



# The Effect of Politicians' Personality on Their Media Visibility

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## Abstract

While being frequently covered in the news media is key to political success, previous research demonstrates that some politicians are systematically more visible in the media than others. The current study advances our understanding of which politicians gain higher media visibility by exploring the effects of their personality traits. Utilizing a unique sample of 339 incumbent politicians in three countries, we find that the two personality traits that speak directly to one's interpersonal orientation—agreeableness and extraversion—affect visibility, with less agreeable and more extraverted politicians appearing more frequently in the news. We also find that open to experience and emotionally stable politicians get covered more frequently and that being highly conscientious predicts media visibility in some cases, but not in others. Politicians high on these traits, we argue, enjoy an inherent advantage in the competition for the media's attention.

## Keywords

news and newsworthiness, topics, mass media, survey, method

The amount of news coverage politicians receive is considered a key element in determining their political success. Frequent media appearances help politicians inform the public about their decisions and positions, promote their goals and plans, and influence other actors taking part in the policy-making process (Cook, 2005; Hopmann,

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Vliegthart, De Vreese, & Albæk, 2010). Media coverage is also essential from an electoral point of view. Citizens are likely to vote for candidates they have heard of and have sufficient information about, and people get their political information mainly from the media (Arnold, 2004).

While it is generally agreed among scholars that “no political actor or institution can afford not to take the media into consideration” (Strömbäck & Esser, 2014, p. 4), studies find that not all politicians receive the same amount of media attention (Vos, 2014). Previous studies propose either institutional-level factors, such as political power (Hopmann, Van Aelst, & Legnante, 2012), or specific behavioral indicators, such as activity in parliament and communication skills (e.g., Sheaffer, 2001), as predictors of politicians’ media visibility. None, however, examines the effect of their core personality traits.

Personality psychology suggests a broad and quite stable set of behavioral, cognitive, and emotional differences between individuals. Scholars have been consistent in showing that “personality traits can be comprehensively conceptualized and reliably measured in terms of five traits (the Big Five): Agreeableness, Openness (to Experience), Emotional Stability (sometimes referred to by its inverse, Neuroticism), Conscientiousness, and Extraversion” (Gerber, Huber, Doherty, Dowling, & Ha, 2010, p. 111; see also Goldberg, 1992; John, Naumann, & Soto, 2008). We argue here that examining the effects of politicians’ personality traits on their media visibility can significantly advance our understanding of what makes some actors more newsworthy than others. The novelty of this approach is that personality traits are nonconditional, decontextualized, and even genetically encoded dispositions that shape the overall orientation of an individual toward the world (Gerber, Huber, Doherty, & Dowling, 2011a). An examination of the relationship between personality traits and media appearances can thus broaden our understanding of politicians’ media access by extending it beyond previous explorations focusing on institutional explanations or specific behaviors.

To test for the effects of politicians’ personality traits on their visibility in the news media, the current study utilizes a unique dataset of 339 incumbent members of parliament from three countries: Belgium, Canada, and Israel. Data on the Big Five personality traits were based on self-assessments provided by the politicians themselves. Media visibility was measured during one legislative session. Our analysis finds that four of the Big Five personality traits—agreeableness, extraversion, openness to experience, and neuroticism—are significantly associated with politicians’ media visibility, while one trait, conscientiousness, partially predicts visibility. In short, we find that the two traits that speak most directly to one’s interpersonal orientation affect visibility, with less agreeable and more extraverted politicians appearing more frequently in the news. Furthermore, we show that the more open to experience and the less neurotic (i.e., more emotionally stable) a politician is, the more frequent her appearances in the news media will be. Finally, we find that in Canada and Israel, but not in Belgium, more conscientious politicians get more media coverage. Politicians scoring high on these traits, we argue, have more incentives to get into the media, are considered more newsworthy by journalists, or both, and thus enjoy a rather stable advantage in the competition for the media’s attention.

## The Media Visibility of Politicians

Political communication scholars argue that the media arena is an integral part of politics and that one cannot understand politics without understanding how the media work (Cohen, Tsfati, & Sheafer, 2008; Strömbäck & Esser, 2014). The media not only serve as an information source on daily issues (Davis, 2007; Zoizner, Sheafer, & Walgrave, 2017), but also function as an arena in which political actors continuously compete for attention (Cook, 2005). Various studies show that visibility in the media is one of the keys to political success. Although politicians may benefit more from positive coverage, studies indicate that mere visibility has an important role in increasing their electoral success (Geiß & Schäfer, 2017). In fact, visibility is sometimes even more important than the tone of the coverage (Hopmann et al., 2010).

There are at least three reasons why media visibility matters for political success. First, in an age of candidate-centered politics, appearing in the media improves individual actors' electoral success (Sheafer, 2001), for example, by increasing the public's familiarity with an actor or by allowing her to develop a distinct policy reputation among the public. Second, since the public's interaction with political actors is very rarely direct and almost always mediated, news appearances are an important channel of communication between representatives and voters between elections (Strömbäck, 2008). Third, being visible in the media can facilitate actors' ability to influence other politicians. Understanding that the media have become an essential part of the policy-making process, legislators use their news appearances to influence their counterparts—for example, by drawing their attention to an issue—and obtain their cooperation in getting legislation passed (Sellers, 2000).

While it is agreed among scholars and admitted by politicians themselves (Davis, 2007) that attention from the media is key to political success, it is also clear that some politicians appear in the news consistently more than others. Institutional-level factors are considered important predictors of media visibility, and political power—namely, holding an influential political position—is an especially important factor increasing politicians' visibility (Vos, 2014; Wolfsfeld, 2011). Scholars also argue for an “incumbency bonus,” where leading governing actors are highly visible in the media (Hopmann et al., 2012). Party affiliation is another factor influencing visibility (Vos, 2014), and politicians from highly populated districts also gain more media coverage (Waismel-Manor & Tsfati, 2011).

Other scholars focus on individual-level explanations of media visibility and find that politicians' experience in office and activity in parliament can increase their media visibility (Cook, 2005). Politicians' specific media behaviors, such as their communication and rhetorical skills (Sheafer, 2001) and motivation and effort to appear in the media (Cohen et al., 2008), are found to increase their media visibility. When comparing media types, it is found that politicians' physical attractiveness increases their coverage on television but not in newspapers or on the radio (Tsfati, Markowitz-Elfassi, & Waismel-Manor, 2010; Waismel-Manor & Tsfati, 2011). Another intermedia comparison reveals mixed results regarding a gender bias in politicians' media

coverage: Some find that newspapers display a stronger bias toward male politicians than television news (Van Aelst, Maddens, Noppe, & Fiers, 2008), while others do not (Vos, 2014). Finally, politicians' race affects visibility in television news, but not in newspapers (Waismel-Manor & Tsfat, 2011).

Below, we extend the individual-level explanations of media visibility by arguing that politicians' personality traits influence the amount of news coverage they receive. To date, no study has examined this relationship, either due to theoretical considerations (i.e., an assumption that politicians' behavior is primarily determined by institutional factors) or because of the difficulty of obtaining direct personality measures from politicians (Caprara & Zimbardo, 2004). Based on the research reviewed above, we expect institutional power to be the strongest predictor of media visibility, as was found in multiple previous studies. However, we also expect personality to have a substantial effect on media visibility above and beyond previous explanations, including political power. We elaborate on the theoretical considerations behind this expectation in the following sections.

### **The Personality Traits of Politicians**

In the past decade, a growing number of studies demonstrate that core personality traits have significant and substantive effects on political behavior (Gerber et al., 2011a). The framework most of these studies utilize to conceptualize personality is the Big Five traits model. This model draws on the consistent finding from psychological research that most of what affects personality and underlies human behavior can be comprehensively conceptualized in terms of five traits: agreeableness, extraversion, openness to experience, neuroticism, and conscientiousness (Goldberg, 1992; John & Srivastava, 1999).

The Big Five traits are broadly defined as follows. First, individuals scoring high on agreeableness like other people and are usually liked by them. They are good-natured and cooperative, and their relationships with others tend to be pleasant and harmonious. On the contrary, people low on this trait are competitive, suspicious, and more willing to face conflict and manipulate others for their own needs. Second, people scoring high on extraversion are oriented toward the outer world. They are outgoing, energetic, and talkative. The inverse of this trait is being an introvert, which describes reserved, quiet, and inhibited individuals. Third, a person more open to experience displays originality, curiosity, and a preference for novelty. A person low on this trait, however, is more conventional and conservative and tends to resist change. Fourth, neuroticism represents one's tendency to feel psychologically distressed. People scoring high on this trait have difficulty resisting impulses, are easily irritated, and display vulnerability to external conditions. In contrast, emotionally stable individuals are calm and even-tempered. Finally, individuals scoring high on conscientiousness are self-disciplined, goal-oriented, and consistent, and their actions result from a deliberate consideration of potential outcomes. People low on this trait, however, prefer not to make plans and are more easygoing and careless (John & Srivastava, 1999; Mondak, 2010).

While a growing number of studies explore the effects of the Big Five traits on the political behavior of citizens (e.g., Gerber, Huber, Doherty, & Dowling, 2011b; Mondak, 2010), studies among political elites are relatively rare. Methodologically, most of the existing elite studies operationalize personality using expert evaluations or content analyses of archival materials (e.g., Ramey, Klingler, & Hollibaugh, 2017; Rubenzer & Faschingbauer, 2004). Theoretically, the primary focus of these studies is on comparing the personality of politicians with that of the general population or linking politicians' personality with their ideology or legislative behavior (Best, 2011; Caprara & Zimbardo, 2004; Dietrich, Lasley, Mondak, Rempel, & Turner, 2012). The current study aims at contributing to the literature in both regards. Methodologically, our analysis relies on a direct measurement of personality. We utilize a widely used Big Five instrument among a large sample of incumbent politicians ( $N = 339$ ). Theoretically, our focus is on a dependent variable that has not been explored before in the context of personality and is considered highly important for the success of political actors—their visibility in the news media.

## **The Personality Traits of Politicians and Their Media Visibility**

We believe that variations in elite personality have the potential to expand our understanding of politicians' visibility in the media. In what follows, we present our empirical expectations regarding the effects of the Big Five traits. We start by describing our first set of expectations, which relate to the impact of agreeableness and extraversion. Since attaining media coverage is an interactive process that largely involves interpersonal relations between politicians and journalists, we expect traits that speak directly to how people engage with others to significantly affect visibility. Among the five broad factors of personality, these traits are agreeableness and extraversion. While it is true that all five traits influence people's perceptions of other individuals, neuroticism, openness to experience, and conscientiousness are not intrinsically interpersonal. According to McCrae and Costa (1989, p. 586),

One can feel unhappy, respond to art, or accomplish a task regardless of the presence or absence of other people. The case is different with the two dimensions of Extraversion and Agreeableness. These two appear to determine directly the amount of social stimulation preferred and the prevailing quality of social interaction.

In other words, since extraversion taps the intensity of one's social activity and agreeableness concerns the nature of one's social interactions, we expect these traits to have a substantial impact on the highly interactive process of attaining media coverage.

Another reason these traits are expected to affect media visibility is the finding that extraversion/energy and agreeableness/friendliness are two especially important traits voters rely on when evaluating politicians. It has been shown that to cope with informational overload about politicians, voters often simplify their perceptions of them

and rely primarily on these two traits, which constitute highly dominant and visible dimensions of human personality (Caprara, Barbaranelli, & Zimbardo, 2002). This dual-factor evaluation of personality may apply to journalists who cover politicians as well, either because they implicitly understand that the public cares most about these two traits or because, being citizens themselves, they also evaluate politicians this way. Even though extraversion and agreeableness are not the only political traits important to citizens—who also care about dimensions such as leadership and intelligence (e.g., Fridkin & Kenney, 2011)—they are the most theoretically relevant among the Big Five traits measured here.

The second set of expectations we present pertains to the impact of the three other Big Five traits. Even though they are not intrinsically interpersonal, we expect openness to experience, neuroticism, and conscientiousness to affect politicians' media visibility for reasons elaborated below. We theorize that two mechanisms drive the relationship between the personality traits of politicians and the amount of news coverage they get. The first is a motivational mechanism. From the perspective of politicians, we expect some individual actors to be more interested than others in getting covered in the news due to their personality. This variation is important because studies show that high motivation for coverage leads to increased media visibility (Cohen et al., 2008; Sheafer, 2001). To date, variations in politicians' motivation for media coverage have been attributed to differences in their perceptions of the media's power (Cohen et al., 2008), to electoral constraints (Amsalem, Sheafer, Walgrave, Loewen, & Soroka, 2017), or to short-term goals, such as getting legislation passed (Kedrowski, 1996). We argue here that these variations may also result from politicians' core personality traits. Studies find that personality traits affect motivational needs, such as an individual's need for exposure to and interaction with others or one's tendency to seek new and diverse external stimuli (Costa & McCrae, 1988; Mondak, 2010). As explained in the hypotheses section below, we expect such needs to affect politicians' motivation for media coverage. Highly extraverted individuals, for example, constantly seek attention from and interaction with other people, which should increase their motivation for media coverage and, consequently, their media visibility.

The second explanation we propose is a news values mechanism, which focuses on the media's perspective. We expect some personality traits to induce behaviors that better correspond to the selection criteria guiding journalistic work. We also expect personality to enable some politicians to master essential communication skills more easily than others. For example, personality should affect one's ability to perform well in front of a camera as well as her overall proficiency at speaking in front of an audience (extraversion), or one's ability to come up with surprising and unconventional political initiatives that will draw journalists' attention (openness to experience). In short, we expect some politicians to be inherently more newsworthy than others because of their personality.

Relatedly, we expect personality to affect politicians' ability to cultivate close relationships with journalists. Such relationships should, in turn, affect their chances of being covered. For instance, highly extraverted politicians, who are warm and outgoing individuals, should be more skillful at initiating and maintaining close contact with

journalists than more introverted ones. Such relationships should positively affect the chances that journalists will know these politicians, use them as sources, and publish stories about them (Sheafer, 2001).

As for the relative importance of these explanations, we propose that newsworthiness considerations, which relate to the nature of the behaviors a politician engages in and the type of stories he or she is involved in, will contribute more to the volume of her media coverage than her relationships with journalists. Therefore, in cases where these explanations lead to mixed expectations (as in the case of agreeableness, as elaborated in the next section), we expect a politician's newsworthiness to be the most important determinant of her media coverage (see Helfer & Van Aelst, 2016). Based on the mechanisms discussed above and on this hierarchy of considerations, we next present our empirical expectations.

### *Agreeableness*

Politicians scoring high on agreeableness dedicate a large part of their political efforts to cooperation and collaboration with others and much less to attacking others and criticizing them. More agreeable legislators are found, for instance, to cosponsor more bills with members of an opponent party than those scoring low on this trait (Ramey et al., 2017). The news media are not likely to support such goals. The literature clearly indicates that the media are more likely to serve as an arena for politicians to attack others than as a constructive basis for cooperation. It is found, for example, that opposition members and politicians who focus on competition are especially attentive to the media, since the contentious nature of media messages is better suited for goals such as embarrassing the government and attacking other political actors (Sevenans, Walgrave, & Vos, 2015). We therefore expect less agreeable politicians, who are more competitive and manipulative, to display higher media motivation. In contrast, individuals scoring high on agreeableness, who are more modest, tend not to show-off, and prefer cooperative ways of communication (Goldberg, 1992) should be less drawn to this form of communication.

From the news media's perspective, since journalistic coverage is strongly biased toward negative information and tends to emphasize conflict and competition (Cappella & Jamieson, 1997), we expect the typical behavior of more agreeable politicians to be much less newsworthy than its opposite. Individuals high on agreeableness are gentle, considerate, and less likely to claim credit for their actions or shed blame on others (Seibert & Kraimer, 2001), characteristics that should decrease their newsworthiness. Moreover, while the trusting nature of more agreeable politicians may allow them to enjoy cordial relationships with journalists, we do not expect this to be a sufficient condition for being frequently covered in the news. To enter the news on a regular basis, a politician must be involved in what journalists perceive as good stories (Helfer & Van Aelst, 2016); these are, most often, negative and conflictual stories.

Based on the two mechanisms described above, namely, lower motivation to be covered and lower newsworthiness, our first hypothesis is the following:

**Hypothesis 1 (H1):** The more agreeable a politician is, the less visible he or she will be in the news.

### *Extraversion*

From a motivational point of view, we expect politicians scoring high on extraversion—who relish the opportunity to be on the public stage and interact with the mass public (Dietrich et al., 2012)—to seek more public exposure for their actions than more introverted ones. Clearly, the media are the best means for a politician to get the public's attention and gain mass recognition. Appearing in the news should, at least partially, answer the needs of more extraverted politicians for interacting with new people, taking center stage at social events, and engaging in dramatic and sensational occurrences (Costa & McCrae, 1988). Politicians high on extraversion should thus be more motivated to get media coverage.

From the media's point of view, we expect more extraverted politicians to be favored in news coverage since extraversion corresponds well with journalistic news values. Due to their sociable and outgoing nature, highly extraverted politicians should be better at initiating and maintaining productive working relationships with journalists. Moreover, since extraverted behaviors are highly visible to the outside observer, recognizing them should be relatively easy for journalists. These behaviors include performing well in front of a camera, speaking proficiently in front of an audience, initiating social events and filling a central role in them, providing proper sound bites, and more. In general, we expect extraverts' high levels of activity and dominance—characteristics typically valued and rewarded in positions of leadership (Dunn, Mount, Barrick, & Ones, 1995)—to contribute to their prominence in the news.

Based on these two considerations, our second hypothesis is the following:

**Hypothesis 2 (H2):** The more extraverted a politician is, the more visible he or she will be in the news.

### *Openness to Experience, Neuroticism, and Conscientiousness*

So far, we have theorized that two traits—agreeableness and extraversion—are associated with visibility in the media. For these traits, both mechanisms of influence led us to similar expectations, namely, a negative effect for agreeableness (due to low motivation and decreased newsworthiness) and a positive effect for extraversion (due to high motivation and increased newsworthiness). When it comes to the three other traits in the Big Five model, the theoretical basis for our expectations is not as consistent. In other words, they are not necessarily strongly driven by both our proposed mechanisms. We do believe, however, that these traits may affect media visibility, for several reasons.

First, from a news values perspective, the tendency of politicians high on openness to experience to respond positively to novel experiences and ideas is expected to increase their chances of drawing the media's attention. Their imaginative, original,



and unconventional nature, as well as their willingness to try new activities and reconsider their beliefs (Goldberg, 1992), are likely to result in newsworthy behaviors such as coming up with new initiatives that change the status-quo, introducing new and unconventional ideas that draw people's attention, coming up with creative ways to contact journalists and persuade them, sponsoring bills that their party does not necessarily support, and more.

Second, politicians scoring high on neuroticism may feel distressed by the contentious nature of media information (Mondak, 2010). Their tendency to feel psychologically distressed and vulnerability to external conditions should cause them to dislike the stressful components of encounters with journalists, such as facing hard questions during interviews, engaging in rhetorical battles, or appearing in live broadcasts. Furthermore, compared with the emotional stability characterizing people scoring low on this trait, more neurotic politicians are likely to find it harder to maintain their composure during dramatic and unexpected events, which typically draw the media's attention.

Finally, from a motivational perspective, politicians scoring high on conscientiousness should seek the media's attention because they feel that it is their duty to communicate with their voters. Their tendency to display order, competence, and deliberation should lead them to strive for achievements in the media arena and allow them to competently engage in the meticulous planning of media campaigns. This potential positive effect on media visibility, however, may be attenuated by their newsworthiness levels. Previous research shows that hard and efficient parliamentary work, which is characteristic of highly conscientious legislators (Ramey et al., 2017), does not contribute to visibility in the media (Vos, 2014) and may even decrease it (Tsfati et al., 2010). The initiatives highly conscientious politicians engage in may be too detailed, cautious, and complex to answer the news media's demands for drama, clarity, and simplicity.

Based on these considerations, we formulate the following empirical expectations:

**Hypothesis 3 (H3):** The more open to experience a politician is, the more visible he or she will be in the news.

**Hypothesis 4 (H4):** The more neurotic a politician is, the less visible he or she will be in the news.

**Hypothesis 5 (H5):** The more conscientious a politician is, the more visible he or she will be in the news.

## Method

This study utilizes a unique sample of 339 politicians from three countries: Belgium, Canada, and Israel. These three countries were chosen for the study because they are all developed parliamentary democracies, but also differ in their electoral systems. Canada has a single-member plurality system (SMP) based on local representatives elected by their geographic constituency; Belgium has a multimember system in which 11 electoral districts elect a total of 150 MPs; and Israel's multimember system is

characterized by extreme proportionality (the entire country constitutes one single electoral district). This variation between countries makes our case selection suitable for making inferences on the relationship between personality traits and media visibility in other developed democracies as well.

An elite survey was conducted in the three countries simultaneously between March and August 2015. In Belgium, we interviewed 95 members of the 54th federal parliament and 139 members of the regional parliaments (57% response rate). In Canada, we interviewed 45 members of the 41st federal parliament and 28 members of the 41st Ontario provincial parliament (26% response rate<sup>1</sup>). In Israel, we interviewed 32 members of the 20th national parliament, the Knesset (27% response rate). The biographical features of our MP sample (available in Online Appendix A) highlight a considerable similarity in all three countries between the MPs who participated in our study and the MP population from which our sample was drawn. All MPs answered, in the presence of the researchers, a 40-minute long survey on a computer brought by the researchers. The survey was administered in the native language of each MP (Dutch, English, French, or Hebrew) and included questions on their preferred information sources, decision-making preferences, personality traits, and other related items. To ensure the comparability of the survey data, all interviews followed an identical protocol that included detailed guidelines on the contact procedure, interview timing and location, and interviewer behavior during the interview. The interviewers, who were all PhD candidates, postdoctoral researchers, or university professors, were trained on how to conduct interviews with politicians. Finally, prior to interviewing incumbent politicians, several pilot interviews with former MPs were conducted in order to test and improve the survey instrument.

### *Media Visibility Measurement*

To measure the attention politicians receive from the media, we counted the number of times each politician's name was mentioned in his or her country's major news outlets.<sup>2</sup> We used three types of media: newspapers, news websites, and television channels. The criteria for selecting these outlets were first, that they are leading outlets in the country, second, that they are distributed at the national level, and third, that they represent both quality and popular media. In Belgium, we used six newspapers (*De Standaard*, *De Morgen*, *De Tijd*, *L'Echo*, *La Libre Belgique*, *Le Soir*), two news websites (hln.be, dh.be), and two TV channels (VTM, VRT). In Canada, we used three newspapers (*Globe and Mail*, *National Post*, *Toronto Star*), two news websites (cbc.ca, theglobeandmail.com), and one TV channel (CTV). In Israel, we used two newspapers (*Haaretz*, *Yedioth Ahronoth*), two news websites (ynet.co.il, walla.co.il), and two TV channels (Channel 2, Channel 10).

The number of appearances in each news outlet was counted from the beginning of that country's parliamentary legislative session until the end of the session or until the end of 2015 (for countries in which the session kept running).<sup>3</sup> Since media appearances were counted during different time spans and came from a varying number of news outlets in each country, their absolute values were incomparable between

countries. Therefore, we used standardized visibility scales. For each country and medium (newspapers, news websites, and TV channels), we recoded the visibility measure into a 0 to 1 comparable scale.<sup>4</sup> Summary statistics for MPs' visibility in each medium and country are presented in Online Appendix A. Our final dependent variable is an aggregated national media visibility scale that includes the standardized total number of appearances of each MP in all media outlets in his or her country. This was done by summing each politician's 0 to 1 visibility score in each medium and recoding the final measure again into a 0 to 1 scale ( $M = .08$ ;  $SD = .14$ ). The relatively low mean score on the dependent variable indicates that even though some politicians appear frequently in the national media, many of them appear very little or even do not appear at all.

### *Personality Traits Measurement*

Standard measurement of the Big Five traits consists of a list of adjectives presented to a respondent. The respondent is asked to rate how well each adjective describes some individual, usually herself. While early work has employed 240-item (Costa & McCrae, 1992),<sup>5</sup> 100-item (Goldberg, 1992), and 44-item (John & Srivastava, 1999) batteries, researchers have more recently developed and validated brief measures of the Big Five traits for cases where administering longer batteries is not feasible. The most widely used brief measure designed to tap the Big Five traits is Gosling, Rentfrow, and Swann's (2003) Ten-Item Personality Inventory (TIPI), which asks respondents to rank themselves, or someone else close to them, on a list of only 10 pairs of adjectives—two pairs for each personality trait. The TIPI was found to perform well on convergent validity: Even though it is noticeably shorter than other Big Five measures, its results correlate strongly with results obtained from longer batteries (Gosling et al., 2003). On the contrary, the very brief nature of the TIPI typically results in low content validity and reliability scores, which make studies using this measure likely to provide underestimations of the strength of relationships between personality and other variables (Credé, Harms, Niehorster, & Gaye-Valentine, 2012).

To gauge the personality of politicians, we used Gosling et al.'s (2003) English version of the TIPI and its existing translations into Dutch, French, and Hebrew.<sup>6</sup> A brief Big Five measure was selected for this study because we interviewed incumbent politicians, and did so mostly in their parliamentary offices during a working day. This means that most of our interviews were severely limited in terms of time. Under such circumstances, and considering that political elites are often reluctant to participate in personality surveys (Caprara & Zimbardo, 2004), implementing a long instrument was unlikely to result in a large enough sample.

In our survey, MPs were asked to report the extent to which they see themselves as characterized by 10 pairs of adjectives, with responses given on a 7-point scale ranging from *disagree strongly* (1) to *agree strongly* (7). Each Big Five trait was captured using two pairs of adjectives, with one pair for each trait reverse-scored. For instance, extraversion was measured by asking MPs how "extraverted and enthusiastic" they are, on the one hand, and how "reserved and quiet" they are, on the other hand.

Summary statistics for each trait are available in Online Appendix A. The English version of the standard TIPI questionnaire we used can be found in Online Appendix B. During the survey, special efforts were made to ensure that social desirability in politicians' responses is reduced to a minimum. Our survey questions were not read aloud to the politicians, who answered all questions on a private computer screen. In addition, the interviewers informed politicians of the full anonymity of their responses, both at the start of the survey and prior to answering the personality items.

The scores of politicians on each trait were computed by averaging the two items (two pairs of adjectives) used to tap that trait. Extraversion was constructed by averaging extraverted-enthusiastic and reserved-quiet (reverse-coded),  $r = .61, p < .001$ . Openness to experience was constructed by averaging open to new experiences-complex and conventional-uncreative (reverse-coded),  $r = .25, p < .001$ . Neuroticism was measured by averaging anxious-easily upset and calm-emotionally stable (reverse-coded),  $r = .37, p < .001$ . Conscientiousness was constructed by averaging dependable-self-disciplined and disorganized-careless (reverse-coded),  $r = .29, p < .001$ . The two pairs of adjectives used to measure agreeableness (sympathetic-warm and critical-quarrelsome, reverse-coded) were not significantly correlated in our sample,  $r = .09, p > .1$ .<sup>7</sup> The latter result—namely, a noticeably lower correlation and reliability score for the two items tapping agreeableness—was found in other studies applying the TIPI as well (e.g., Gerber et al., 2010). Finally, a factor analysis of the 10 items resulted in five factors corresponding to the correlational analysis presented above (i.e., two-item factors for four traits and a one-item factor for agreeableness). Among those factors, however, only one (extraversion) had an eigenvalue higher than 1. Full results of the factor analysis are available in Online Appendix C.

Even though not all correlations and factor loadings are satisfactory (especially those concerning agreeableness), we follow the advice of the developers of the TIPI (Gosling et al., 2003) and that of other scholars adopting 10-item measures (e.g., Mondak & Halperin, 2008) and scale all pairs of items. As Gerber et al. (2011a, p. 267) note, “the most important trade-off researchers face when deciding which personality battery to use is between internal reliability and brevity.” In the case of the TIPI—an extremely short battery—low inter-item correlations and factor loadings are almost guaranteed, because it measures very broad domains using only two items per domain and uses items from both sides of the scale (Gosling et al., 2003).

In sum, despite its brevity, the TIPI is a sufficiently valid measure of the Big Five personality traits. However, its brief nature and the low reliability scores it tends to produce enable researchers to measure personality only at the broad domain level, without being able to disentangle the relative impact of different facets of each trait. We thus scale each pair of items, but present our expectations and interpret our results in terms of broad traits.

### **Control Variables**

Variables found in previous research to explain variations in politicians' media visibility were controlled for using additional data collection. These variables were gender,

age (in years), parliamentary experience (years since first election to parliament), being a member of the coalition (binary coded), political power, parliamentary activity, number of Facebook posts, country, ideology, and whether the MP belongs to a federal or a regional parliament.

To control for political power, we used three different dummy variables: one for being a minister, one for being a party leader, and one for being the house speaker. Parliamentary activity was measured by counting the number of parliamentary actions, such as bill proposals and oral questions, each MP took in the period under investigation.<sup>8</sup> Since each parliament enables varying types of activity, we could not simply compare the absolute activity counts between parliaments. Therefore, instead of using a count measure, we standardized the final activity score for each parliament by recoding it into a 0 to 1 scale. To control for politicians' efforts to communicate with the public, we measured the number of posts they published on their personal Facebook pages in the period under investigation.<sup>9</sup> This measure was also recoded into a 0 to 1 scale in each country.

Finally, we measured ideology using a binary "conservatism" variable. In all three countries, members of right-wing parties were coded as 1 and politicians from left and center parties were coded as 0. The coding of the Belgian parties was based on data from the Chapel Hill Expert Survey of European political parties' ideology (Bakker et al., 2015). Right-wing parties were those with a left-right value higher than 7 (on a 1-10 left-right scale): New Flemish Alliance (N-VA), Vlaams Belang ("Flemish Interest") and PP ("The People's Party"). In Canada, the Conservative Party was coded as 1, and all other parties were coded as 0 (New Democratic Party, Liberal Party, Green Party, Bloc Québécois). In Israel, the coding was based on the ideological positions of parties proposed by Hazan and Diskin (2015). Politicians from conservative parties (Halikud, Jewish Home, Israel Beiteinu, Shas, Yehadut HaTorah) were coded as 1, while all other politicians were coded as 0.

## Results

Model 1 in Table 1 presents the results of a multivariate ordinary least squares (OLS) regression estimating the total visibility of politicians in all news outlets as a function of their personality traits, while controlling for relevant alternative explanations.<sup>10</sup> Since our dependent variable is positively skewed (i.e., many MPs appear very little in the media; Skewness = 3.77), we used a log-transformed media visibility variable. This was done to ensure normally distributed residuals, which is one of the assumptions of an OLS regression.<sup>11</sup> H1 posited that the more agreeable a politician is, the less visible he or she will be in the news. The standardized coefficient of agreeableness is negative and statistically significant ( $\beta = -.116$ ;  $p < .05$ ), which allows us to confirm H1. For each one standard deviation increase in agreeableness, the media visibility (log-transformed) of an MP decreases by .116 standard deviations, while holding the control variables constant. According to H2, the more extraverted a politician is, the more visible he or she will be in the news. This hypothesis is also confirmed, as the standardized coefficient is positive and significant ( $\beta = .117$ ;  $p < .05$ ). For each one

**Table 1.** The Effects of Politicians' Personality Traits on their Media Visibility.

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
	(All news outlets)	(Newspapers)	(News websites)	(TV channels)
	<i>b</i> (SE)	<i>b</i> (SE)	<i>b</i> (SE)	<i>b</i> (SE)
	Beta	Beta	Beta	Beta
Agreeableness	-0.184* (0.075) -.116	-0.243** (0.077) -.158	-0.102 (0.077) -.067	-0.188† (0.107) -.112
Extraversion	0.129* (0.052) .117	0.093† (0.055) .084	0.117* (0.053) .110	0.128† (0.074) .113
Conscientiousness	-0.008 (0.066) -.006	0.055 (0.067) .040	-0.077 (0.065) -.057	0.006 (0.087) .005
Openness	0.153* (0.070) .098	0.046 (0.072) .031	0.230** (0.072) .154	0.049 (0.107) .028
Neuroticism	-0.157* (0.068) -.111	-0.118† (0.070) -.086	-0.191** (0.069) -.142	-0.044 (0.100) -.029
Female	-0.613*** (0.144) -.197	-0.595*** (0.147) -.196	-0.484*** (0.143) -.161	-0.521* (0.204) -.155
Age	-0.013† (0.007) -.088	-0.003 (0.008) -.025	-0.015† (0.007) -.106	0.008 (0.010) .052
Experience	0.047*** (0.010) .224	0.032** (0.011) .159	0.053*** (0.011) .263	0.023† (0.014) .116
Coalition	-0.383* (0.154) -.127	-0.649*** (0.155) -.221	-0.088 (0.158) -.031	-0.217 (0.221) -.068
Minister	3.122*** (0.375) .369	3.487*** (0.379) .431	2.447*** (0.365) .311	2.915*** (0.428) .405
Party leader	1.836*** (0.414) .195	2.198*** (0.416) .244	1.352*** (0.401) .154	1.708*** (0.432) .225
House speaker	0.524 (0.490) .048	1.180* (0.494) .114	0.518 (0.528) .047	0.597 (0.579) .063
Conservatism	-0.148 (0.164) -.043	-0.409* (0.169) -.122	0.211 (0.165) .064	-0.134 (0.232) -.037
Federal MP	0.503*** (0.143) .167	0.300* (0.146) .103	0.418** (0.145) .145	0.147 (0.221) .044
Parliamentary activity	0.523 (0.381) .064	0.363 (0.389) .046	0.635 (0.388) .081	-0.346 (0.553) -.039
Facebook posts	0.089 (0.377) .012	-0.099 (0.382) -.013	-0.074 (0.371) -.010	0.878† (0.519) .114
Canada	0.739*** (0.192) .194	-0.012 (0.199) -.003	1.287*** (0.196) .354	1.356*** (0.272) .338
Israel	1.013*** (0.293) .188	0.191 (0.297) .037	1.367*** (0.287) .272	1.109** (0.346) .248
Constant	-3.627*** (0.762)	-2.800*** (0.789)	-3.811*** (0.765)	-4.504*** (1.052)
<i>n</i>	306	296	286	174
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	.483	.450	.478	.546

†*p* < .1. \**p* < .05. \*\**p* < .01. \*\*\**p* < .001.

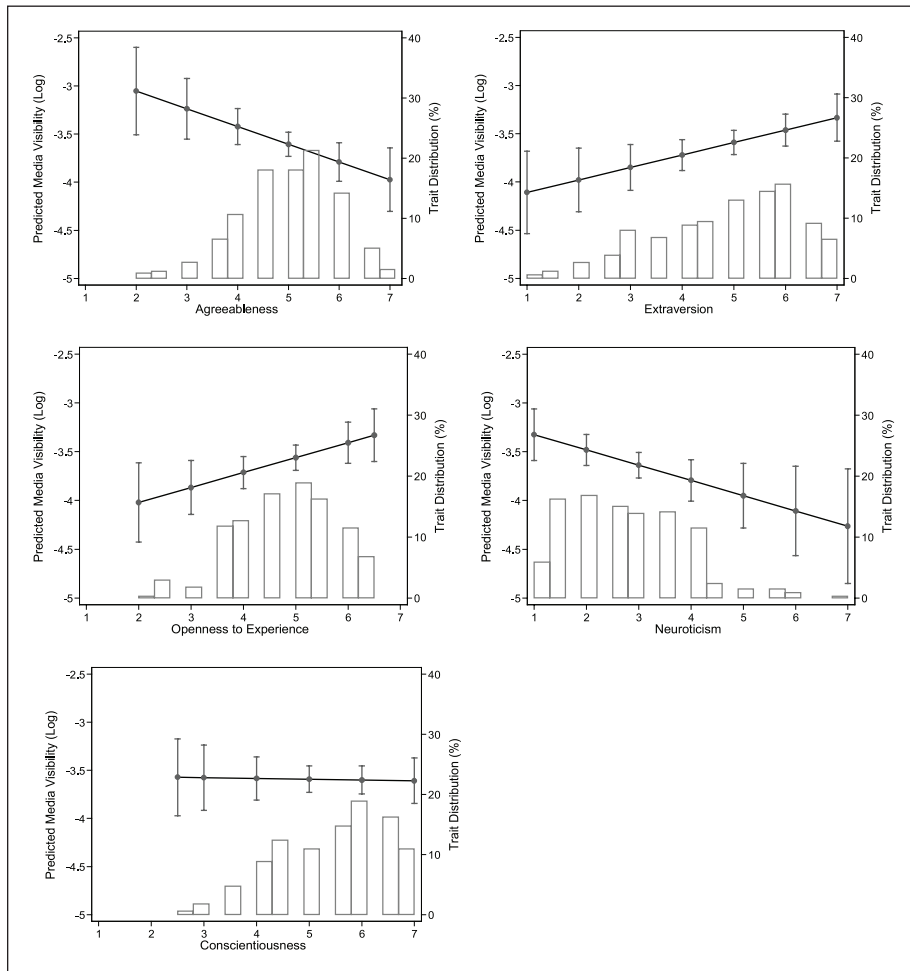
standard deviation increase in extraversion, an MP's media visibility (log-transformed) increases by .117 standard deviations, while holding the controls constant.

In H3, we hypothesized that the more open to experience a politician is, the more visible he or she will be in the news. This hypothesis is supported, as the standardized coefficient for this trait is positive and significant ( $\beta = .098$ ;  $p < .05$ ). In other words, for each one standard deviation increase in openness to experience, a politician's media visibility (log-transformed) increases by .098 standard deviations, all else held constant. H4 assumed that the more neurotic a politician is, the less frequently he or she will appear in the media. This hypothesis is supported, as the standardized coefficient for this trait is negative and significant ( $\beta = -.111$ ;  $p < .05$ ). This means that each one standard deviation increase in a politician's neuroticism decreases her media visibility (log-transformed) by 0.111 standard deviations, while holding the controls constant. Finally, H5 posited that the more conscientious a politician is, the more frequently he or she will appear in the media. This hypothesis is not supported in this model, with the standardized coefficient of conscientiousness being very close to zero and statistically insignificant ( $\beta = -.006$ ;  $p = .91$ ). The effects of the Big Five personality traits on media visibility, while holding all control variables constant, are illustrated in Figure 1. The figure displays the predicted values of media visibility for each level of the personality variables.

Our results show that personality effects on media visibility are not as large as the well-documented effect of institutional political power, but still quite substantial. For instance, in terms of standard deviations, the effect of being a minister on media visibility is, as expected, very strong ( $\beta = .369$ ) and is about 3 times larger than the effects of agreeableness, extraversion, openness to experience, or neuroticism. However, the effect of being a party leader ( $\beta = .195$ ), another important institutional role, is only slightly stronger than the personality effects we observe. This suggests that while institutional power is still a more powerful predictor, personality exerts a substantial effect on media visibility. The effects of other covariates on media visibility are discussed in Online Appendix D. We note here, however, that the results are generally in line with previous literature.

### **Robustness Checks**

To test the robustness of the above findings, Models 2 to 4 in Table 1 estimate the effects of politicians' personality traits separately for each news medium (newspapers, news websites, and TV channels), controlling for the same variables as in Model 1. The models produce comparable results to those of Model 1. In Model 2, the effect of agreeableness on visibility in print newspapers remains negative and significant at the 95% level, and the effects of extraversion and neuroticism are significant at the 90% level. The effects of openness to experience and conscientiousness are statistically insignificant in this model. A similar pattern emerges in Model 3: When predicting visibility in news websites, the effects of extraversion, openness to experience, and neuroticism are significant; the effect of agreeableness is still negative but becomes insignificant; and the effect of conscientiousness remains insignificant. When



**Figure 1.** The marginal effects of agreeableness, extraversion, openness to experience, neuroticism, and conscientiousness on politicians' media visibility (log-transformed). Note. Linear slopes represent the association between a personality trait ( $x$ -axis) and log-transformed media visibility (left-hand  $y$ -axis). Brackets represent 95% confidence intervals. Vertical bars represent the distribution of the personality trait ( $x$ -axis) in terms of percentages (right-hand  $y$ -axis). The graphs are based on Model 1 in Table 1.

examining TV channels (Model 4), the effects of extraversion and agreeableness remain significant at the 90% confidence level, but the other traits are insignificant.<sup>12</sup> Taken together, Models 2 to 4 suggest that the relationship between personality traits and media visibility remains generally stable across media.

In a different robustness test, we estimated a more parsimonious model that only controls for demographic variables. This model provides further support for our findings (see Online Appendix E). We also performed a separate analysis for each country



(also presented in Online Appendix E) where we used the above-mentioned parsimonious models due to the small sample size per country. The coefficients of all personality traits are in the same direction, except for agreeableness and neuroticism in Israel and conscientiousness in Belgium. It is important to note that conscientiousness has a positive and significant effect on media visibility in Canada and Israel, as we originally hypothesized, but not in Belgium. However, the small samples, especially in Israel ( $n = 32$ ), limit our ability to draw confident conclusions from this by-country analysis. We further elaborate on these cross-country results in the discussion section. Finally, we performed a randomization inference test to rule out the possibility that the significant effects are “simply a result of a lucky draw from the universe of possible outcome variables” (Malesky, Nguyen, & Tran, 2014, p. 158). The results of this test (presented and explicated in Online Appendix E) suggest that it is extremely improbable that the four jointly significant effects we observe are the result of a random coincidence.

## Discussion

The results presented in this study provide clear evidence that politicians’ personality matters for their visibility in the media. We find that four out of five core traits significantly predict the frequency of politicians’ news appearances, while one trait partially predicts it. First, we find that politicians scoring high on agreeableness are covered in the news less frequently, a result we attribute to their dislike of the contentious nature of the news and to a correspondence between low levels on this trait and the media’s focus on competition and conflict. Second, we demonstrate that politicians scoring high on extraversion are covered in the news more frequently, a result that is in line with their higher need for interaction and public recognition and with their sociable and energetic nature.

Measuring these two traits among elites has allowed us to test the expectation that personality traits tapping politicians’ interpersonal orientation will be important predictors of their visibility in the media. It is conventional in the personality psychology literature to conceptualize one’s interpersonal behavior using two major axes—one of dominance, power, and status and another of solidarity, friendliness, and warmth (Wiggins, 1979). In the Big Five model, these two axes are represented by extraversion, which taps one’s enthusiasm and assertiveness, and agreeableness, which taps politeness and compassion (DeYoung, Weisberg, Quilty, & Peterson, 2013). From this perspective, the fact that more assertive (rather than submissive) and hostile (rather than compassionate) individuals get more media coverage is an important and non-trivial finding. It extends previous studies showing that highly extraverted politicians are more ambitious than more introverted ones (Dietrich et al., 2012) and linking agreeableness with cooperative rather than competitive elite behavior (Ramey et al., 2017).

In addition to the two predominantly interpersonal traits, our study demonstrates that two other personality traits are consistently predictive of media visibility. Politicians scoring high on openness to experience are found to be more visible in the news, a result we attribute to their preference for novelty (McCrae, 1993). This effect,

we believe, highlights the utility of “thinking outside the box” when attempting to access the media, for example, by coming up with original ideas or showing a willingness to try new activities. Our models also show that politicians scoring high on neuroticism are featured less frequently in the news than those more emotionally stable. This, we believe, stems from their aversion to the negative, conflictual, and dramatic nature of media stories (Mondak, 2010). Fighting for media attention, it appears, requires politicians to display psychological resilience.

A cross-country analysis reveals that the personality effects in each country are similar to those in our main models. Conscientiousness, however, is positively and significantly associated with media visibility in Canada and Israel but has an insignificant effect in Belgium. We propose two explanations for the null finding in Belgium. Methodologically, the very brief nature of the TIPI, which typically results in high measurement error, has been shown to provide underestimations of the strength of relationships (Credé et al., 2012). Thus, the effect of conscientiousness on media visibility in Belgium may be stronger in the population than indicated by our data. Theoretically, it is possible that conscientious MPs—while striving for achievement in the media arena, feeling that it is their duty to communicate with voters, and engaging in the meticulous planning of media campaigns—are not highly newsworthy in their actual behavior for this effect to hold across contexts. The latter possibility is demonstrated when examining the impact of conscientiousness on media visibility in Belgium by type of parliament. As demonstrated in Online Appendix E, among members of regional parliaments in Belgium ( $n = 137$ ), conscientiousness is found to decrease media visibility significantly, while for members of the federal parliament ( $n = 95$ ), an insignificant effect is found. In either case, due to the small number of countries and the relatively small  $n$  in each country, we are cautious in making comparative inferences from these country differences.

Taken together, these results further our understanding of the role of personality in the political domain. To date, only a few examinations of the Big Five traits among political elites were conducted, and the existing studies either compared the personality traits of politicians with those of the general population (e.g., Best, 2011) or used personality to explain politicians’ ideology and legislative behavior (e.g., Ramey et al., 2017). We contribute to this literature by demonstrating that personality is politically consequential in another way: It affects the chances of a politician to gain exposure and recognition for herself and her actions among the mass public—a highly important goal for any political actor wishing to promote policies and to get reelected.

From a political communication perspective, our results join other studies exploring the factors that make some individual political actors more newsworthy than others (see Vos, 2014, for a review). Previous studies focused on factors at the institutional level (e.g., power), on specific behavioral indicators (e.g., activity in parliament), or on demographic variables (e.g., gender). While our study corroborates the expectation that political power will exert the strongest influence on media visibility, we find that personality’s effect is significant and substantial above and beyond previous explanations. The uniqueness of personality traits as predictors of media visibility is that they are genetically heritable characteristics of a person that are relatively stable across contexts (Gerber et al., 2011a). Therefore, we can conclude that traits that better fit

news values, such as extraversion, give politicians a long-lasting advantage in the competition for media visibility. Due to the stable nature of personality, we believe the findings presented here advance the literature one step closer toward an understanding the true “essence” of newsworthy politicians.

From a normative point of view, these results may have important implications for political representation. They may indicate that a selection effect takes place in politics, whereby certain types of individuals find it easier than others to climb to the top of the system. For example, while cooperation and compromise are fundamental aspects of the democratic process, the media success of less agreeable politicians—who are more hostile and aggressive—can lead over time to more polarized political systems. On the other side, this selection effect may have a positive side, as we also find that the media tend to reward politicians more open to new experiences and ideas, who “think outside the box,” which is a desirable quality among elite decision makers.

Before concluding, we note that this study has several limitations. The first is social desirability. Inaccurate responses stemming from what respondents perceive to be socially valued traits is a threat in any personality questionnaire based on self-assessment, and a survey conducted among politicians is no different. MPs and ministers who currently hold office may not be eager to admit that they are, for instance, easily irritated or disorganized, while socially desirable characteristics, such as being dependable or sympathetic, may be somewhat overestimated. This may lead to biased estimations of the impact of personality on media visibility. A second limitation of the study is our use of a brief personality battery. Short instruments such as the TIPI tend to produce relatively high measurement error, a fact that may also have affected our results by leading us to underestimate true effect sizes. Moreover, while our data allow us to conclude with confidence that some broad personality traits affect media visibility, a Big Five measure using only 10 items does not allow us to determine the relative impact of different facets of each trait.

Our study is also limited in terms of scope. While we believe that a multicountry design is preferable to a single-country study, we have only three cases. Studying politicians from more than three countries would have enabled us to generalize our results to other contexts as well, such as presidential systems or nondemocratic states. Also in terms of scope, we acknowledge that measuring additional relevant dependent variables may have produced a more nuanced picture of the association we explore: most importantly, measuring the tone of politicians’ media coverage in addition to its volume is important, as negative media coverage may have detrimental consequences for politicians (Fridkin & Kenney, 2011). Finally, while we argue that two theoretical mechanisms (motivation and newsworthiness) drive the relationship between personality and media visibility, we do not measure these mechanisms directly and thus cannot disentangle their relative influence on media visibility. This can be done in future research, for instance, by conducting in-depth interviews with politicians and journalists exploring their daily interactions.

We hope future research will address some of these limitations. While issues such as social desirability cannot be easily solved, we do urge scholars to explore the relationship between personality and media visibility in countries with different political and media systems and to gauge the impact of personality on the tone of the coverage

politicians receive in addition to its volume. Despite the limitations mentioned above, we believe that the results presented here constitute meaningful evidence that variations in personality traits can predict the media visibility of politicians above and beyond explanations suggested in previous research.

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The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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### Notes

1. In Canada, we contacted 278 politicians. In Belgium in Israel, we contacted all MPs.
2. For newspapers, we automatically searched for articles mentioning each politician’s full name. In Canada, articles were retrieved from LexisNexis. In Belgium and Israel, they were retrieved from the news outlets themselves. As for TV appearances, in Canada, we searched for politicians’ full names in transcripts (available through LexisNexis); in Belgium, we manually counted how many times each name had appeared in the actual broadcasts (visuals were provided directly by the broadcasting companies); in Israel, visibility counts were provided by Ifat Media Information Center. For news websites, we manually counted how many unique articles mentioned each politician. Each item was then manually reexamined to ensure that it refers to the politician rather than to a nonpolitician with the same name.
3. In Canada, since the 41st federal parliament dissolved on August 2, 2015, data were collected from June 2, 2011 to this ending point; for Ontario politicians, data were collected from July 2, 2014, to December 31, 2015; Belgian data were collected from June 19, 2014, to November 30, 2015; and Israeli data were collected from the 20th Knesset’s first plenum, on March 31, 2015, to December 31, 2015.
4. For example, while media appearances in Israel were collected for a period of 9 months, appearances in Canada were counted for 4 years. Thus, if two MPs—one from Israel and one from Canada—had 100 media appearances each, the Israeli MP would obviously be more prominent, since he or she gained the same amount of coverage in a much shorter period. Thus, we recoded the absolute number of media appearances into a standardized and comparable 0 to 1 scale for each country and medium. On this variable, a value of 0 means that the MP received no coverage at all on a specific medium in a specific country and a value of 1 means that the MP received the highest amount of coverage in a specific medium in her country. The formula for the 0 to 1 rescaling was  $(\text{Value} - \text{Min}) / (\text{Max} - \text{Min})$ .
5. Costa and McCrae do not use the term *Big Five* to describe their model, but use the term *five-factor model* (FFM). While both models explore the same set of five traits, they use

- different terminology and rely on different instruments to measure personality (see John, Naumann, & Soto, 2008 for a comprehensive review of the history and concepts of the Big Five trait taxonomy, including further information on the similarities and differences between the models).
6. We relied on the translations proposed in Gosling's website (<http://gosling.psy.utexas.edu/scales-weve-developed/ten-item-personality-measure-tipi/>). Although the translations differ in the level of efforts dedicated by scholars to validate them, we are not the first to use the TIPI in any of these languages.
  7. Cronbach's alphas are not exceptionally high as well: extraversion (0.75), openness to experience (0.39), neuroticism (0.53), conscientiousness (0.4), and agreeableness (0.15).
  8. Indicators of parliamentary activity varied based on data availability. In the Belgian parliaments, we collected bills initiated and oral and written questions; in the Canadian federal parliament, we collected bills initiated, laws passed, motions, House interventions, and committee interventions; in the Ontario parliament, we collected bills initiated and laws passed; and in Israel, we collected written questions, bills initiated, and laws passed.
  9. For MPs who held official public pages, we used "Facepager" program (<http://github.com/strohne/Facepager>), which automatically retrieves posts from public pages. For MPs who did not have a Facebook page but used a public Facebook profile, we manually counted the number of posts they published.
  10. No collinearity was found between any of the predictors of media visibility. The variance inflation factor (VIF) scores are lower than 1.63 for all independent variables.
  11. The use of log-transformed dependent variable led to a decrease in the  $n$  of each model, especially in Model 4 (TV channels), since a log of zero is not defined. To keep the original  $n$ , we transformed the dependent variable by adding a constant (half of the smallest non-zero value) to each original visibility value and then logged it (see Kelly et al., 2013). The results using this transformation are similar to those presented in the main analysis.
  12. Both Belgian TV channels in our sample (VTM, VRT) are Dutch-speaking outlets, while our politician sample includes members of both Dutch- and French-speaking regional parliaments. We found that Belgian MPs from French-speaking regional parliaments were not mentioned once in these TV channels during our sampling period. Therefore, to avoid bias, we excluded MPs from French-speaking regional parliaments from the analysis and ran the same model. The results (available in Online Appendix E) are similar.

### Supplemental Material:

Supplementary material is available for this article online.

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