

ECPR Standing Group on **Political communication**



Newsletter February 2023

Dear members of the Standing Group on Political Communication,

Below please find information on the following:

- **Applications for the Summer School of our Standing Group on Political Communication are now open!** (deadline March 24!).
- **At the ECPR general conference this year, there will once more be a section on political communication: “Political Communication in the Digital Age”.** The call for papers and panels is out now (deadline February 28!).
- **A call for abstracts for the conference on “Characters Assassination, Illiberalism, and the Erosion of Civic Rights”** (deadline February 15!).
- **A call for papers for the Digital Political Science workshop** at the Belgian-Dutch Political Science Conference (Politicologenetmaal) (deadline March 28!).
- **A vacancy for an Assistant Professor** in Political Science, with expertise in Comparative Politics at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam.
- **Vacancies for three post-docs** related to news, political content, and public debate in online environments at University of Amsterdam.
- **A vacancy for an Associate Professor** in Sociology / Political Science, with expertise in various fields related to political communication, at NTNU.

In further news, the list of accepted papers for the **Joint Sessions workshop** on “Political Communication and Policymaking in the Age of Digital Media”, organised by Emiliano Grossman and Ana Ines Langer can be accessed [here](#)! Also a reminder: we have set up a Mastodon account. If you are active on Mastodon and want to keep up to date on news about the standing group, you can find us here: https://mastodon.nl/@ECPR_PolCom@toot.io

If you have news you want included in the next newsletter, please email: jonas.lefevere@vub.be

Kind regards,

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

Laura Jacobs
Linda Bos
Katjana Gattermann
Jonas Lefevere
Loes Aldering

ECPR Political Communication Summer School 2023: Call for Applications open!

[More information on the summer school, and instructions on how to apply here](#)

The ECPR Summer School on Political Communication is a new initiative taken by the ECPR Standing Group on Political Communication (Conveners: Linda Bos, Katjana Gattermann, Laura Jacobs, Jonas Lefevere and Loes Aaldering). The first edition will take place in **Amsterdam** at the Amsterdam School of Communication Research (ASCoR) from **3-7 July 2023** and will be organized in close collaboration with ECPR. The main objective is **to provide PhD students with a future-oriented conceptual and methodological toolkit for the study of political communication**: it thus features 5 days of methods and theory lectures from leading scholars in the field, plus a keynote lecture, roundtable, presentations by PhD students in smaller groups and plenty other opportunities for both formal and informal exchange and interaction.

How to apply?

More information on the contents of the summer school, and all practicalities on how to apply, are now available on the [dedicated summer school page on the ECPR website](#). The deadline for applications is March 24 at midnight (UK time).

ECPR General Conference Section “Political Communication in the Digital Age”: Call for Papers & Panels is now open!

[More information on the session, and general conference, here](#)

Deadline for applications: February 28

Once more, there will be a session on political communication endorsed by the standing group. Sophie Minihold (University of Vienna) and Daniel Thiele (University of Vienna) will act as session chairs for this year’s session!

Political communication research has never been more relevant than it is today, as digital media have permeated deeply into all political, social, and personal spheres. Citizens use digital platforms to inform themselves, form opinions, express their views, and organize collective action, as well as for entertainment and socializing. Politicians, parties, but also transnational political actors use these platforms to reach, persuade and influence voters and citizens.

This Section aims to bring together contributions from the field of political communication research in the broadest sense. Broadly speaking, we have a special interest in contributions that enhance our understanding of digital political communication.

We look forward to receiving submissions on traditional aspects of political communication such as election campaigns, party communication, political journalism, mediatization, and media effects, as well as submissions targeting topics such as mis- and disinformation, visual communication, citizen-generated communication and citizen competences, news avoidance, negativity and incivility, gender and power imbalances, or populist and radical-right communication.

Papers on other topics are also welcome, insofar as they relate to the broad field of political communication. We appreciate Papers using content analyses, experimental designs, survey methods, qualitative methods, mixed methods, as well as theoretical contributions. In particular, we welcome contributions that advance the methods of research designs within the field. We particularly encourage submissions that use open science practices to promote transparency in the field of political communication research.

We encourage full Panel submissions, but also propose the following ten Panels:

1. Traditional Campaigns and Elite Communication
2. The Power of (Political) Visual Communication
3. Capturing and Combatting Mis- and Disinformation in the Digital Age
4. Citizen Focus: Competences and Citizen-Generated Content Online
5. Political Journalism and News Avoidance
6. Media Effects on Political Attitudes and Behaviours
7. The Role of Emotion: Hate Speech, Incivility, and Negativity
8. Social Media, Fragmentation and Social Movements
9. Data-Driven Campaigns: Navigating Challenges and Opportunities
10. Advancing Research Designs and Methods in Political Communication

Call for Abstracts: International Conference on Character Assassination, Illiberalism, and the Erosion of Civic Rights

Amsterdam, 21-23 June 2023

Submit your 250 word abstract by February 15!

All details can be found here: <https://conta.cc/3jVcE60>

Hosts: Martijn Icks, Faculty of Humanities at University of Amsterdam; Alessandro Nai, Amsterdam School of Communication Research (ASCoR) at University of Amsterdam; Edwina Hagen, Faculty of Humanities at VU University

Co-Sponsors: Lab for Character Assassination and Reputation Politics (CARP); Illiberalism Studies Program (The George Washington University)

Location: University of Amsterdam & VU University, 21-23 June 2023

About the conference:

Liberal democracies face multiple external challenges from autocracies across the world, as well as internal challenges from populist politicians, nativism, and the normalization of incivility in media and political discourses. Character assassination (CA) often accompanies these political and social conflicts, especially when unresolved ideological and moral issues are involved. Social conflicts become aggravated when moral issues intermix with political and economic factors. Factions then resort to persuasive attacks on character to delegitimize and disempower their opponents. This increased polarization and aggressiveness of elite rhetoric likely foster voters' cynicism and discontent with politics as usual. The increasing gap between liberal elites and the disgruntled electorate, in turn, likely provides even more fertile ground for intra-elite conflict, and paves the way for illiberal conceptions of the democratic order.

This conference seeks to explore current-day illiberal tendencies as well as historical societies where emerging strong men and dictators manipulated the political system and undermined the rights of the people. In particular, it focuses on practices of character assassination in these highly unstable and polarized environments. We invite scholars to submit research and works in progress which will discuss the drivers of illiberalism and the erosion of civic rights in ages of conflicting ideologies from a variety of disciplinary and cultural angles. We welcome both theoretical work and case studies. Authors of selected best papers will be invited to submit their work to the Journal of Illiberalism Studies.

Suggested Topics:

- The erosion of civic rights in historical societies;
- Character assassination as an illiberal practice;
- Negative campaigns and their effects on behaviors and attitudes;
- Political incivility over time and space;
- The psychological and emotional underpinnings of persuasive attacks on character;
- Populist rhetoric, impression management, and democratic elections;
- Political incivility and polarization;
- The spread of culture wars in the U.S., the E.U., and beyond;
- Illiberal technologies and societal transformations;
- The effects of cancel culture on civil discourse;
- Far-right and far-left social movements;
- Digital activism and the practices of disruption and subversion;
- Neo-authoritarian forms of coercion and dominance in the Internet Age;
- Mediated public scandals in liberal democracies;
- Personalization and infotainment issues;
- Legal aspects of libel, slander, and defamation;
- Reputation management, image repair, and inoculation strategies.

Please submit a 250-word abstract of your paper by 15 February, 2023. A limited number of slots for online presentations will be made available. If you would like to opt for one of these, please include a brief motivation explaining your reasons. **Email the abstract as an attachment to Martijn Icks (M.Icks@uva.nl) and Sergei Samoilenko (ssamoyle@gmu.edu).**

Call for Papers: Digital Political Science workshop at Politicologenetmaal 2023

[Call for papers and conference information available here](#)

We are excited to announce the Politicologenetmaal 2023 Workshop on Digital Political Science (<https://politicologenetmaal.eu/call-for-papers-2023/>). The workshop will take place on 1-2 June in Leuven, Belgium and will focus on exploring how computational data gathering and analysis can enhance our understanding of political behavior, communication, representation, public policy, and the like.

Digitalization presents both challenges and opportunities for political science. Emerging resources such as digitized documents or social media data hold the promise of new research questions and paradigms, but also pose significant challenges to political science. One major challenge lies in reconciling dominant research questions and methods in the field with these new data types and techniques.

We invite contributions demonstrating how classic political science questions can be tackled through computer-assisted data gathering and analysis techniques. This includes, but is not limited to, natural language processing, social network analysis, and digital methods. We also encourage submissions that connect to recent international scholarly efforts in addressing pressing societal problems like disinformation, inequality, radicalization, polarization, etc.

We welcome submissions from both novice and experienced computational researchers, and we look forward to an engaging and productive discussion. The deadline for submitting abstracts is 28 March (<https://politicologenetmaal.eu/call-for-papers-2023/>). If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the workshop organisers, Evelien Willems (Evelien.Willems@uantwerpen.be), Tom Willaert (Tom.Willaert@vub.be) and Frederik Heylen (frederik.heylen@datamarinier.be).

Assistant Professor (UD) in Political Science with expertise in comparative politics

[Full vacancy available here](#)

Are you a political scientist with a strong and appealing research agenda that involves comparative politics in an international context? Are you motivated to teach substantive and more methodological courses in this domain? Then, please apply at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (VU).

The Department of Political Science and Public Administration is searching for an Assistant Professor in Political Science with expertise in comparative politics in an international context. The envisaged candidate is to teach courses in comparative politics and related themes and undertake research that contributes to our research program. We are keen to have a colleague who is methodologically self-reflective and commands distinctive skills in quantitative and/or qualitative methods. Given the range of expertise in the department, we particularly welcome applicants who hold expertise on (parts of) the Global South. Other thematic interests that would enrich our political science team include political parties, political violence, processes of democratization, and digital politics.

Do you have a compelling research agenda that can contribute to our research programme on 'Multi-Layered Governance in Europe and beyond'? Then this may be an interesting offer for you. You need to hold a PhD in political science and demonstrate experience in teaching with positive evaluations. You maintain international research networks. You have a proven track record of high-quality international publications, and the potential to acquire research grants.

As an Assistant Professor, you are expected to be able to teach a variety of courses in political science at Bachelor and Master level. This may also be in the Bachelor in Philosophy, Politics and Economics (PPE) and the Master in Law and Politics of International Security. You conduct research, publish this in international, refereed journals and, where feasible, spread the findings to a wider public. Besides, you are active in acquiring external research funding, alone or with colleagues, and you may co-supervise PhD candidates.

Three Post-Doc Vacancies at the Amsterdam School of Communication Research

[Full vacancy available here](#)

Do you enjoy...

- engaging in cutting-edge research as part of a larger team?
- answering theoretically and societally important communication science questions?
- applying computational approaches yourself and/or working closely together with computationally-minded colleagues?
- thinking about how (algorithmic) design choices impact news, political information, and public debate?

Then the job as a Postdoctoral Researcher in one of our computational communication science projects is perfect for you. You will become a member of the Political Communication & Journalism group part of the Amsterdam School of Communication Research, as well as the Computational Communication Science Amsterdam Lab.

Associate Professor in Sociology/Political Science at the NTNU

[Full vacancy available here](#)

The Department of Sociology and Political Science (ISS) has one permanent position available as Associate Professor in Sociology or Political Science, within the field of media sociology, digitalization/, information technology/ and societal development, political communication or/and political behavior. The candidate shall teach within the social scientific field of media, communication and information technology. Applicants must be able to link their research background to the strategic focus areas and research groups at the Department.

ISS is one of Norway's largest and leading social science communities. The Department conducts research, teaching and dissemination within sociology, political science, sports science and media science. The Department has around 115 employees (equaling 105 full-time man/year work) and 10 study programmes. Our research and education shall contribute to identifying and meeting central societal challenges, in order to contribute to solving challenges that Norway and the world community are facing. Our education programs must provide competence that makes our candidates attractive on the labor market and key contributors to societal development. The research must be at a high level and contribute to public debate and professional development. For more information, see: <https://www.ntnu.edu/iss> .