

**Abstract**

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**The self-representations of the  
Romanian politicians on Facebook.  
Roles, frames and social media  
engagement**

There is a significant amount of research on how politicians use the social media during the electoral campaigns, but there are fewer studies on how politicians construct their self-image on long run via their Facebook pages.

Since the cyber self is formed and negotiated in the same manner as the offline self, the study will use, among other theoretical frameworks, a revisited and updated form of Goffman's dramaturgical approach. Thus, the study aims to identify in which roles the politicians display themselves (the hero, the father of the nation, the saviour, the truthful buffoon) and which are the main frames used to make sense about the major events on the political and social scene.

The quantitative analysis over variables such as post type, shares, likes and comments aims to reveal public communication and branding strategies employed by the politicians. The dataset is extracted from Facebook via API interrogation of the public Facebook pages of the Romanian politicians with the greatest number of fans (as of January 31st, 2018): Klaus Iohannis (1.812.608 fans), Victor Ponta (812.854 fans), Gabriela Firea (488.651 fans), Traian Băsescu (401.639 fans), Elena

Udrea (371.432 fans) and Dacian Cioloș (350.245 fans). The time frame used for the data collection ranges from January 1st, 2015 to January 31st, 2018.

Furthermore, a qualitative analysis of the photos, videos and stories with the highest engagement rates is performed in order analyze how Romanian politicians employed the social media in order to construct their public image.