

02. September 2026

Study on the 2024 European elections, conducted by the researchers at Saarland University and GESIS, receives an award

The research team comprising **Dr. Giuseppe Carteny**, **Prof. Dr. Daniela Braun**, and **Dr. Alexander Hartland** — from the **Chair of Political Science (specializing in European Integration and International Relations)** at Saarland University's Department of European Social Research — along with **Dr. Ann-Kathrin Reinl** from GESIS – Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences, has been awarded the **Mario Caciagli Prize QOE-IJES 2026**. The prize recognizes the best academic article published in the Italian Journal of Electoral Studies (*Quaderni dell'Osservatorio Elettorale*) over the past two years.

The article "[Party Competition on European Issues in the 2024 EP Elections](#)", published in issue 1/2025 of the international journal, received the award. The study examines how political parties in Europe addressed key issues regarding the future of Europe in the run-up to the 2024 European elections and how political fault lines within the European Union are shifting.

The prize jury, comprising **Laura Sudulich (University of Essex)**, **Fabio Serricchio (University of Molise)** and **Dario Tuorto (University of Bologna, President of the Società Italiana di Studi Elettorali)**, recognized the work as an outstanding scholarly contribution characterized by significant methodological sophistication and great societal relevance.

Emphasis was placed on the exceptional methodological rigor of the work, based on text-as-data methods. Using a fine-tuned transformer-based model, the researchers analysed 71 election manifestos from nine European countries, providing new insights into the “new normal” of European politics, in which consolidated Eurosceptic challenger parties, particularly on the far right, have become central actors in party competition. The jury also highlighted the innovative approach in mapping EU party competition, which moves beyond traditional unidimensional approaches. Indeed, the study maps EU-related party competition across three distinct dimensions: attitudes toward the European polity, migration, and the environment. By analysing shifts between the 2019 and 2024 European Parliament (EP) elections, the article provides systematic evidence on a broader shift toward more negative positions among mainstream parties on migration and the environment, while also showing that far-right Eurosceptic parties have moderated their positions on the EU polity.

The award will be presented on **7 November 2026** during an academic conference at the Italian Parliament **in Rome**. The event is jointly organized by the Italian Journal of Electoral Studies (IJES), the *Società Italiana di Studi Elettorali (SISE)*, the Public Opinion, Parties and Elections (POPE) research group of the Italian Political Science Association, and other academic partners.

The award winners:

- [Dr. Giuseppe Carteny](#), Department of European Social Research, Saarland University
- [Prof. Dr. Daniela Braun](#), Department of European Social Research, Saarland University
- [Dr. Alexander Hartland](#), Department of European Social Research, Saarland University
- [Dr. Ann-Kathrin Reinl](#), GESIS – Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences, Mannheim

Contact

Prof. Dr. Daniela Braun

Chair of European Integration and International Relations

Department of European Social Research

Saarland University