

# ECPR Standing Group on **Political communication**



Dear members of the Standing Group on Political Communication,

Below please find information on the winner of the Best Paper Award 2021 within the Political Communication section of the ECPR General Conference, information on the workshop 'Moralizing in public debates' at the upcoming ECPR Joint Sessions that is sponsored by our standing group, a job opening for a full professorship, and a call for abstracts for a special issue on negative politics.

If you have news you want included in the next newsletter, please email: [l.aaldering@vu.nl](mailto:l.aaldering@vu.nl).

For now, we wish you a great and relaxing Christmas break and a wonderful start of 2022!

Kind regards,

The Steering Committee of the ECPR's standing group on Political Communication

Laura Jacobs  
Linda Bos  
Katjana Gattermann  
Jonas Lefevere  
Loes Aaldering

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## Political Communication ECPR Best Paper Award 2021

The standing group on Political Communication hands out a best paper award for the best paper presented at the ECPR General Conference of 2021. Based on the suggestions of the chairs and discussants of the panels, the following papers were nominated for the best paper award:

Panel	Paper	Authors
Challenges in Digital Political Communication & Journalism	"Parties' Twitter discourse on ruling with anti-establishment parties. Who wants to do it with whom and why?"	Laura Jacobs
Media effects: Branding, Agenda-setting & Framing	"Staying on message or on topic? An analysis of candidates' issue emphasis in Belgian election debates, 1985-2019"	Jonas Lefevere, Ine Goovaerts & Emma Turkenburg
Populist communication and polarization	"Wer ist das Volk?' In- and outgroups of populist political communication'	Lisa Zehnter
Political Communication in Elections & Campaigns	"The Effects of Exposure to Political Advertising"	Teresa Esteban-Casanelles
Social Media & Political Communication: Trends & Implications	"A Cross-Platform Analysis of Far-right Online Communication: Studying Changes in Hate Speech Prevalence in the Aftermath of Terrorist Attacks"	Julian Hohner, Nicolas Grünbeck, Sarah Lindebner, Heidi Schulze & Daniel Wagner
Mediatization, politicization, and (de-)legitimization of immigration in Europe	"Discontentment trumps Euphoria: Interacting with European Political Elites' Migration-Related Messages on Social Media"	Tobias Heidenreich, Hajo Boomgaarden, Jakob-Moritz Eberl & Fabienne Lind
Candidates, Leaders & Personalization	"When gender stereotypes benefit candidates: Evidence from Slovak presidential elections in 2009 and 2019"	Mária Žuffová
Misinformation, Fake News, & Political Communication	"Uninformed or misinformed citizens? A panel study of how and why using social media as a news source influences political knowledge accuracy and confidence"	Atle Haugsgjerd, Rune Karlsen, Kari Steen-Johnsen & Audun Beyer
Political Communication in the COVID-19 Pandemic	Mic, Pandemic and Epic: Gender Effect on Political Leaders' Nonverbal Communicative Structure during the COVID-19 Crisis	Tsfira Grebelsky-Lichtman & Roy Katz

The best paper award committee (including Dren Gerguri, Alexander Fotescu, Safia Dahani, Tiago André Lopes, Jihyun Kwo, Katjana Gatermann, Loes Aaldering and Linda Bos) have read and evaluated all papers, and **we have a winner!!!**

The best paper presented at the Political Communication Section of the ECPR General Conference 2021 is....

**“When gender stereotypes benefit candidates: Evidence from Slovak presidential elections in 2009 and 2019” by Maria Zuffova.**

The best paper award committee noted: ‘Great paper!’, ‘Overall, it is a highly important subject, the paper is well-written and original and provides highly insightful findings’, and ‘The data are solid and the conclusion adds to the global knowledge we have on gendered media coverage’.

Maria Zuffova, congratulations!!!

On next year's ECPR general conference, during the Business Meeting, we will officially hand out the Best Paper Award 2021!

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### **Call for Abstracts: 'Moralizing in public debates', workshop at the ECPR Joint Sessions, April 19-22 2022, University of Edinburgh**

Although public moral discourse has always been present in the European tradition, in recent years fight between good and evil become the centre point of the political dispute (Lovin, 2021). Political messages nowadays are less explicit about conflicting interests, rather they focus on the moral implications of political actions (Grubbs et al., 2019). Much of contemporary political rhetoric is about purification and claims for moral leadership (Rhode, 2006). Moralizing is one of the key components of the political interactions both at the local, national, and international levels, but can take different forms depending on the contexts in which it occurs. Even though the literature on morality in politics is rich with publications describing the philosophical (Brink, 1997) and psychological foundations (Davidson et al., 2003), its communicative features need refreshed academic attention. This workshop contributes to the academic discussion on moralization in political communication, in particular, on its relevance for the increasingly conflictual politics in Europe.

Dworkin (2003) distinguishes between ethics and morality by arguing that ethics includes common convictions about which kinds of lives are good or bad for people, while morality includes principles about how the ruling elite should treat citizens. Further, moralization means "the acquisition of moral qualities by objects and activities that were previously morally neutral" (Rozin, 2010: 380). The objects and activities do not have intrinsic moral qualities but are determined by the character of the arguments used in the debate (Rebecca et al., 2019). Moralization always has collective and communicative aspects: the shared ethical foundations are the robust predictor of political behaviour. The morality-based value judgments are not compatible with public deliberation as being often intolerant to disagreements. A high level of moralization leads to a conflict of absolutes, increasing hostility, stigmatization, and decreasing chances of political compromises (e.g. Yosida, 2020). This is also one of the key features of populism (Ruzza, 2020). However, morality is inevitable in democracies and useful for mobilization. Moralizing messages simplify the complexities of the political domain and encourage the citizens to view the legislative election as a moral decision. If politicians can convince that, they are the moral choice and the other candidate is the immoral choice, then they can increase the participation that stems from moral conviction. Moralization is promoted by exchanges of ideas about social values and norms, still, we need a more nuanced understanding of why and how political actors and ordinary citizens communicate about politics in a moral light. The workshop is also inspired by the study of the affective side of moralizing rhetoric. Researches support the claim that a diverse packet of emotions such as anger, contempt, disgust, guilt, shame, and pride play an essential role in moral cognition (Haidt, 2003). The expressions of moral emotions undoubtedly matter, yet it is rather an undiscovered field in political communication studies. The workshop's goal is to fill this gap, building on the premise that morally justified manner of speaking and the rise of antagonistic interactions in politics are very much interconnected.

**Deadline:** February 2, 2022

More information about the Joint Sessions: <https://ecpr.eu/Events/Event/Content?ID=1033&EventID=163>

More information about the workshop: <https://ecpr.eu/Events/Event/PanelDetails/11360>

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## Job Opening

**Where:** University of Vienna

**Position:** University Professor of Communication with a focus on Media Change and Media Innovation

**For:** permanent position

**Deadline:** 12-01-2022

**More information:** [https://personalwesen.univie.ac.at/en/jobs-recruiting/professorships/detail-page/news/communication-with-a-focus-on-media-change-and-media-innovation-1/?no\\_cache=1&tx\\_news\\_pi1%5Bcontroller%5D=News&tx\\_news\\_pi1%5Baction%5D=detail&cHash=a4a2eea6027a71da1c43e5be125e13ac](https://personalwesen.univie.ac.at/en/jobs-recruiting/professorships/detail-page/news/communication-with-a-focus-on-media-change-and-media-innovation-1/?no_cache=1&tx_news_pi1%5Bcontroller%5D=News&tx_news_pi1%5Baction%5D=detail&cHash=a4a2eea6027a71da1c43e5be125e13ac)

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## Call for Abstracts: Special Issue Politics and Governance - Negative Politics: Leader Personality, Negative Campaigning, and the Oppositional Dynamics of Contemporary Politics

*Editor(s):* Alessandro Nai (University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands), Diego Garzia (University of Lausanne, Switzerland), Loes Aaldering (Free University Amsterdam, the Netherlands), Frederico Ferreira da Silva (University of Lausanne, Switzerland) and Katjana Gattermann (University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands)

Much of contemporary political dynamics have a *negative* component. Electoral campaigns increasingly promote political attacks against opponents; partisan differences in voters are morphing into affective polarization and profound dislike of the other camp; negative partisanship leads citizens to vote against disliked candidates instead of in favor of liked ones; candidates with dark and uncompromising personality traits are on the rise worldwide; news media are historically dragged towards sensational coverage of political events and the use of a conflict framing, and new online (and social) media follow suit; and waves of mass protests regularly shook the established political order. These developments all share an oppositional component and tend to rely on political narratives framed negatively. Indeed, in the background of many of these developments are the fundamental dynamics of entrenched “negativity biases”—according to which negative considerations have, when compared to equivalent positive considerations, a stronger effect and saliency.

Yet, research on these phenomena has mostly evolved on separate tracks. The thematic issue takes stock of these separate strands of research and brings together empirical work on election campaigning, leader personality, negative voting, and antagonistic political attitudes towards the establishment of an integrated framework on “negative politics.” As such, the thematic issue invites work that tackles one or more of the following issues (e.g.):

How to explain the rise of political leaders with a “darker” personality profile (e.g., low agreeableness, high narcissism, low integrity)?

Are negative personality profiles in political leaders more successfully (e.g., electorally) than positive profiles?

What are the effects of elite polarization and the use of negativity, incivility, and populist communication on affective polarization and negative voting?

Who likes negative politics? What are the “dark” individual underpinnings (e.g., in terms of attitudes or personality traits) that moderate the effectiveness of negative communication or drive participation to protest events?

What is the relation between negative campaigning and negative voting and negative partisanship?

How are negative voting and negative partisanship related to mass protests and political representation?

How do patterns of social media consumption, content exposure, and types of interactions relate to the development of negative attitudes towards parties/candidates?

The scope of the thematic issue is empirical in nature, and as such priority will be given to empirical investigations presenting new and compelling observational or experimental evidence—even more so if comparative and cross-sectional in nature. This being said, we also welcome meta-analyses, systematic literature reviews, and critical theoretical contributions.

*Instructions for Authors:*

Authors interested in submitting a paper for this issue are asked to consult the journal's instructions for authors and submit their abstracts (maximum of 250 words, with a tentative title) through the abstracts system ([here](#)).

**Submission of Abstracts:** 15 January 2022

**Submission of Full Papers:** 15-30 April 2022

**Publication of the Issue:** October/December 2022

More information can be found here:

<https://www.cogitatiopress.com/politicsandgovernance/pages/view/nextissues#NegativePolitics>

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