

Presidents' Informal Powers and The Policy Process

Panel Chair:

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Abstract

Several studies have highlighted how presidents rely on their electoral legitimacy and visibility to influence the policy process via their public statements and symbolic actions. However, the focus of this research has largely been circumscribed to the American presidency (Kernell, 1997; Edwards, 2003; Ashley & Jarmer, 2016). Heads of state in other presidential systems and in semi-presidential systems are also popularly elected and should a priori have the same capacity to influence public action through identical means. Yet, this issue has received little attention from scholars.

To what extent do presidents use the bully pulpit and symbolic actions to influence policy? Is their willingness to use these informal powers determined by their institutional powers (strong versus weak presidency), their changing environment (divided versus united government, relationship between the president and its parliamentary party, changes in the perceived role of the president by the public, development of social media tools, etc), or other factors such as the presidents' leadership abilities?

This panel aims at bringing together papers that can advance theoretical and empirical research on the use of informal powers by popularly elected president in presidential and semi-presidential systems. The goal is to extend our understanding of the use of informal powers by presidents outside of the US political system and to use a more comparative approach to study these questions. We welcome papers that can shed light on these questions by using a variety of methods (longitudinal research, qualitative work, textual analysis, quantitative methods). Case studies are welcome as long as they can provide a theoretical framework that can be adapted to other cases.

Works Cited

- Kernell, S. (1997). *Going Public. New Strategies in Presidential Leadership*. Washington: CQ Press.
- Edwards, G. (2003). *On Deaf Ears: The Limits of the Bully Pulpit*. New haven: Yale University Press.
- Ashley, J., & Jarmer, M. (Eds.). (2016). *The Bully Pulpit, Presidential Speeches and the Shaping of Public Policy*. New York: Lexington Books.

If you have a Paper you think might fit in this Panel, please contact the Panel Chair before 15 February with the following information:

- Title of the paper (no more than 20 words)
- Abstract of the paper (no more than 250 words)
- Author's (and if applicable co-author's) email address as registered in their MyECPR account
- 3 – 5 keywords