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# **Campaign Valence Rhetoric and Vote Choice in Europe: How do Self-Praises and Valence Attacks Affect Vote Choice?**

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**Hörsaal 10**, Rathausstraße 19, 1010 Vienna

Political parties spend parts of their campaigns discussing their own and each-others' valence characteristics, i.e., their non-policy traits, such as honesty, integrity, and competence.

How do these valence discussions affect voters?

We currently lack a comprehensive comparative analysis of how campaign valence discussions affect voter behavior. We measure party valence discussions using a novel party campaigns data, which code the share of each party's election campaign dedicated to self- valence praises and negative valence attacks against opponents. We argue that self-valence praises and negative attacks can help or hurt the parties.

These valence strategies are used by the parties to help their standing. By educating the voters about the positive or negative traits of parties and their leaders, they may work as intended. However, we also argue that voters may find self-praises as incorrect or may blame the party for bragging.

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*Zeynep Somer-Topcu is an Associate Professor at the University of Texas at Austin. Her research interests include European party politics, elections, representation, and voter behavior. She works on a series of projects examining campaign strategies of political parties and the electoral and perceptual consequences of parties' campaign positions.*

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