

Section 9– Elezioni e Comportamento di voto
Chairs: Paolo Bellucci, Alessandro Chiaramonte

Panel 9.2 Leadership and Candidates Selection in Comparative Perspective

The study of leaders and candidates selection has assumed a role that is anything but marginal in contemporary political studies. Used in the United States of America since the mid-nineteenth century, the primary elections have been imported into the European political tradition in very recent times. In Italy, for instance, they have been systematically adopted since 2005, with a subsequent and growing diffusion also in the context of other European party systems. By adopting a comparative perspective, the purpose of this panel is above all to stimulate a reflection on leaders and candidates inclusive selection. This method of research should not be interpreted as a mere juxtaposition of different case studies. The comparative method requires that scholars identify a set of relevant dimensions/variables on which to base the analysis. Thanks to this method it will be possible to explain the similarities and differences between the different selection procedures disseminated in Europe.

For example, we indicate at least three dimensions:

1. Sociographic dimension. The focus is on the definition of the profiles of the participants in the inclusive selectoral procedures (i.e. primary elections), in an attempt to highlight similarities and differences with respect to the sociographic and cultural characteristics of the general electorate.
2. Strategic dimension. A crucial dimension in assessing inclusive selection processes is related to their ability in mobilizing a loyal selectorate regardless of the outcome of the selectoral competition. This feature of the selectoral process is far from obvious - in particular when selection is open even to party sympathizers -, so it is necessary to investigate it.
3. "Rules" dimension. This dimension could be useful to understand the implications and effects of the adoption of certain selectoral rules rather than others. As most of the literature on elections shows, electoral outcomes are strictly related to the electoral rules. From this point of view, papers on the comparative analysis of participation and competitiveness will be very welcomed. Together with empirical papers, the panel would like to discuss theoretical and conceptual research papers, able to bring back leaders and candidates selection within the field of party change.

Chairs: Stefano Rombi, Fabio Serricchio