Key points: This project focuses on holding a workshop on Political Leadership in the European Union (EU) 'EULead', a public event with leading EU officials, publishing the results in an academic journal and disseminating the knowledge through a policy brief and the media. The policy brief will be presented at a final dissemination event in Brussels.

Background and rationale: The financial crisis has made clear that the EU faces difficulties in exercising political leadership. Ample questions have been raised in popular press and public debates about the leadership of the EU in this context. However, the issue plays hardly a role in scientific debates and analyses. Recently a few edited volumes have been published on the topic e.g. Beach/Mazzucelli (2007), Hayward (2008), but they only deal with selected aspects of the issue. Furthermore, they lack an encompassing theoretical framework and present rather a patchwork of preliminary conclusions instead of an encompassing scientific analysis. Against this b