times of Disruption – Practice, Challenges, and Evaluation"
•Journal of Contemporary Political Research (JCER) Special Issue 2019, Vol. 15, 2 "New Conceptual and Methodological Developments in the Study of EU Economic Governance"

Reviewer:
•Journals: Journal of Contemporary European Research; European Journal of Political Research; Sustainability, Evidence and Policy, Citizen Science

Other:
•Initiator and coordinator of Social Data Science Project Lab (SDS-L), QStep undergraduate programs, UCL (2022-2023)
•Founder and coordinator of Applied Data Science for Social Research Working Group (ADSSR) at Robert Schuman Centre of Advanced Study, European University Institute (2020-2022)
•Initiator and contributor to GlobalStat Policy Puzzle publication series at Robert Schuman Centre of Advanced Study, European University Institute (2020-2022)
•Assistant coordinator of International Statistical Literacy Project (ISLP) working group on Statistical and Data Literacy in Policy-Making, International Statistical Institute (ISI) and International Association for Statistical Education (IASE) (2020-2021)

SOFTWARE SKILLS

R (advanced); Python (advanced); SQL (basic); Tableau (basic); RapidMiner (advanced); JMP (advanced); KNIME (intermediate); SPSS (intermediate); Gephi (advanced); QDA Miner (intermediate); LaTeX(intermediate); MS Office (advanced)

LANGUAGES

Croatian (native); English (C2); Italian (A2); Slovak (B1), French (A1)

CONFERENCE TALKS (SELECTED)

2025

Data and Indicators for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Data for Policy Fireside Chat

Introduction to Data Storytelling, Data Futures: Progress and Prospects, Saïd Business School, University of Oxford

Applied Machine Learning in Political Science: An Overview, 7th International Conference on Public Policy (ICPP7), International Public Policy Association (IPPA)

Measuring and Framing Sustainable Development: Data and Indicators for the Sustainable Development Goals, 7th International Conference on Public Policy (ICPP7), International Public Policy Association (IPPA)

2023

Millennials and Early Retirement: An Exploratory Study, ESPANet Italy, University of Milan

Is this Clear to You? Statistical Reasoning and Conding in Teaching Quantitative Methods, European Conference on Research Methodology (ECRM)

2022

Statistics Anxiety: Quo Vadis, University College London

Politicised treatment of scientific evidence in times of division and crisis, International Workshops on Public Policy (IWPP3), International Public Policy Association (IPPA), Central European University

2021

Politicisation of scientific evidence in times of crisis, 13th Interpretive Policy Analysis conference

Social investment policies in the EU, 5th International Conference on Public Policy (ICPP5), International Public Policy Association (IPPA)

2020

Comparing contexts of evidence dissemination: The effect of "nuanced" politicization, Data for Policy Conference, London

2019

Macroeconomic paths to pension adequacy: limits and potentials of European Semester, QCA Paper Development Workshop; May 2019; Antwerp School of Management

Council's amendments of Country Specific Recommendations (CSR): more than just cosmetics?, Annual Conference of Italian Political Science Association (Sisp), University of Turin