(Vincent) Weiqian XIA
Curriculum Vitae

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Born: 1991-09-21, in China

Universitetsvägen 10B, 10 691 Stockholm, Sweden
Strandgatan 2, 65100 Vaasa, Finland

Updated November 2026

RESEARCH INTEREST

Secularization and religious demography, migration and ethnic relations, political sociology

EMPLOYMENT

2023- Present	Wenner-Gren Fellow researcher, Demography Unit, Åbo Akademi University. Project "En undersökning av religiöst medlemskap i högsekulär Finland med nationella registerdata", funded by Wenner-Gren Foundations.
2022- Present	Affiliated researcher, Stockholm University Demography Unit (SUDA), Department of Sociology, Stockholm University.
2025	Postdoctoral researcher, Demography Unit, Åbo Akademi University. Project "Parbildning och dess konsekvenser bland infödda och immigranter i Finland".
2022- 2023	Postdoctoral researcher, Demography Unit, Åbo Akademi University. Projects "Demographic change and ethnolinguistic identity in an intergenerational perspective: The Swedish-speaking population in Finland (DemSwed)" and "RelFin: Forskning vid Åbo Akademi om trender i religiöst medlemskap i Svenskfinland".
2022- 2023	Postdoctoral researcher, Department of Social Work, Södertörn University. Project "Leavers and stayers - Migrant and non-migrant life trajectories in Sweden and Finland".
2017- 2021	PhD student, Department of Sociology, Stockholm University.

EDUCATION

2017-2021	PhD in Sociology, Stockholm University, Sweden. Dissertation title: *The Political Sociology of Religion: The Impact of Religion on Political Attitudes and Behaviors in Secularizing European Societies* Supervisors: Jens Rydgren, Sunnee Billingsley Opponent: Mikael Hjerm
2015-2017	MSc Research Master Social and Behavioral Sciences, Tilburg University, the Netherlands. Minor in Sociology; Graduated with distinction (Met Genoegen).
2014-2015	MA in Social Science, Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, Hong Kong SAR, China.
2010-2014	BSc in Statistics, Sun Yat-Sen University, China.

PUBLICATIONS & ACADEMIC WORK

Xia, W. (2026). "The Secular Divide and GAL/TAN Politics: How Religion Shapes Same-Sex Union Legislations' Impact on Attitudes toward Homosexuality in Europe". *Sexuality & Culture*.

Xia, W., Turunen, J., Aradhya, S., & Saarela, J. (2026). "Returns to returning with sibling comparisons: Register-based evidence from Finland". *International Migration Review*.

Xia, W., Kolk, M. & Saarela, J. (2024). "Socioeconomic Advantage or Community Attachment? A Register-Based Study on the Difference in National Lutheran Church Affiliation Between Finnish and Swedish Speakers in Finland". *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 63, 543-560.

Xia, W. (2022). "Christian Religiosity, Religious Nostalgia, and Attitudes Toward Muslims in 20 Western Countries". *Sociological Forum*, 37, 1414-1435.

Xia, W. (2021). "Mediators explaining radical right voting patterns of Christians in Europe: Attitudes toward immigrants, values, or social capital?". *Social Science Research*, 97, 102575.

Xia, W., Bowen, C. E., Saarela, J., & Skirbekk, V. (2026). "Secularity and gender-(a)typical educational choices: evidence from Finnish population-wide register data". *Stockholm Research Reports in Demography*, 2026:08. Manuscript revised & resubmitted.

Xia, W., Kolk, M., Saarela, J., & Skirbekk, V. (2025). "Religious Disaffiliation in a Secularized Society: A Register-Based Study of Finland on Disaffiliation around Policy and Legislative Changes". *Stockholm Research Reports in Demography*, 2025:19. Manuscript revised & resubmitted.

Xia, W. (2023). "Catalyst of engagement or shadow of grievance? The role of religion in immigrants' political participation in Sweden". *The Department of Sociology Working Paper Series*, 44. Manuscript to be revised & resubmitted.

Larsson, E. C., Skirbekk, V., & Xia, W. (2025). "Wage Disparity by Faith: Investigating Wage Differences Among Church Affiliated and Non-Affiliated". Manuscript revised & resubmitted.

Xia, W., Kolk, M. & Saarela, J. (2025). "Socioeconomic status differences by religious affiliation in Finland 2001-2023." Manuscript in preparation.

Xia, W., Zhou, Y., Reini, K. & Saarela, J. (2025). "How does religion alleviate the health effects of death of spouse." Manuscript in preparation.

Xia, W., Carlsson, E. & Saarela, J. (2025). "Religion and fertility in Finland." Manuscript in preparation.

Xia, W. (2021). "*The Political Sociology of Religion: The Impact of Religion on Political Attitudes and Behaviors in Secularizing European Societies*". PhD dissertation, Department of Sociology, Stockholm University.

Kolk, M., Saarela, J., & Xia, W. (2024): "A Survey of Religious Beliefs and Practices in the Finnish Population." *OSF Preprints*.

GRANTS & AWARDS

2026	Wenner-Gren Fellowship extension (est. 2,268,000 SEK)
2026	Rewards for Publication Activity, Department of Social Sciences, Åbo Akademi University (250 EUR)
2025	Travel grant from Church Institute for Research and Advanced Training, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland (660 EUR)
2025	Stiftelsen Karl Staaffs fond (19,308 SEK)
2025	INVEST Fellowship Programme (1,000 EUR, plus accommodation and transportation costs)
2025	Åbo Akademi University Travel Grants (1,200 EUR)
2023-2026	Wenner-Gren Fellowship (142,191 EUR)
2023	Riksbankens Jubileumsfond Project Grant (3,433,253 SEK offered)
2023-2024	Helge Ax:son Johnsons Stiftelse (30,000 SEK)
2023	Centre for Baltic and East European Studies Grant (30,000 SEK)
2022	Ralph A. Gallagher Travel Grant (1,000 USD)
2019	Stiftelsen Karl Staaffs fond (8,350 SEK)
2016	Tilburg University Tuition Waiver (7,000 EUR)
2015	Orange Tulip Scholarship (6,500 EUR)

PEDOGOGICAL EXPERIENCE

2023, 2006	Jury for the Swedish Demographic Association Thesis Competition.
2023	Globalization (seminar leader), Bachelor´s Programme in Sociology, Department of Sociology, Stockholm University, Spring Term 2023.
2023	Complex Inequality (invited lecturer), Master's Program in Sociology, Department of Sociology, Stockholm University, Spring Term 2023.
2022	Discussant for Master's Program in Demography thesis defense. “Exploring Social Trust and its association with Partnership in Sweden”.
2019-2021	Introduction to Quantitative Data Management and Statistics, Multi-disciplinary Master’s Program in Demography, Department of Sociology and the Demography Unit, Stockholm University, Winter Terms 2019 & 2020.
2020	Quantitative Methods in the Social Sciences II (responsible for workshops for math supports), Master's Program in Sociology, Department of Sociology, Stockholm University, Spring Term 2020.
2014	Civil Society and Philanthropy (course assistant, in cooperation with Rural Women Development Foundation Guangdong), Sun Yat-Sen University, Spring Term 2014.

RESEARCH VISITS

2026	Helsinki Institute for Demography and Population Health (PopHel), University of Helsinki, hosted by Hannu Lahtinen and Karri Silventoinen, in September.
2025	INVEST Research Flagship Centre, University of Turku, hosted by Linus Andersson and Mikko Niemäla, in September - October.

2024	Center for Social Research, Guanghua School of Management, Peking University, hosted by Qiang Ren, in April.
2023	Centre for Fertility and Health, Norwegian Institute of Public Health, hosted by Vegard Skirbekk, in September.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

2026	"Religious Disaffiliation in a Secularized Society: A Register-Based Study of Finland on the Impact of Policy and Legislative Changes". Co-authored with Martin Kolk, Jan Saarela, and Vegard Skirbekk. Poster presentation at the Åbo Akademi Social Science Poster Conference 2026, Vaasa, Finland, in April.
2025	"Religion and gender-typical educational choice: evidence from Finnish population register data". Co-authored with Catherine Bowen, Vegard Skirbekk, and Jan Saarela. Presented at the Research Network 34 Sociology of Religion Mid-Term Conference, Tilburg, the Netherlands, in August.
2025	"A Register-Based Study on Legislation Changes and Religious (Dis)Affiliation in Highly Secular Finland". Co-authored with Martin Kolk, Jan Saarela, and Vegard Skirbekk. Presented at the Research Network 34 Sociology of Religion Mid-Term Conference, Tilburg, the Netherlands, in August.
2025	"Religion and gender-typical educational choice: evidence from Finnish population register data". Co-authored with Catherine Bowen, Vegard Skirbekk, and Jan Saarela. Poster presentation at the Nordic Demographic Symposium 2025, Middelfart, Denmark, in June.
2025	"Religiously-(Un)Affiliated More Likely to Pursue Gender-Atypical Studies: Analysis of Finnish Register Data". Co-authored with Catherine Bowen, Vegard Skirbekk, and Jan Saarela. Poster presentation at the Population Association of America 2025 Annual Meeting, Washington DC, USA, in April.
2025	"A Register-Based Study on Legislation Changes and Religious (Dis)Affiliation in Highly Secular Finland". Co-authored with Martin Kolk, Jan Saarela, and Vegard Skirbekk. Presented at the 82nd Annual Midwest Political Science Association Conference, Chicago, USA, in April.
2024	"Religiously-(un)affiliated more likely to pursue gender-atypical studies: Analysis of Finnish register data". Co-authored with Catherine Bowen, Vegard Skirbekk, and Jan Saarela. Presented at the 31st Nordic Sociological Association conference, Norrköping, Sweden, in August.
2024	"The Returns to Returning – Economic Returns to Remigration to Finland with Sibling Comparison". Co-authored with Jani Turunen, Siddartha Aradhya, and Jan Saarela. Presented at the European Population Conference 2024, Edinburgh, UK, in June.

2024 “The Returns to Returning – Economic Returns to Remigration to Finland with Sibling Comparison”. Co-authored with Jani Turunen, Siddartha Aradhya, and Jan Saarela. Presented at the Research Committee 28 on Social Stratification and Mobility Spring Meeting 2024, Shanghai, China, in May.

2023 “The returns to returning – Economic returns to remigration to Finland”. Co-authored with Jani Turunen, Siddartha Aradhya, and Jan Saarela. Presented at the XX International Sociological Association World Congress of Sociology, Melbourne, Australia, in June.

2023 “Nudged My Religion Away? - a Register-Based Study on the Impact of Deregulation Law on Religious Affiliation in Highly Secular Finland and the Sociodemographic Heterogeneity”. Co-authored with Martin Kolk, Jan Saarela and Vegard Skirbekk. Presented at the XX International Sociological Association World Congress of Sociology, Melbourne, Australia, in June.

2023 “The Returns to Returning: Economic Returns to Remigration to Finland with Sibling Comparison Design”. Co-authored with Jani Turunen, Siddartha Aradhya, and Jan Saarela. Poster presentation at Population Association of America 2023 Annual Meeting, New Orleans, US, in April.

2023 “The Church of Two Ethnolinguistic Groups: A Register-Based Study on Religious Affiliation of Finnish and Swedish Speakers in Finland”. Co-authored with Martin Kolk and Jan Saarela. Poster presentation at Population Association of America 2023 Annual Meeting, New Orleans, US, in April.

2022 “The returns to returning – Economic returns to remigration to Finland”. Co-authored with Jani Turunen, Siddartha Aradhya, and Jan Saarela. Presented at Swedish Register-Based Research Summit 2022, Stockholm, Sweden, in November.

2022 “Churches of two ethnicities – A register-based study on ethnolinguistic differences of religious affiliation in Finland”. Co-authored with Martin Kolk and Jan Saarela. Presented at Swedish Register-Based Research Summit 2022, Stockholm, Sweden, in November.

2022 “Impact of religious deregulation and sociodemographic heterogeneity: Studying religion affiliation in the highly secular Finland through national register data”. Co-authored with Martin Kolk, Jan Saarela and Vegard Skirbekk. Presented at the 2002 Association for the Study of Religion, Economics and Culture Europe Conference, London, UK, in October.

2022 “Trends of religious affiliation in the highly secular Finland 1971-2020: Studying religion with population register data”. Presented the 83rd Annual Meeting of the Association for the Sociology of Religion, Los Angeles, USA, in August.

2022 “The role of religious engagement in mobilizing immigrant political participation in Sweden”. Presented the 83rd Annual Meeting of the Association for the Sociology of Religion, Los Angeles, USA, in August.

2022 “Trends of religious affiliation in the highly secular Finnish context: Studying religion through national register data”. Poster presentation at 22nd Nordic Demographic Symposium, Oslo, Norway, in June.

2022 "The Role of Religious Engagement in Mobilizing Immigrants' Political Participation in Sweden". Presented at Sociologidagarna 2022, Uppsala, Sweden, in March.

2021 "The Role of Religious Engagement in Mobilizing Immigrants' Political Participation - the Case of Sweden". Presented at European Consortium for Political Research General Conference 2021, virtual presentation due to COVD-19, in September.

2021 "The Role of Religious Engagement in Mobilizing Immigrants' Political Participation - the Case of Sweden". Presented at American Sociological Association 2021 Annual Meeting, virtual presentation due to COVD-19, in August.

2021 "Mediators Explaining Radical Right Voting Patterns of Christians in Europe: Attitudes toward Immigrants, Values, or Social Capital?". Presented at 78th Annual Midwest Political Science Association Conference, virtual presentation due to COVD-19, in April.

2020 "Christian Religiosity and Voting for Radical Right Parties in Europe: Testing Mediators". Presented at 6th Interim Conference of Political Sociology Research Network 32, virtual presentation due to COVD-19, in October.

2020 "Christian Religiosity and Voting for Radical Right Parties in Europe: Testing Mediators". Accepted for presentation at the 2020 Annual Meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion and the Religious Research Association, cancelled due to COVID-19.

2020 "Christianity and voting for populist radical right parties in Europe". Accepted for presentation at Sociologidagarna 2020, cancelled due to COVID-19.

2019 "Secularization and Politicisation: How Religious Contexts Shape the Impact of Same-Sex Marriage and Partnership Legislation on Public Attitudes towards Homosexuality in Europe". Presented at the European Consortium for Political Research General Conference 2019, Wrocław, Poland, in September.

2019 "Secularization and Political Polarization: How Religious Contexts Shape the Impact of Same-Sex Marriage and Partnership Legislation on Public Attitudes towards Homosexuality in Europe". Presented at the 81st Annual Meeting of the Association for the Sociology of Religion, New York City, USA, in August.

2019 "Secularity and politicization: How religious contexts shape the impact of same-sex marriage and partnership legislations on public attitudes towards homosexuality in Europe". Presented at the 4th International European Social Survey Conference, Mannheim, Germany, in April.

2018 "Religiosity, Legislation, and Homosexual Attitudes in Europe" at the Impact of Religion International Conference Doctoral Workshop, Uppsala, Sweden, in April.

INVITED PRESENTATIONS

2026	"Registered-based research on religious affiliation in Finland". Åbo Akademi Joint Religious Research Workshop. Åbo Akademi University.
2026	"Religious Disaffiliation in a Secularized Society: A Register-Based Study of Finland on the Impact of Policy and Legislative Changes". Fika Seminar of Helsinki Institute for Demography and Population Health, University of Helsinki.
2025	"Registered-based research on religious affiliations in highly secular Finland". The Study of Cultures research seminar, Åbo Akademi University & University of Turku.
2025	"Returns to returning with sibling comparisons: Register-based evidence from Finland". INVEST Ethnic minorities and migrants working group, INVEST Research Flagship Centre, University of Turku.
2025	"Religion and gender-typical educational choice: evidence from Finnish population register data". Fika Seminar of Helsinki Institute for Demography and Population Health, University of Helsinki.
2025	"Registered-based research on religious affiliations in highly secular Finland". INVEST Fellowship Researcher Lecture, INVEST Research Flagship Centre, University of Turku.
2025	"A Register-Based Study on Legislation Changes and Religious (Dis)Affiliation in Highly Secular Finland". Stockholm University Demography Unit (SUDA) Colloquium, Department of Sociology, Stockholm University.
2025	"Religiously-(un)affiliated more likely to pursue gender-atypical studies: Analysis of Finnish register data". Seminar of Department of Sociology, Umeå University.
2024	"Religion i registerdata". (Joint DemSwe project presentation). SLS forskarträff 2025, Svenska litteratursällskapet i Finland.
2024	"Technology advancement, risk of job loss, and fertility and health consequences in China". DIMJOB final symposium, Centre for Fertility and Health, Norwegian Institute of Public Health (virtual presentation).
2023	"Språkregistrering och religionstillhörighet". (Joint DemSwed project presentation). The Science Carnival in Vaasa.
2023	"National Lutheran Church Affiliation Difference between Finnish and Swedish Speakers in Finland". Workshop on traditionalism, fertility, labour market behaviour and health, Centre for Fertility and Health, Norwegian Institute of Public Health.
2023	"The Returns to Returning – Economic returns to remigration to Finland 1970–2020". Higher Seminars in Social Work, Department of Social Work, Södertörn University (cancelled due to sickness).

2023 "Socioeconomic advantage or community attachment? A register-based study on the secularization difference between Finnish and Swedish speakers in Finland". Stockholm University Demography Unit (SUDA) Colloquium. Department of Sociology, Stockholm University.

2023 "The returns to returning – Economic returns to remigration to Finland with sibling comparison". Stockholm Session on Migration, Department of Sociology, Stockholm University.

2023 "Studying religious affiliations through national register data in highly secular Finland". Forskarseminarium Religionsvetenskap, Department of the Study of Religions, Södertörn University.

2021 "Mediators Explaining Radical Right Voting Patterns of Christians in Europe: Attitudes toward Immigrants, Values, or Social Capital?". LNU Seminar in Political Science, Department of Political Science, Linnaeus University (virtual presentation).

2021 "The Role of Religious Engagement in Mobilizing Immigrants' Political Participation - the Case of Sweden". Stockholm Session on Migration, Department of Sociology, Stockholm University.

MEDIA PRESENTATIONS

Svenskspråkiga tillhör i högre grad den evangelisk-lutherska kyrkan i Finland (with Jan Saarela). (2026, November 16). Teologia.fi. https://teologia.fi/2026/11/svenskspraka-tillhor-i-hogre-grad-den-evangelisk-lutherska-kyrkan-i-finland/

Närmare en femtedel av svenskspråkiga kvinnor emigrerar hellre än tar en finsk partner (Joint DemSwed project presentation). (2023, November 17). Hufvudstadsbladet. https://www.hbl.fi/artikel/e63eb983-ede4-578f-873d-92b6e9e8a837

Diskriminerade invandrare röstar mer sällan – muslimer särskilt utsatta. (2022, February 19). Sveriges Radio. https://sverigesradio.se/artikel/diskriminerade-invandrare-rostar-mer-sallan-muslimer-sarskilt-utsatta

Religiöst aktiva invandrare engagerar sig mindre politiskt. (2021, December 5). Dagen. https://www.dagen.se/nyheter/2021/12/05/religiost-aktiva-invandrare-ar-mindre-politiskt-engagerade/

Religiöst aktiva invandrare har lägre valdeltagande och är mindre politiskt aktiva. (2021, November 19). Kyrkans tidning. https://www.kyrkanstidning.se/nyhet/religiost-aktiva-invandrare-ar-mindre-politiskt-aktiva

Studie: Valdeltagandet lägre bland religiösa invandrare som diskrimineras. (2021, November 15). Tidningen Syre. https://tidningensyre.se/2021/15-november-2021/studie-valdeltagandet-lagre-bland-religiosa-invandrare-som-diskrimineras

Christians neither more nor less likely to vote for the far right than nonreligious. (2021, June 3). The Academic Times. https://academictimes.com/christians-neither-more-nor-less-likely-to-vote-for-the-far-right-than-nonreligious/

OTHER ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

2022-2024	Peer review for journals: *Advances in Life Course Research*, *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, *Journal of Comparative Economics*, *Comparative Migration Studies*, *Journal of Religion in Europe*, *Social Science Research*, *Sociological Forum*, *Scandinavian Studies*, *Nordic Yearbook of Population Research*, *Sociological Perspectives*, *European Sociological Review*, *Sexuality & Culture*, *Journal of Population Research*
2025	Discussant for panel "Religion in Communist and Post-Communist Countries" and poster panel "Understanding Contemporary American Politics" at 82nd Annual Midwest Political Science Association Conference, Chicago, USA, in April.
2025	Discussant for poster panel "COVID-19; Data and Methods" at the Population Association of America 2023 Annual Meeting, New Orleans, USA, in April.
2021	Discussant for panel "What Affects Policy Attitudes" at 78th Annual Midwest Political Science Association Conference, virtual panel due to COVD-19.
2017	Summer School on Social Cohesion, Bremen International Graduate School of Social Sciences (BIGSSS), Bremen, Germany.
2016-2017	Three research traineeships for comparative research projects on religion and values in Europe with European Value Study data, Tilburg University, the Netherlands.
2016	Summer Course on Causal Inference, University of Michigan-Peking University Joint Institute, Peking University, Beijing, China.
2013-2014	Research assistant internship for project "Chinese Nongovernmental Philanthropy Organizations Development Survey", School of Philanthropy, Sun Yat-Sen University, Guangzhou, China.

ADMINISTRATIVE & OTHER ACTIVITIES

2018-2019	Member of Doctorate Council, Department of Sociology, Stockholm University, Sweden. Representative to the Social Science Faculty Board
2015-2016	Member of Educational Committee Research Master, Tilburg School of Social and Behavioral Sciences, Tilburg University, the Netherlands.
2014	Volunteer work at Guangdong Rural Women Development Foundation, Guangzhou, China.
2013	Internship as data analyst at South China Sea Institute of Oceanology, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Guangzhou, China.
2011	Volunteer for fieldwork investigation focusing on local villagers and rural labor migrants in Shiling, Youshili Social Work Development Center, Guangzhou, China.

ACADEMIC MEMBERSHIP

International Sociological Association
Research Committee 28 on Social Stratification and Mobility
Midwest Political Science Association

Nordic Sociological Association
Finnish Demographic Society
Swedish Sociological Association
Swedish Demographic Association
European Consortium for Political Research, Standing Groups: Migration and Ethnicity; Politics and Religion; Political Sociology; Gender and Politics; Public Opinion and Voting Behaviour

SKILLS

Language	English (professional), Chinese (native Mandarin, proficient Cantonese) Swedish (professional), Japanese (proficient) Finnish (beginner), Korean (beginner) Norwegian & Danish (reading)
Software	R, Stata, SPSS, SAS, LaTeX, MS Office, Zotero

REFERENCES

Jens Rydgren, Professor, Department of Sociology, Stockholm University
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Sunnee Billingsley, Professor, Department of Sociology and Demographic Unit (SUDA), Stockholm University
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Siddartha Aradhya, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology and Demographic Unit (SUDA), Stockholm University
siddartha.aradhya@sociology.su.se

LINKS

Stockholm University: https://www.su.se/english/profiles/wxia-1.341939

Åbo Akademi University: https://research.abo.fi/sv/persons/weiqian-xia

ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6301-216X

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Twitter: https://twitter.com/weiqianxia

LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/in/vincenthsia/

ResearchGate: https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Weiqian-Xia

Academia: https://braintrain.academia.edu/WeiqianXia

Google Scholar: https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=eWEp490AAAAJ&hl=en

OSF: https://osf.io/xkybn/