

CfP: International Workshop on ‘Linking Survey and Context Data to Analyze Elite and Mass Interactions’, University of Vienna, 26-27 September, 2019

Analysing the communicative interactions between political and societal elites on the one hand and the public (or: the mass) on the other hand are of utmost interest to Political Communication research. Most generally, communication scientists assume elites to have an influence on the attitudes of citizens, voters or media users, be that by means of agenda setting, cueing, framing, priming or other forms of communication. In addition, many scholars also investigate the potential of the public to influence the positions and the behaviour of political and societal elites. As is true for most subjects in social sciences, this branch of research has also greatly benefitted from a development towards ever increasing methodological standards, possibilities and capabilities. Yet, despite these developments, analysing the effects of elite communication / positions on mass attitudes (and vice versa) is still faced with several empirical and methodological challenges. The aim of this workshop is twofold:

1) Identifying commonalities in elite and mass communication that enable us to link different sources of communication – i.e., what do we link? The first aim of the workshop is to exchange and discuss various efforts in identifying and managing different types of data sources, such as public opinion surveys, media data from various sources, or politicians’ communication (e.g., interviews, parliamentary questions, speeches, press releases, party manifestos, reports).

2) Identifying mechanisms and developing tools for linking different kinds of data sources – i.e., how do we link? The second aim of the workshop is bring together researchers who use individual linkages to analyse the interaction between elite and mass positions through various methods, such as survey research, content analysis, experimental research, and different measures, particularly for media exposure (e.g., self-reported measures, tracking, media diaries).

This workshop is a joint initiative of co-convenors of the ECPR Standing Groups on Political Communication (Loes Aaldering, Katjana Gattermann) and Political Methodology (Bernd Schlipphak). The focus of the workshop lies on discussing innovations and challenges in linking data and linkage analysis with the ultimate goal to contribute to establishing best practices in the field when trying to understand the impact elite positions / communication have on mass attitudes – and vice versa. The workshop is open for both senior researchers and PhD students in their final phase.

Paper proposals should include the title and name of the presenter as well as an abstract of no more than 300 words. The deadline for submitting the proposals is 30 April 2019. We will notify applicants by 15 May. A special issue in a high-ranking journal based on a selection of presented papers is currently planned but of course dependent on the willingness of authors and the coherence of paper topics.

To submit a paper proposal, please email the workshop organizers, loes.aaldering@univie.ac.at, k.gattermann@uva.nl, and bernd.schlipphak@uni-muenster.de.

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