

# Natural Enemies: Articulations of Racism in Right-Wing Populism in Austria

## Povzetek

### Naravni sovražniki: Artikulacije rasizma v desničarskem populizmu v Avstriji

Članek raziskuje različne artikulacije rasizma v desnih populističnih diskurzih v Avstriji. Temelji na štirih študijah primerov, ki se osredinjajo na Avstrijsko svobodnjaško stranko (FPÖ), njeno mladinska organizacija (RFJ), novo desničarsko Identitetno gibanje Avstrije (IBÖ) in številne nevladne organizacije, ki se borijo proti (gradnji) mošej in islamskih centrov. Uporabili smo kritično analizo okvirov besedil, ki so jih te organizacije objavile na spletu. Analiza je bila opravljena v okviru dveh projektov, ki jih je sofinancira EU. V prispevku smo se osredinili na argumentativne strategije in vzorce oblikovanja pomenov, povezanih z okviri, ki temeljijo na »drugačenju«, etnizaciji in rasizmu, ki sestavljajo približno polovico glavnih okvirov analiziranih desnih populističnih diskurzov. Natančno branje teh diskurzivnih strategij kaže na tri različne oblike rasističnega artikulacije: protimuslimanski rasizem, etnopluralizem in ksenorasizem. Te oblike rasističnih artikulacij se ne razlikujejo le glede na skupine, ki so stigmatizirane kot »drugi«, ampak tudi po rasistični logiki in glede na naloge, ki naj bi jih imele v desničarskih populističnih diskurzih. Medtem ko je protimuslimanski rasizem predvsem sredstvo ustvarjanja pozitivne samopodobe, je etnopluralizem koherentna ideologija. Na drugi strani deluje ksenorasizem predvsem kot sredstvo za naturaliziranje privilegijev domačinov in krepi desničarsko populistično diskurzivno hegemonijo. Te empirične ugotovitve lahko povežemo s teoretskimi razpravami o rasizmu in podpirajo zahteve, da v definicijo rasizma kot analitični koncept vključimo 'nove', 'diferencialistične' oblike rasizma.

**Ključne besede:** rasizem, desničarski populizem, Avstrija, analiza okvira

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## Abstract

The article investigates different articulations of racism in right-wing populist discourses in Austria. The paper is based on four case studies focusing on the *Austrian Freedom Party* (FPÖ), its youth organisation (RFJ), the new-right *Identitarian Movement Austria* (IBÖ) and a number of NGOs campaigning against (the building of) mosques or Islamic centres. We employed critical frame analysis of texts published online by these four organisations, done in the framework of two projects co-funded by the EU. In this paper we focus on argumentative strategies and patterns of meaning-making relating to frames based on 'othering', ethnicisation, and racism, which account for about half of the main frames in the right-wing populist discourses analysed. A closer reading of these discursive strategies shows three distinct modes of racist articulation: forms of anti-Muslim racism, ethnopluralism and xeno-racism. These forms of racist articulations differ not only with regard to the groups that are stigmatised as 'others', but also with regard to the racist logic applied and to the functions they are meant to perform within right-wing populist discourses. While anti-Muslim racism is above all a means of creating a positive self-image, ethnopluralism presents a coherent ideology. Xeno-racism on the other hand

works mainly as a means of naturalising privileges of natives and strengthening right-wing populists' discursive hegemony. These empirical findings can be related to theoretical debates on racism and support claims for inclusion of 'new', 'differentialist' forms in its definition as an analytical concept.

**Keywords:** racism, right-wing populism, Austria, frame analysis

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Since the 1990s right-wing populism has become a buzzword in European politics as well as in political science as right-wing populist movements and parties have successfully changed the political landscape in many countries. Among them the *Austrian Freedom Party* (FPÖ) was one of the pioneers of the populist modernisation of right-wing extremism in Europe and its success makes Austria an interesting laboratory for the study of right-wing populist discourse. While right-wing populists' regular use of 'othering'-discourses and racism is often treated as self-evident in public discussion and academic research alike, the question of *how* populism and racism are interwoven in discursive practices is less frequently addressed. This article sets out to examine empirically articulations of racism in right-wing populists' public communication in Austria. Our aim is to build a typology of right-wing racism in order to demonstrate the varieties of racism in right-wing discourse.

We start our discussion by defining right-wing populism and its relation to racism – two notions that guide our analysis. After a short introduction of the material analysed and the method of 'critical frame analysis' we discuss the results of our empirical research, which is based on four case studies we researched in the framework of two EU-funded projects<sup>1</sup> in 2013 and 2014 in Austria.

## Racism in right-wing populism

We chose the concept of right-wing *populism* as our starting point in order to develop our research perspective. This concept provides a focus on how the political actors studied construct their social and political reality through a double antagonism: against elites on the one hand and against groups constructed as 'others' on the other. These constructions fulfil a strategic function as they allow right-wing populists to identify themselves as representatives of the collective will of their addressees in the most direct and unmediated way (Canovan, 2004: 274; Mudde, 2010: 1175).

We follow Sebastian Reinfeldt, who defines right-wing populism as the organisation of "a political strategy and dynamic that links a political formation to parts of the population"<sup>2</sup> (Reinfeldt, 2000: 46). In his view right-wing populist discourses construct politics as a script of

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<sup>1</sup> RAGE – Hate speech and populist othering in Europe (Fundamental Rights and Citizenship Programme, grant no. JUST/2012/FRAC/AG/2861) and e-Engagement Against Violence – e-EAV (Daphne Programme, grant no. JUST/2011/DAP/AG/3195).

<sup>2</sup> All quotes from German sources have been translated by the authors.

relations between friends and enemies, which can be dissected in four positions (ibid.: 132; Figure 1).

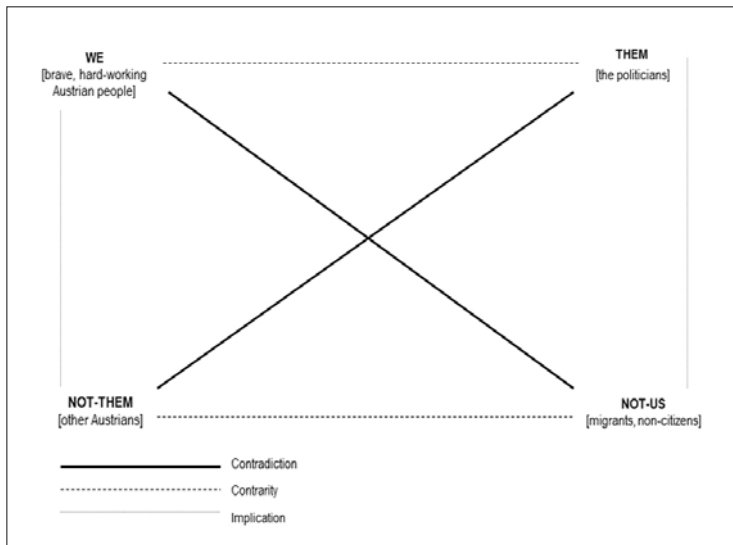


Figure 1: The ideological square of right-wing populism. (Source: Reinfeldt, 2000: 133)

The first position is the ‘us’-group, i.e. the populist in-group that is normally structured around a leader (‘us’). The second position is the group of addressees of right-wing populist discourse (‘not-them’), whom the populist leader and group claim to represent. An equally close connection is assumed to exist between the two distinct groups of enemies: the elites (‘them’/‘those up there’), who are deemed to be not only remote from the concerns of ordinary people, but to act against their interests in a vicious manner, and groups of ‘others’ (‘not-us’) that are excluded from the group of addressees of the populists’ discourse. Those that are ‘not-us’ are often portrayed as representing a danger, which has been deliberately created or is at least fostered by the elites.

While the assignment of the discursive positions to specific groups remains flexible and might change according to the actor analysed, the topic at stake, or the context of a specific utterance, the structure of this double antagonism remains stable and provides the rationale for right-wing populist discourse in every area of political debate. Most commonly (though not exclusively) the role of ‘not-us’ is ascribed to ethnicised and racialised ‘others’, who are depicted as ‘different’ in terms of ethnicity, nationality, religion or culture. Right-wing populist discursive strategies thereby ethnicise the political antagonism constructed between the right-wing populist ‘us’ and its addressees on the one hand and its alleged enemies on the other. As this logic is applied in all policy fields, right-wing populism fosters an ethnicisation of political discourse in general, i.e. a re-framing of all kinds of political and social problems in terms of ‘ethnic’ or ‘cultural’ conflicts.

Research on right-wing populism has tried to capture this logic of right-wing populist ‘othering’ by developing different analytical concepts. For example, the Austrian political scientist Anton Pelinka characterised right-wing populism as adding a “(xenophobic) horizontal affect” to the “(anti-elitarian) vertical affect of populism in general” (Pelinka, 2002: 284–285) and linguist Martin Reisigl focused on the “affirmative relation to the people represented and the

simultaneous attack of internal and external enemies” (Reisigl, 2012: 141). We propose to conceptualise these forms of ‘othering’ as articulations of racism instead. This analytical choice allows us to build on the extensive theoretical discussion on racism as a multi-layered analytical concept that bridges individual, institutional, and discursive areas.

Racism has long been theorised mainly in connection with a biologist exclusionary worldview. Although the understanding has been broadened considerably in recent debates, older definitions still provide an important starting point for a discussion of racism as an analytical concept. Robert Miles and Malcolm Brown (2003: 87) define racism as a “social process by which meanings are attributed to real or imagined human characteristics”. They point to the arbitrariness of phenotypical classifications linked to ‘race’, which only construct specific bodily features to be meaningful and significant for classification. These ‘meaningful’ bodily features then become associated with culture and provide the basis for separating humans into different groups. “(I)n the end it is arbitrary” as to which differences are constructed as meaningful, as Terkessidis (2004: 75) contends. Hence, if no visible differences exist they are invented. Therefore, racism – even in its biologist form – cannot be understood as “a natural division of the world’s population, but the application of historically and culturally specific meanings to the totality of human physiological variation” (Miles and Brown, 2003: 89). Hence ‘race’ cannot be used as an apolitical, ‘given’ category of analysis, but has to be reconceptualised to signify processes of ‘racialisation’ (Terkessidis, 2004: 37; Miles and Brown, 2003: 90, 99). Researchers such as Colette Guillaumin (1995) and Mark Terkessidis (2004) have further broadened this notion to include not only phenotypical but also sociological, symbolic, and imaginary characteristics and the processes in which these are naturalised. Historical research has also shown that racism has always been ‘cultural’ as well as ‘biological’ (Hund, 2001: 12).

Apart from processes that serve to divide humans into groups, Miles and Brown argue that in order to label a phenomenon ‘racist’ at least one group has to be ascribed with negative characteristics or has to be represented as a threat for other groups, which then creates a hierarchy between the constructed ‘races’ (Miles and Brown, 2003: 104). In their view the combination of both elements – racialisation and hierarchisation – defines racism as an ideology. However, new forms of racism do not just mandate a broadening of our understanding of processes of racialisation. Equally, we need to refine our understanding of ‘hierarchisation’ as an ‘element’ of racism. ‘Differentialist’ forms of racism no longer explicitly state a hierarchy of racialised groups, but make use of the anti-racist idea of a “right to be different” and turn it into a “duty to be different” (Schiedel, 2011: 34, see also Terkessidis, 2004: 82). Instead of propagating that groups are of different value, ‘differentialist’ racism focuses on the supposedly insurmountable differences between groups, which are mostly defined in ‘cultural’ rather than openly ‘racial’ terms. As these articulations also separate humans into distinct groups, imply a normative assessment, and define relations between them, we have to define them as a form of racism, too. Following this ‘differentialist’ logic racism itself becomes naturalised by being portrayed as a ‘natural’ longing for tradition and separation. From this point of view the sheer presence of ‘others’ appears to be problematic (Balibar, 1991: 21). Therefore constructions of racialised groups have to be understood as racist ideologies in their own right and have to be placed in the context of power relations that provide conditions for *and* at the same time are effects of racism.

Notwithstanding the importance of understanding racism as an ideology, it is equally important to take its functionality into account. To this end Stuart Hall (2000) and Mark Terkessidis (2004) conceptualise racism as a social practice that links constructions of meaning to the exclusion of specific groups from cultural and symbolic resources. Hence, Terkessidis suggests understanding racism “as a combination of social practice and the simultaneous production of knowledge” (2004: 92), i.e. he suggests understanding racism as an ongoing process in which practices of exclusion and discrimination produce powerful knowledge about ‘others’, which in turn legitimises and prompts further practice. In a nutshell, his definition of racism consists of three elements (*ibid.*: 98): First, processes of ‘racialisation’ construct groups as seemingly natu-

ral entities on the basis of assumed biological as well as cultural characteristics often bundled together. The second element is found in social practices that are based on and result in exclusion and discrimination. Third, the concept of a 'power of differentiation' serves to include the element of (epistemic) violence that links these components. Although racism is not necessarily defined by one dominant group ruling over another by means of force, racism always implies unequal power relations that allow one group to define 'others' and render them visible as 'others'. At the same time and within these relations of inequality the 'us'-group is constructed as the dominant group (ibid.: 96).

This rather broad analytical definition of racism provides our point of departure for the empirical analysis of different constructions of ethnicised groups of 'us' and 'others' within right-wing populist discourses in Austria. Such a theoretically grounded understanding of racism allows us to discuss the functionality of different articulations of racism for and in right-wing populist discourses. But before turning to the results of our case studies, we will introduce the analysed material and our method of *critical frame analysis*.

## Case studies

This article is based on an analysis of texts and images published online by four Austrian right-wing populist organisations. We deliberately chose texts that were part of the respective organisation's publication strategy because we wanted to analyse arguments that these organisations meant to feed into public discourse rather than the – presumably more ideology-driven – discourse among functionaries or militants.

The Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ) was chosen as our first case study due to its relevance in Austrian and European politics. The party is known to be one of the forerunners of populist modernisation among traditional right-wing parties in Europe. The Freedom Party's Youth Organisation, RFJ, was chosen in order to establish a specific focus on communication strategies targeting young people. In contrast to the RFJ, our third case study, the Identitarian Movement Austria (IBÖ) is an independent and relatively new right-wing movement of young people. The IBÖ follows ideas of the *New Right*, derived from its French role model. Our fourth case study also deals with a non-institutionalised actor: a number of NGOs against the building of mosques or Islamic centres, which in April 2011 united in the Movement Pro Austria (BPÖ), although this umbrella organisation has not shown much activity since. The importance of anti-Muslim agitation for right-wing populist parties and groups all over Europe makes these initiatives an interesting case for analysis.

Fifty texts, which have been published online from 2010 onwards<sup>3</sup> and were still available in autumn 2013<sup>4</sup>, were chosen for the analysis. We selected texts in order to cover a broad range of different genres. In some cases images were analysed alongside the text in order to grasp visual communication strategies as well (see Table 1).

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<sup>3</sup> Not all texts feature an exact date of publication.

<sup>4</sup> The IBÖ has since reorganised its website. Although most of the texts can still be found either on the website or on the Facebook page not all of them are as prominently featured as in autumn 2013.

Table 1: Right-wing populist organisations' textual and visual material

	FPÖ	RFJ	IBÖ	BPÖ	Total
Texts total	14	14	12	10	50
a) Programmatic texts	3	6	4	2	15
b) News	3	4	3	3	13
c) Public statements	2	2	2	3	9
d) Speeches, interviews	3	2	3	2	10
e) Social media	3				3
Images		9	3		12
Video			1		1

## Critical Frame Analysis

Our method of *Critical Frame Analysis* (CFA) (Verloo, 2005; Verloo and Lombard, 2007: 35) focuses on the construction and representation of political problems and solutions which are either explicitly stated or implied in problem construction (for the theoretical background see Bacchi, 2010). This perspective allows an analysis of the similarities of populist argumentation strategies and of patterns of meaning-making across different texts, genres and political actors.

Our analysis shows that right-wing populism tends to reproduce specific patterns of meaning-making, which are used with regard to different issues. As CFA also allows analysing how blame, responsibility, and victimisation are discursively constructed and distributed among different actors it can be fruitfully combined with Reinfeldt's ideological square of right-wing populism described above. Furthermore, we investigated discursive references, e.g. to norms, values, and ideologies, that legitimised specific constructions of meaning. In many cases processes of framing are not a question of conscious selection, as actors rely on already existing frames that are widespread in society or in their respective group (van Hulst and Yanow, 2014). However, in the specific context of political discourse so-called 'strategic framing', i.e. a "conscious and intentional selection of language and concepts to influence political debate and decision-making" (Bacchi, 2009: 19) plays an important role. Even though processes of meaning-making are never fully controlled by their authors, they strive to create political realities in ways that match their ideological assumptions and construct problems that fit preconceived solutions.

First empirical results showed that nearly half of the problem-constructions analysed relied on a racist logic of ethnicisation and/or racialisation of parts of the population (most prominently Muslims) or on the problematisation of immigration, asylum and integration policies. Slightly more than half of the 'solutions' presented by the right-wing populist organisations studied either proposed restrictive immigration and asylum policies, were directed against Muslims, or presented the positive flip side of racist discourses in the form of a strengthening of Austrian and/or European identity, the privileging of natives or references to patriotism and nationalism. These first results provided the basis for a more nuanced look at the strategic use and intersections of different frames in meaning-making processes.

## Articulations of racism

Our results show that right-wing populists use different strategies in the construction of ethnicised ‘others’, which can be systematically grouped, arriving at three main patterns of meaning-making. Drawing on existing literature these patterns can be conceptualised as anti-Muslim racism (Fekete, 2006), ethnopluralism (Bruns et al., 2014: 174) and xeno-racism (Fekete, 2001). Even where strands of political discourse intersect or converge, our analysis captures different logics and functions of these articulations.

### *Anti-Muslim racism*

This form of racist articulation plays a tremendous role in right-wing populism. The logic underlying the construction of the populist ‘us’ and its addressees (‘not-them’) on the one hand and ‘not-us’/‘others’ on the other hand follows established patterns of cultural racism. ‘Others’, ‘their culture’ and ‘their religion’ are portrayed as being in complete contradiction to ‘our culture’ and ‘our values’, thereby rendering these ‘others’ a threat to the dominant society. Anti-Muslim racism treats the culture and the religion of ‘others’ as interchangeable terms. Firstly, religion – often pictured in its most restrictive forms – is seen as dominating and defining culture, while secondly the vague notion of culture serves to include all people with a (family or migration) background that might in any way be linked to Islam into this group irrespective of individual religious (or atheist) practices. All actors in our case studies voice anti-Muslim racism. In the case of the civic initiatives lobbying against mosques or Islamic centres it even represents the only relevant content. One telling example stems from an ‘open letter’ of one of these initiatives, that lobbied for the “closing and sale” of an Islamic cultural centre of the Turkish organisation ATIB/Turkish-Islamic Union in Vienna. In this open letter the NGO states the following:

If the organisation should go into operation, this means the acceptance of political-religious views and acts that in no way conform to our worldview and contradict the Geneva Convention on Human Rights<sup>5</sup> or good morals such as the definitive discrimination of women, absence of religious freedom, dress codes, genital mutilation of minors in unsterile conditions, cruelty towards animals by halal slaughtering,<sup>6</sup> etc. (Hubac, 2013)

This quote provides an interesting example for the use of categories of gender and age in right-wing populist discourse. Women and minors appear as victims of Islam, which is thereby rendered a ‘male’ – read: dominant, aggressive – religion. The use of the gender-neutral term “minors” enables at least two different readings of the sentence – a prominent strategy in right-wing populism that has been aptly termed ‘calculated ambivalence’ (Engel and Wodak, 2013). The term “genital mutilation” plays on the notion of ‘Female Genital Mutilation’ (FGM), which is a brutal and harmful practice that is not grounded in Islam, but in local traditions and hence cannot be linked to the organisation ATIB that represents the Turkish state-controlled Islam. While deliberately playing on this notion the term might of course also be taken to refer to male circumcision, which is a religious practice, albeit a much less harmful one. Calculated

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<sup>5</sup> It is not quite clear which convention the authors are referring to here as a *Geneva Convention on Human Rights* does not exist.

<sup>6</sup> The German text uses the term “schächten” here, which mostly refers to Jewish kosher butchering although it can also be used for the Islamic practice. This criticism and the reference to “genital mutilation” (if understood to refer to male circumcision) could be further investigated in terms of connections and differences between anti-Muslim racism and anti-Semitism, but such an analysis is beyond the scope of this article.

ambivalence in this instance works as a strategy to capitalise on the moral outrage over FGM, while still being able to downplay the statement to one about male circumcision if a reference to facts should be required.

Arguments relying on a specific depiction of gender relations are a typical device of anti-Muslim racism, which creates an image of an 'Orient' characterised by the subordination of women, thereby rendering the 'West' – and in our example white Catholic Austria – a model of emancipation and equality between the sexes (Fekete, 2006: 13). It is also typical that the group the author is referring to as 'us' ("our worldview") is not named and only implicitly constructed as native Austrians without a migration history and either Catholic or agnostic/atheist. Through this discursive strategy Muslim men are pictured as potential perpetrators, Muslim women – if present at all – are victimised, native Austrian women appear to be threatened by Islam, while native men are called to defend 'our' good morals, which supposedly include gender equality. A specific paradox is the use of "religious freedom" as an argument against the building of a religious centre. The idea of human rights is thereby reduced to mere rhetoric in order to paint a more favourable picture of the right-wing populist 'us' and its addressees.

## *Ethnopluralism*

Even though ethnopluralist racist articulations are often legitimised by anti-Muslim resentment, they follow a different and rather more complex logic. Proponents of the New Right, who since the 1970s have strived for a modernisation of right-wing extremist ideologies in order to distance themselves from National Socialism, have coined the term 'ethnopluralism'. The concept is based on the assumption that different peoples and cultures, which are defined in ethnic terms and presumed to be static entities, need to be kept separate from each other in order to ensure their inner homogeneity. These ahistorical "ethno-cultures" are perceived to be the basis of functioning societies, democracy, and peace. In their self-presentation ethnopluralists often explicitly distance themselves from racism, arguing that they perceive all cultures as being different but of equal value. As discussed above current theoretical approaches to racism counter that argument by pointing to the power relations implied in processes of racialisation. Ethnopluralism therefore has to be analysed as a type of differentialist racism.

Many aspects of ethnopluralism are in line with traditional right-wing extremist ideas on population policies. However, it also represents a conceptual modernisation by renouncing an explicit hierarchisation of peoples and by foregrounding 'culture' rather than 'biology'. Still, ethnopluralist ideologies are grounded in a biologist understanding that constructs ethnic groups in terms of kinship. The following paragraph was taken from a programmatic text of the Identitarian Movement Austria and shows that – in contrast to anti-Muslim racism described above – ethnopluralism often works with explicit depictions of what is deemed one's own:

Being identitarian for us means being fully committed to standing up for the preservation of our ethno-cultural identity. For us our identity is the interplay of our inherited culture, our awareness of being a homogeneous community related by kinship as well as the collective memory of its path through time. (IBÖ, n.d.)

Even though the "homogeneous community" that identitarian activists are committed to is explicitly grounded in biology, ethnopluralists avoid notions of 'nation' or 'race' in this respect and prefer the more flexible concept of 'ethno-cultural identity'. This allows for a gradual definition of closeness and distance of different groups. It is thereby possible to conceptualise European peoples as being in close relation to each other on the basis of biologically defined kinship, while a deep cleavage is constructed between Europeans and non-European and especially Muslim 'others'.



Regarding the inner logic and the function of this form of racism, two aspects appear to be most important: First, the human race is divided into separate groups by means of an essentially biologist reasoning, which is enriched by cultural and historical factors. This logic mirrors traditional right-wing extremist nationalism and racism, but uses different and less explicit categories. The preservation of these imagined homogeneous groups is the central political aim of ethnopluralism and allegedly is the cure to all ills of the modern world, including but not limited to multiculturalism, migration, egalitarianism, liberalism, and demographic decline. Second, this ideological worldview explicitly calls for the exclusion and discrimination of ‘others’ within today’s immigration societies.

## *Xeno-racism*

A third type of racist articulation was found mainly in texts from the FPÖ and its youth organisation RFJ, i.e. from actors who are constantly trying to maximise their electorate. Xeno-racist articulations avoid an ideological grounding of their stance against ‘others’ and are instead based on a naturalising logic of ethnicised competition. Xeno-racism (Fekete, 2001) focuses on the antagonistic relation between the addressees of right-wing populism (‘not-them’) and ‘others’ (‘not-us’) without debating these groups as such in any detail.<sup>7</sup> The antagonistic nature of this relationship is not explained, but appears as a given. Xeno-racist articulations mostly construct the ‘foreigner’ (*Ausländer*) as their object, without further defining or specifying this term. While ‘foreigner’ literally refers to people without Austrian citizenship, it has in its actual usage strong racialised overtones that link it to markers such as perceived phenotypical differences or an accent on the use of the German language rather than to nationality. Therefore, black Austrians or (grand)children of immigrants of Turkish origin, for example, who long ago obtained Austrian citizenship, might more often than not be perceived as ‘foreigners’ in this sense. The logic of xeno-racist articulations can be shown in the following quote from an FPÖ election campaign: “The FPÖ will turn Austria into the most family- and child-friendly country in Europe for her own citizens.” (FPÖ, 2013)

One of the preconditions for this endeavour is also stated: “Stop the export of family benefits to foreign countries.” (ibid.)

The latter demand, which the FPÖ has voiced repeatedly, has no basis in reality as Austria cancelled its bilateral agreements on social benefits with Turkey as well as with the countries of former Yugoslavia in 1996. Since then family benefits have only been paid to non-EU citizens working in the country if their children are living in Austria as well.<sup>8</sup> But the FPÖ’s claim for a nationalisation of family benefits is not a question of facts, but of the creation of rather vague but nevertheless highly emotionalised constructions of ‘us’ versus ‘others’. Already in 2010 the Facebook profile of party leader Heinz-Christian Strache featured a posting entitled “Our families have to bleed – the money goes abroad!” (Strache, 2010). The entry starts with the (factually wrong) claim that “month after month we transfer full family benefits, which are enormous sums” to Turkey (ibid.). The whole posting then systematically mixes the possibility of a transfer of family benefits across borders within the EU and the nationality of people receiving family benefits in Austria. The main part of the text reads as follows:

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<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless recipients make sense of these messages and often add the openly racist descriptions (e.g. in comments on Facebook) that the right-wing populist actors in question do not (need to) provide.

<sup>8</sup> However, EU regulations stipulate that EU citizens and Swiss citizens might under certain conditions be entitled to family benefits in the country they work in even if the children are living abroad.

[F]amily benefits – 200,486 Turks, Slovaks, etc. are entitled to it. Until now Austria has paid 312 million Euros per year to 200,486 foreign children whose fathers or mothers have worked in Austria for at least three months!!!

We need the money for OUR children, OUR families! (ibid.)

Hence, the whole posting is about the creation of an antagonism between ‘us’ and those that are ‘not-us’, who might be “Turks”, “Slovaks” or “foreign children”. The claim to nationalise family benefits might be understood as a concrete version of the omnipresent slogan “Austria first!”, which the FPÖ has been using since the 1990s and which structures their political discourse in many policy fields. In the context of family policies it bridges the populist claim to care for the needs of the ‘little man on the street’ (read: to legitimise privileges of natives) on the one hand and ideas of nativist population policies driven by right-wing ideology on the other hand. The success of this strategy is connected to images of naturalised differences that *inter alia* rest on the history of a so-called ‘foreigners’ question’ established in Austria in the early 1990s (Zuser, 1996). This ‘question’ became an established topos in political debates and was key to the construction of a ‘natural’ antagonism between Austrian natives and people perceived to be immigrants. The two most fundamental functions of xeno-racist articulations are therefore the naturalisation and thereby legitimisation of the privileged position of natives and the strengthening of right-wing populist discursive hegemony in a number of policy fields.

## Conclusions

Our analysis shows that right-wing populist discourses include a range of different articulations of racism, which can be grouped according to the different logics underlying these articulations and to their different functions. Even though dichotomous and racist constructions are an important part of right-wing populism in all policy fields our analysis also shows that racist patterns of meaning-making and argumentation are especially important in some policy fields, including of course immigration policies, but also other fields that are connected to population policies, which have always been of central concern for right-wing extremism, including issues of gender equality and family policies. Therefore our analysis strengthens the claim to intersectionality as an analytical perspective (Siim, 2009: 2), i.e. a focus on how the simultaneous invocation of multiple differences is used in an ever-shifting manner in order to render right-wing populist discourse coherent and intelligible. Analysing “intersectionality from above” (Sauer, 2013) allows us to grasp the instrumental use of different categories of inequality and the effects these discursive strategies produce. Frame analysis as a method allows for such an intersectional perspective, if framing is understood to be a complex activity of meaning-making rather than the simple application of one specific frame to a given situation.

As we have shown, the three types of racist articulation fulfil different functions in right-wing populist discourses. The most important function of anti-Muslim racism is the creation of a positive self-image of the speakers, their in-group and addressees in terms of modernity, democracy, equality and emancipation. Ethnopluralism, while presenting itself as opposed to racism, in effect functions as a tool to legitimise exclusion and inequality in immigration societies. While ethnopluralist articulations openly discuss their ideological foundations, xeno-racism in contrast is based on the naturalisation of ethnicised antagonistic groups as part of a ‘common sense’. It not only legitimises native privilege, but also enables right-wing populism to establish some of its central ideological constructions as part of ‘common sense’, thereby defining not only the content but the basic premises of political debate. Our analysis focused on recent publications and therefore could not identify long(er) term developments. A comparison of our findings with literature on racist articulations in Austrian populism in the 1990s and

very early 2000s (Ottmeyer, 2000: 79–93; Ötsch, 2000: 39–41; Wodak, 2000), however, hints at some developments: First, anti-Muslim racism has clearly emerged as a new topic of utmost importance, while racism based on biological signifiers as well as anti-Semitism in relation to the National Socialist past (although both are still present) have become less dominant issues in right-wing populist articulations. Ethnopluralist articulations, which have been discussed among right-wing extremists for decades, only emerged as an issue in public communication with the formation of Identitarian groups. In contrast, xeno-racism builds on the discursive construction of an antagonism between natives and foreigners during the last 25 years, which has been articulated by different actors in all areas of political discourse until it has become ‘common sense’.

Drawing on the conception of racism by Terkessidis, these different articulations can also be defined as different configurations of the three essential components of racism: Anti-Muslim racism focuses mainly on processes of ‘racialisation’, i.e. the construction and – extremely negative – description of ‘others’, which in turn allows for the implicit creation of a positive self-image. Ethnopluralist patterns of meaning-making are the broadest and most clearly ideology-driven articulations we found in our analysis, as they combine the construction of homogeneous, allegedly ‘natural’, ‘ethno-cultural’ entities with the legitimisation of exclusion and discrimination. In contrast, xeno-racism avoids explicit ideological articulations as well as a clear definition of the antagonistic groups it constructs but focuses instead on the legitimisation of the unequal allocation of resources and of practices of exclusion. All three types of racist articulation rely on what Terkessidis calls the ‘power of differentiation’, i.e. the power to make ‘others’ mere objects of right-wing populist constructions of reality.

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