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ABSTRACT:

The crisis of political representation has several explanations, including the collapse of trust in political institutions and the weakening of the role of the party as an intermediary between voters and elected representatives. This is counterbalanced by a strategy of individual representation pursued by politicians. This article aims to examine representation in Italy through a highly innovative approach, that of the strategic communication of the elected during the electoral campaign and in office: not only the parliamentary work of the elected, but also the overall analysis of the electoral campaign and constituency communication. The study identifies changes in representation, including functional and thematic autonomy from the party, personalization of activities, promotion of independent communication tools, and party-independent agendas. It also highlights the backstage structuring of a new relationship between voters and elected representatives in politics. A study conducted on 150 Italian parliamentarians in Chamber of Deputies (17th Legislature, 2013–18) revealed varying logics of representation based on their political affiliation, career paths, and individual characteristics.

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