

R. Melis Baydag, PhD

University of Freiburg, Department of Political Science, Chair of International Relations
Rempartstr 15 · 79085 Freiburg · Germany
melis.baydag@politik.uni-freiburg.de | www.uni-freiburg.de

POSITIONS

Oct 2025-present	Postdoctoral Researcher and Lecturer , Chair of International Relations. Department of Political Science, University of Freiburg.
Oct 2025-present	Associate Researcher , Department Inter- and Transnational Cooperation. German Institute of Development and Sustainability (IDOS).
2024-2025	Lecturer , Chair of European and Global Governance. Munich School of Politics and Public Policy, Technical University of Munich.
Apr 2024-Sep 2025	Researcher , Department Inter- and Transnational Cooperation. German Institute of Development and Sustainability (IDOS).
2022-2024	Research Associate and Lecturer Chair of International Politics, Ruhr University Bochum.
Oct-Dec 2023	Guest Researcher Department Inter- and Transnational Cooperation, IDOS.
May 2023	Visiting Lecturer Institute of International Studies, University of Wroclaw.
2018-present	Lecturer Chair of International Politics, Ruhr University Bochum.
Sep-Oct 2018	Guest Researcher Department Inter- and Transnational Cooperation, German Development Institute.
Oct 2017	Guest Researcher Department Bi- and Multilateral Development Cooperation, German Development Institute.

EDUCATION

2023	PhD in Social Sciences (with distinction - <i>magna cum laude</i>). Major field: Political Science/International Relations Chair of International Politics, Ruhr University Bochum (RUB), Germany.
2017	MSc in International Relations (GPA 3.90/4.00). Middle East Technical University (METU), Ankara, Turkey.
2015-2016	<i>Exchange year</i> , MA International Development Studies, Philipps-University Marburg, Germany.
2014	BSc in International Relations (GPA 3.53/4.00, with High Honors). Middle East Technical University (METU), Ankara, Turkey.
2013-2014	<i>Exchange semester</i> , BA Political Science, Duisburg-Essen University, Germany

RESEARCH INTERESTS

IR, international political economy, domestic politics theories, international economic cooperation, foreign aid and development, middle powers, global governance, populism in IR, qualitative methods, and process-tracing.

PUBLICATIONS

Book (forthcoming)

The Domestic Politics of Aid: Development Policies among Emerging Middle Powers
Palgrave Macmillan | International Political Economy Series

Peer-reviewed publications

Baydag, R. M. & Villanueva Ullgard, R. (2025). Populist narratives and personalized national role conception in middle powers: The cases of Mexico and Turkey during the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Politics & Policy* 53(1), e12645, 1-14.

Baydag, R. M. (2024). Domestic ideas and interests in development cooperation of emerging donors: The case of Mexican development policy. *Contemporary Politics*, 1-23.

Baydag, R. M. (2024). Positions of Established and Emerging Powers towards Climate Finance: The Cases of Germany and Korea. In Klingebiel, S., Kalinowski T. & Keijzer, N. (Eds.) *Emerging trends in international development and climate policy*. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.

Baydag, R. M. & Klingebiel, S. (2023). Partner country selection between development narratives and self-interests: A new method for analysing complex donor approaches. *Review of Development Economics* 27(2), 1199-1223.

Baydag, R. M. (2021). Middle powers in international development cooperation: Assessing the roles of South Korea and Turkey. In Chaturvedi, S. et al. (Eds.) *The Palgrave handbook of development cooperation for achieving the 2030 agenda: Contested collaboration*. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.

Discussion papers and Policy Briefs

Baydag, R. M. & Villanueva Ullgard, R. (2025). Not all populists turn inward – and for a reason: Mexican and Turkish development cooperation in an era of global fragmentation. In S. Klingebiel & A. Sumner (Eds.) *Development and Development Policy in the Trump Era* (IDOS Discussion Paper 23/2025). German Institute of Development and Sustainability (IDOS).

Baydag, R. M., Klingebiel, S. & Marschall, P. (2018). Shaping the patterns of development cooperation: A comparative analysis of seven bilateral donors and the European Union. (DIE Discussion Paper 22). German Development Institute.

Research in progress

“Dialogue Instead of Mutual Neglect? International Political Economy Meets Foreign Policy Analysis,” *Cooperation and Conflict* (revise & resubmit, co-edited with S. Fouquet).

“Europe’s geoeconomic turn without aid? Domestic politics of German and British development policy preferences.”

“Interests, ideas, leaders: What drives development policies of emerging OECD donors?”

“Dividing at home, cooperating abroad: Turkey’s populist foreign aid policy” (prepared for a special issue in *Third World Quarterly*).

“Parsing populist leaders’ policy space: Domestic politics theories of IPE, personalistic-plebiscitary decision-making, and international economic conflicts” (co-authored with S. Fouquet).

“Who Belongs? Competing Logics of Like-Mindedness within International Organizations” (co-authored with S. Klingebiel).

RESEARCH FUNDING

2025	British Academy Seed Funding (<i>under review</i>). - Exploring the role of the Turkish Diaspora in shaping UK and German foreign policy towards Turkey (with E. Violaris, University of Oxford and C. Cetin, University of Sussex). - Populist discourses and the politicization of development aid and refugees in the UK (with C. Cetin, University of Sussex).
2020-2023	Funding by the Mercator Research Center Ruhr (MERCUR) Foundation for the PhD project (employment).
2020	German Research Foundation (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, DFG) Germany’s Excellence Initiative [DFG GSC 98/3] for the field research project “Mexican governmental preferences towards development policy” conducted in Mexico City, Mexico, 1-20 Mar, 2020. It was received via RUB Research School PLUS – Project International (2100€).
2016	METU Scientific Research Projects Coordination Unit [BAP-04-04-2016-001] for the field research project “South Korean foreign aid and middle power diplomacy” conducted in Seoul, Republic of Korea, 1-14 Oct, 2016. (1700€).

TRAINING

2020	“Process Tracing Methods,” Instructor: Derek Beach (Aarhus University). Central European University ECPR Summer School in Methods and Techniques
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TEACHING AND ADVISING

SUPERVISION	12 BA-Theses [as 1st Supervisor: 10 (completed); as 2nd supervisor: 2 (completed)]; 2 MA-Theses.
ADVISING	Reviewing and commenting on MA-Theses and PhD dissertation exposés at weekly colloquiums.
TEACHING	11 completed BA-Seminars, 6 completed MA-Seminars - Independent planning, preparation, and teaching (e.g. course syllabus, reading list, online tools: Moodle). - Preparing, marking and commenting on class presentations, reflection and term papers; holding office hours. - Student evaluation as principal examiner (oral exams, module exams and term papers).
INSTITUTIONS	University of Freiburg (UFR), Technical University of Munich (TUM), Ruhr University Bochum (RUB), University of Wrocław (UWr).
TOPICS	International Relations, International Political Economy, emerging powers, global economic governance, international organizations, regional and European integration.
COURSES	<i>M.A. and B.A. Seminar (UFR)</i> WiSe 2024/25: MA S Foreign economic policies in a fragmented global economy. BA S International organizations and informal clubs in global governance. <i>M.A. Seminar (TUM)</i> WiSe 2024/25: Foreign economic policies in a fragmented global economy. SoSe 2024: International organizations and informal clubs in global governance. <i>M.A. Seminar (RUB)</i> WiSe 2025/26: International organizations and informal clubs in global governance. WiSe 2024/25: The European Union in global economic governance. SoSe 2024: Regional integration in theory and practice. WiSe 2023/24: Established and emerging powers in global governance. SoSe 2023: Comparative regionalism in theory and practice: Europe, Asia and the Americas, 9–17 May, Visiting Lecturer at University of Wrocław. <i>B.A. Seminar (RUB)</i> SoSe 2025: Foreign economic policies in a fragmented global economy. SoSe 2023: Crisis of liberal international order: Global power shifts and domestic discontents. WiSe 2022/23: International organizations and club governance in contemporary world politics. SoSe 2022: Globalization and theories of development. WiSe 2021/22: International organizations and informal groupings in the era of multilateralism. SoSe 2021: Globalization and developing countries: Theory and practice of development. WiSe 2020/21: Schwellenländer in der multilateralen Global Governance: aktuelle Themen und Herausforderungen. SoSe 2020: Theories of regional integration: Europe, Asia and the Americas in comparison. WiSe 2019/20: Global governance in a multipolar world: Emerging powers, issues and challenges. SoSe 2019: Comparative regional integration in theory and practice: Europe, the Americas and Asia. WiSe 2018/19: International power and domestic politics in emerging countries' IR: BRICs and MIKTA.

GRANTS, AWARDS & SCHOLARSHIPS**Alexander von Humboldt Foundation**

6th UK-German Frontiers of Humanities Symposium (UKGFOH) "Belonging". 7-9 May 2025, Berlin, Germany (by invitation only).

The British Academy

6th UKGFOH. 7-9 May 2025, Berlin.

Mercator Research Center Ruhr (MERCUR)

The PhD Project "Material interests and societal ideas in development policy preferences" was conducted as part of the Graduate School on Political Cohesion (GSPC), a cooperative research and PhD training group of Ruhr University Bochum and TU Dortmund University, and funded by MERCUR.

Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft / German Research Foundation (DFG)

RUB Research School PLUS (DFG GSC 98/3) - Int.Mo.P. (Post-doc) Funding

ISA 2024 Annual Convention. 3-6 April 2024, San Francisco.

RUB Research School PLUS (DFG GSC 98/3) - PR.INT (Ph.D.) Funding

Field research grant. Project: "Mexican governmental preferences towards development policy". 1-21 March 2020, Mexico City.

RUB Research School PLUS (DFG GSC 98/3) - ECR Board Funding

EISA 13th Pan-European Conference on International Relations. 11-14 September 2019, Sofia.

RUB Faculty of Social Science

ISA 2022 Annual Convention. 28 March-2 April 2022, Nashville.

EISA 14th Pan-European Conference on International Relations. 13-17 September 2021, virtual.

EISA 8th European Workshops in International Studies. 30 June-3 July 2021, virtual.

ISA 2021 Annual Convention. 6-9 April 2021, virtual.

European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR) 1st Virtual Summer School in Methods and Techniques, Process-Tracing Methods. 3-7 August, 2020.

EISA 13th Pan-European Conference on International Relations. 11-14 September 2019, Sofia.

MERCUR Graduate School on Political Cohesion

EISA 16th Pan-European Conference on International Relations. 5-9 September 2023, Potsdam.

ISA 2022 Annual Convention. 28 March-2 April 2022, Nashville.

ECPR 1st Virtual Summer School in Methods and Techniques, Process-Tracing Methods. 3-7 August 2020.

International Studies Association (ISA)

ISA 2024 Annual Convention, travel grant for early career researchers. 3-6 April 2024, San Francisco.

European International Studies Association (EISA)

EISA 4th European Workshops in International Studies, travel bursary for early career researchers. 7-9 May 2017, Cardiff.

German Institute for Development and Sustainability (IDOS)

Travel grant, EISA 18th Pan-European Conference on International Relations, 25-29 August, 2025, Bologna.

Travel grant, ISA 2025 Annual Convention, 2-5 March, 2025, Chicago.

Travel grant (German-Korean Network workshop). 12-13 June, 2023, Seoul.

Travel grant (expert workshop/handbook project). 19 March 2019, Buenos Aires.

Travel grant (expert workshop). 23 May 2018, New York.

Erasmus+ Staff Mobility for Teaching

The University of Wrocław, Poland. 9-17 May, 2023.

Middle East Technical University (METU)

Field Research grant. Project: "South Korean foreign aid and middle power diplomacy". 1-14 October 2016, Seoul.

Erasmus+Academic Exchange Program

WiSe 2015/16 an der Philipps University Marburg.

WiSe 2013/14 an der University of Duisburg-Essen.

Mehmet Zorlu Foundation

Scholarship via METU. September 2011 – June 2014.

Ankara Atatürk Lisesi Foundation

Scholarship. September 2009 – June 2014.

CONFERENCES, WORKSHOPS & TALKS

2025

Presenter: Parsing Populist Leaders' Policy Space: Domestic Politics Theories of IPE, Personalistic-Plebiscitarian Decision-Making, and International Economic Conflicts at the Annual Workshop "International Dimensions and Effects of Populism" (IDEoPOP), 17-19 September 2025, University of Freiburg, Germany.

Organizer: Workshop "New Directions in Development: Comparing the Engagement of Turkey, the EU, and China with the Global South," organized by IDOS and Istanbul Policy Center. Sept 15-16, 2025, Istanbul, Turkey.

Organizer: Workshop "Understanding Africa-EU Partnerships from a Decolonial Perspective," organized by IDOS and Nelson Mandela University. Sept 11-12, 2025, Pretoria, South Africa.

Section Chair: The Geopolitics and Geoeconomics of Fragmented World Order (with S. Schirm), 18th Pan-European Conference on International Relations (EISA-PEC). 25-29 August 2025, Bologna, Italy.

Conference Paper: Like-Mindedness in Flux? Geopolitics, Ideational Trajectories, and the Politics of OECD Enlargement, EISA-PEC, 25-29 August 2025, Bologna, Italy.

Presenter/Organizer: Workshop at the Ibrahim Governance Weekend (IGW) on “Digital Transformation in Africa: Gaps, Goals and Opportunities for Cooperation with Europe,” organized by IDOS and Mo Ibrahim Foundation, 3 June 2025, Marrakech, Morocco.

Discussant: EADI-IDOS Workshop “Development and Development Policy in the Trump Era,” 21 May 2025, Bonn, Germany.

Guest Lecture: The Politics of Aid in Middle Powers: Ideas, Interests and Leaders, Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt. 15 May 2025, Eichstätt, Germany.

Participant/Presenter: Alexander von Humboldt Foundation and British Academy’s 6th UK-German Frontiers of Humanities Symposium “Belonging”. 7-9 May 2025, Berlin, Germany (by invitation only).

Opening Remarks: Natures of Belonging – What Forms Does Belonging Take? Zooming in on State-Society Relations, 6th UKGFOH. 7-9 May 2025, Berlin.

Conference Paper: Parsing populist leaders’ policy space: Domestic politics theories of IPE, personalistic-plebiscitary decision-making, and international economic conflicts, International Studies Association (ISA) 2025 Annual Convention. 2-5 March 2025, Chicago, USA.

Conference Paper: Populist narratives and personalized national role conception in middle powers: The cases of Mexico and Turkey during the COVID-19 Pandemic, ISA 2025 Annual Convention. 2-5 March 2025, Chicago, USA.

2024

Conference Paper: The changing role and identity of international organizations: The OECD’s strategy between a universal actor and a Western club, 29th DVPW Convention, 24-27 September 2024. Göttingen, Germany.

Conference Paper: Domestic drivers of development policy decision-making in emerging middle powers: A comparative analysis of Mexico and Turkey, 7th World International Studies Committee (WISC) Global International Studies Conference, 24-26 July 2024. Warsaw, Poland.

Conference Paper: The changing role and identity of international organizations: The OECD’s strategy between a universal actor and a Western club, 7th WISC Global International Studies Conference, 24-26 July 2024. Warsaw, Poland.

Roundtable: The Changing Dynamics of International Institutions in an Era of Multiple Crises, co-organized by Marmara University and IDOS, 12 June 2024, virtual.

Conference Paper: Established and emerging powers in international cooperation: Domestic driving forces on German and Korean positions towards international climate finance, ISA 2024 Annual Convention. 3-6 April 2024, San Francisco, USA.

Conference Paper: Preference formation in foreign aid policies of emerging donors: The cases of Mexico and Turkey, ISA 2024 Annual Convention. 3-6 April 2024, San Francisco, USA.

Discussant: Panel Social Data Insights in Foreign Aid, ISA 2024 Annual Convention. 3-6 April 2024, San Francisco, USA.

2023

Conference Paper: The political economy of emerging donors’ aid preferences: The cases of Mexico and Turkey, 16th Pan-European Conference on International Relations (EISA-PEC). 5-9 September 2023, Potsdam, Germany.

Conference Paper: The political economy of South Korean development aid: Ideas and Interests shaping the preferences of the Lee Government’s Green and Climate ODA, 3rd Workshop of the Korean-German Research Network organized by Ewha Womans University & German Institute for Development and Sustainability (IDOS), 12-13 June 2023, Seoul, South Korea.

2022

Conference Paper: Aid-climate nexus: Domestic driving forces on Korean development policy preferences during the President Lee administration, 2nd Workshop of the Korean-German Research Network organized by Ewha Womans University & IDOS. 17-18 October 2022, Bonn, Germany.

Conference Paper: Domestic politics of development aid: Interests and ideas in bilateral development aid preferences of South Korea and Turkey, ISA 2022 Annual Convention. 28 March-2 April 2022. Nashville, United States.

Conference Paper: Shaping policy responses of middle powers to the covid-19 crisis: The role of populist leaders in Mexico and Turkey, ISA 2022 Annual Convention. 28 March-2 April 2022. Nashville, United States.

2021

Conference Paper: Societal influences on foreign aid preferences: Diverging governmental positions of South Korea and Turkey in international development cooperation, 14th EISA-PEC. 13-17 September 2021, virtual.

Conference Paper: Societal influences on emerging donors’ development assistance preferences: A comparative analysis of Mexican and Turkish governmental positions, 8th European Workshops in International Studies (EWIS). 30 June-3 July 2021, virtual.

Discussant: Workshop Non-Western Agency in World Politics: Decentering Practices, Actions and Perceptions at the 8th European Workshops in International Studies (EWIS). 30 June – 3 July 2021, virtual.

Organizer: PhD training workshop Qualitative Methods in Political Science. Keynote Speaker: Derek Beach (Professor, University of Aarhus) “Process tracing methods,” 28 April 2021, virtual.

Conference Paper: Diverging positions of middle-sized emerging donors in international development cooperation: The cases of Mexico and Turkey, ISA 2021 Annual Convention. 6-9 April 2021, virtual.

Discussant: Panel Globalization and Poverty at the ISA 2021 Annual Convention. 8 April 2021, virtual.

2020

Organizer: The GSPC workshop Political cohesion and societal division (w/ Daniel Beck and Daniel Gloris). 18 & 24 November 2020, virtual.

Discussant: Webinar How can middle powers sharpen the global development cooperation discourse? A discussion between representatives of MIKTA development agencies and academia organized by the UNDP Seoul Policy Centre. 27 October 2020, virtual.

Presenter: Mexico's development cooperation: The impact of material interests and societal ideas on governmental preferences, Conversatorio „International Cooperation of Emerging Countries: Perspectives on Foreign Policy and Forced Migration“ organized by El Instituto de Investigaciones Dr. José María Luis Mora (Instituto MORA). 13 March 2020, Mexico City, Mexico.

2019

Presenter: The role of development cooperation in migration management: Between donor interests and development concerns, International Forum on Refugee Protection & Migration Issues (IFRP). 28-29 November 2019, Ruhr-University Bochum, Germany.

Conference Paper: Emerging donors' development policy preferences: An analysis of value-based ideas and material interests shaping the Mexican governmental position, 13th EISA-PEC. 11-14 September 2019, Sofia University, Bulgaria.

Conference Paper: Middle powers in international development cooperation: Assessing South Korea and Turkey, Workshop "Development Cooperation for Achieving the 2030 Agenda" organized by the German Development Institute and the Network for Southern Think Tanks (NeST) for a handbook project at the margins of the 2019 Second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation (BAPA+40). 19 March 2019. Buenos Aires, Argentina.

2018

Conference Paper: Forum shopping for rising powers in proliferation of club governance formats: The rationale for Turkey, Conference „The G20@10: Benefits, Limitations and the Future of Global Club Governance“, organized by DIE, Chatham House, and the Shanghai Institutes for International Studies (SIIS). 23 October 2018, Bonn, Germany.

Conference Paper: A Middle Way towards Development Cooperation: Foreign Aid Discourse of South Korea and Turkey in Relation to the OECD DAC, Expert Workshop "Development Cooperation for achieving the 2030 Agenda: The Way Forward", organized by DIE at the margins of the 2018 High-Level Meeting of the United Nations Development Cooperation Forum, 23 May 2018, New York, United States.

2017

Conference Paper: Middle Powers and International Development Architecture: The Cases of Turkey and Korea, 4th European Workshops in International Studies (EISA), 7-10 June 2017, University of Cardiff, United Kingdom.

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

PEER REVIEW	Third World Quarterly, Contemporary Politics, Brazilian Journal of International Politics, Forum for Development Studies, RUB Research School, IDOS.
MEMBERSHIP	International Studies Association (ISA). European International Studies Association (EISA). German Political Science Association (DVPW). Turkish Political Science Association (TPSA). ECPR Standing Group on International Relations (SGIR). European Platform of Women Scientists (EPWS).
FACULTY WORK	Participating at regular faculty meetings; serving as a reviewer of postgraduate funding proposals; interviewing candidates in recruitment processes.
LANGUAGES	Turkish (native), English (fluent, working), German (fluent, working), French (intermediate, reading and listening), Spanish (basic, reading and listening).
OTHERS	<i>Membership</i> Ankara Atatürk Lisesi Education Foundation (ALEV). The Turkish Foundation for Combatting Soil Erosion, Reforestation and the Protection of Natural Habitats (TEMA).

Last updated: 1 October 2025