

Session at the
3rd European Conference on Social Networks (EUSN) 2017
at Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, Germany,
26th to 29th September 2017

Call for Papers

The role of social networks to explain political behaviour and attitudes

A branch within political sociology examines individual political behaviour and opinion formation. Relevant research questions within this field are for example the following: Why do individuals vote? Which factors determine the individual vote for a special candidate or party? How do people participate in the political process? What influences the individual political opinion formation process?

Already in the 1940s, the so-called *Columbia school* focused on the meaning of influence and social interaction determining the individual vote decision in the presidential elections (Lazarsfeld et al. 1948; Katz and Lazarsfeld 1966; Berelson et al. 1968). Nevertheless, *rational choice* approaches were dominating the field a long time. Since the 1990s, studies in spirit of the *Columbia school* have emerged to a greater extent (e.g. Huckfeldt and Sprague 1993; Huckfeldt et al. 1995; Mutz 1992) and since the 2000s, studies focusing on the meaning of political discussions, social interactions, and various influence mechanisms are an essential component in the literature examining political behaviour and attitudes (e.g. Baldassarri 2009; Baldassarri and Bearman 2007; Scheufele et al. 2004; Beck 2002). In contrast to the early works of the *Columbia school*, recent studies benefit from the methodological progress and the availability of data from different sources.

Keywords: Political science, political sociology, influence, political discussion, political behaviour, voting, participation, public opinion formation, attitudes

Abstract submission: The session welcomes both theoretical and empirical studies on the meaning of social interaction and influence in explaining political behaviour and political opinion formation. We also invite studies examining the role of (social) media within the the interplay between social interaction and opinion formation. Please submit your abstract (not more than 500 words) via the conference website <http://www.eusn2017.uni-mainz.de/> by **31st March 2017**.

Session organiser: Dr. Nadine Meidert (Zeppelin University Friedrichshafen, Germany)

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