### Workshop Proposal Outline form
for prospective Workshop Directors for the ECPR Joint Sessions of Workshops

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<th>Political Leadership Styles and Communication</th>
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**Outline of topic:**

Due to a number of factors including the personalization of politics and the crisis of partisanship and mass parties, leaders have become more important in most contemporary democracies over time. In the age of Bernard Manin’s “audience democracy” (1996) there is an increasing emphasis on the relationship between leaders and citizens. Modern political communication tends to present leaders as the key actors in projecting a political vision. Individual leaders are currently perceived as the actors at the core of the mechanisms of political accountability. In answer to such developments, political scientists have shown an increasing and more systematic interest in the role and the performance of leaders. The subject of leadership style, however, in particular in conjunction with the leader’s way of communicating with followers and citizens, is in need of a further exploration.

The literature on leadership styles has been long dominated by studies from organization theory and management (Hartley and Benington 2011). Accounts on what skills and traits enable an individual to rise to and exercise leadership successfully can also be found in diverse fields such as political psychology, decision-making analysis, gender studies and communication studies. The style of leadership can be clearly considered as a multidisciplinary subject of inquiry. Therefore, this workshop aims at establishing a dialogue between political science and other disciplinary and methodological approaches. As suggested by Rhodes and ‘t Hart (2014, 18), the analysis of political leadership may “supports the case (..) for the several disciplines to draw on another’s theories and methods”. The desired outcome of the workshop is to develop a new and original research agenda on political leadership style and communication and possibly to lay the foundations for future collaboration and potentially for the establishment of a research network.

In order to promote this dialogue, we welcome contributions based on different methods (institutional analysis, experimental analysis, rhetorical analysis, personality profiling, media content analysis, survey analysis) and dealing with different topics. In particular, potential papers should focus on one or more of the following issues:

- what skills and personal traits can be regarded as key components of the leadership style; how many different styles of leadership exist and what is their influence on the leaders’ relationship with followers, collaborators and citizens.

- how leaders use rhetoric and storytelling to interpret their role; how leadership styles and communication interplay; how leaders are represented by media and how citizens assess leaders’ personal skills and traits as a cue to make inferences on their political actions and performances; how the disclosure of leaders’ private life and inner self has become increasingly crucial in shaping the public perception of the leader’s character.

- how gender relates with the style of leadership; if there exists a gendered
| Concept of leadership; how gender stereotypes influence the media coverage and the public perception of female leaders. |
| - how institutional characteristics and roles shape the style of leadership; how institutional factors contribute to influence the storytelling and the communication style of leaders. |

| In contemporary democracies the leadership factor has become more important over time. Scholars from political science and political communication have increasingly investigated phenomena like personalization and presidentialization of politics with the aim of assessing the importance of leaders’ personality on electoral campaigns, the outcome of elections and government performance (Mughan 2000; King et al. 2002; Poguntke and Webb 2005; Karvonen 2010; Blondel et al. 2010; Aarts et al. 2011; Costa Lobo and Curtice 2015). As a consequence of a process of mediatization of politics (Mazzoleni and Schulz 1999), political leaders have replaced parties as the primary agents of consensus-building. Therefore an important element of the style of leadership has become their way of communicating with citizens. Extended scholarship has provided analyses of how presidents and prime ministers craft their images through political marketing techniques and use rhetoric and storytelling to elicit an emotional response from the audience and to project feelings of identification (Stuckey 1991; Grube 2013; Gaffney 2014). The issue of leaders’ personality has become so central that, according to a line of research, leaders are developing into “celebrities”: not only their private lives have become the subject of media scrutiny and public curiosity but also their tastes, their preferences, their “inner selves” (West and Orman 2003; Street 2003, Wheeler 2013). The increasingly intimate nature of mediated politics has been influencing the style of leadership as well (Langer 2010; Stanyer 2013). An effective style of leadership, however, does not depend only on possessing some personal traits but also on how the leader is able to relate with citizens, followers and media. A key contribution to the analysis of this aspect of political leadership is James MacGregor Burns’ notion of transformational leadership. According to Burns (1978, 2003), transformational leaders communicate a political vision through which they inspire followers and help them to move into self-actualization processes. Scholars in organization theory have subsequently operationalized this concept for empirical research (Bass 1998). Although largely applied in other fields, the seminal concept of transformational leadership is still used to interpret political leadership as well (Nye 2008; Brown 2014) and could find more extended applications. |

| For instance, the transformational leadership has assumed a central role in the discussion about the nature and specificities of female leadership (Bass et al. 1997; Eagly 2007). This area of research is especially central to the workshop’s interests and finalities. A large body of literature has shown that women are subject to a number of gender stereotypes that influence their political career (Jamieson 1995; Kellerman and Rhode 2007). There is still a distinction between a male and traditional model, for which leadership is based on agentic traits – authority, assertiveness, decision-making capacity – and a female model for which leadership is based on communal traits – kindness, cooperation, concern for others. Key issues to be investigated concern if women leaders still pay penalties for behaviors perceived as masculine and if there is the possibility of degendering leadership in a way that may reduce gender stereotypes (Pittinsky et al. 2007). |
Finally, how leaders exercise their leadership depends on institutional conditions and institutional change. A fruitful line of research in political science has adopted an institutionalist perspective to political leadership by stressing the importance of the institutional context in which leaders operate (Helms 2005, 2012). Some scholars have investigated the interplay between personal style and institutional settings (Strangio et al. 2013). One of the aims of the workshop is to promote a more extended research in this direction in order to better highlight how institutional characteristics and roles may shape the style of leadership and how institutional factors contribute to influence the communicative style of leaders.

Likely participants: We are interested in papers that deal with theoretical and/or methodological issues, in particular those suggesting an integration of different approaches to identify the conceptual and empirical dimensions of political leadership style. We also plan to include empirical studies that collect and analyze data possibly in innovative and original ways. We are interested in comparative analyses, but we also welcome single-case studies if they use methods that may contribute to a better understanding of the relevant issues.

Type of Papers required: The workshop aims to bring together scholars currently working on political leadership from different theoretical assumptions and with different methodological approaches and different levels of analysis. We also welcome scholars working outside the discipline of political science, especially in political psychology and communication theory. We hope that the workshop will allow for integration of different expertise and methods in order to develop new and original research in this area and possibly lay the foundations for future collaboration.

Funding: N/A

Biographical notes: Donatella Campus is Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Bologna, Italy. Her research interests are political communication, political leadership, gender politics, populism. She authored Women Political Leaders and the Media (Palgrave-MacMillan, 2013), Antipolitics in Power (Hampton Press, 2010) and edited L’immagine della donna leader (Bononia University Press, 2010). She is the author of Charisma in the International Encyclopedia of Political Communication (Wiley, forthcoming). Other publications appeared in a number of international journals such as Political Communication, International Journal of Press and Politics, European Journal of Communication, Journal of Contemporary European Studies, Journal of Modern Italian Studies, European Journal of Women’s Studies. donatella.campus@unibo.it

Christina Holtz-Bacha is Professor of communication at Friedrich-Alexander Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg, Germany. Her research interests are political communication, media systems and media policy. She has published widely in German and international journals. Among her most recent publications are: Die Massenmedien im Wahlkampf: Die Bundestagswahl 2013 (Springer VS, 2015); Opinion polls and the media. Reflecting and shaping public opinion (Palgrave Macmillan 2012); 'Political advertising in international comparison',


