

## WORKSHOP 18

### 18. European Leaders and Democratic Elections

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It has been argued that evaluations of party leaders have become more important in determining both how individual people vote and the overall outcome of elections. This process can be regarded as part of a wider process of the presidentialisation of European democracies and to be the product of the declining influence of social structure and partisanship on voting behaviour.

However the claim has been widely contested, is subject to considerable methodological dispute, and has been little tested beyond the confines of the consolidated democracies. Equally, whether leadership evaluations matter more for some kinds of voters than others has been little explored.

We welcome papers that examine whether the impact of leadership evaluations has become greater over time; the degree to which leaders control party strategies/ appeals; how far the impact of leader evaluations varies across the whole range of social and political contexts that exist in Europe; whether leader evaluations matter more for some kinds of voters than others; and the methodological difficulties involved in assessing this impact.