

Laudation

From the 2022 Jury for the Jean Blondel PhD Prize

The Jury has this year chosen to award the prize to **Vicente Valentim** for his doctoral thesis **Social Norms and Stigmatized Political Behavior** (European University Institute, 2021).

Vicente Valentim's thesis investigates whether and how norms related to politics change. He takes norms related to two major stigmas in advanced democracies – radical-right ideology and behaviour associated with previous authoritarian regimes – as his point of departure.

What are the mechanisms by which these norms change? What behaviour attests to a change in preferences, and what speaks to a change in social norms? Can norm-breaching political actors normalize behaviour? Do they?

These are only some of the questions Vicente raises. His thesis pushes our understanding of how attitudes and behaviour are conditional on perceptions of what others think is appropriate.

The Jury members appreciate the innovative character of this thesis and its methodological rigour. Vicente uses a variety of empirical approaches, and complements his quantitative tests with qualitative analysis. He collects original datasets to investigate the process in which previously stigmatised expressions are, in time, normalised.

The Jury applauds this thesis, and we believe it deserves be read widely. As Vicente shows convincingly, only by understanding the root of the change can we know its direction – let alone identify effective interventions.

Hana Kubátová (Chair)

On behalf of the Jean Blondel Prize Jury
European Consortium for Political Research

