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## **7. Austria. Candidate-Centered and Anti-Immigrant Right-Wing Populism**

*Desirée Schmuck, Jörg Matthes, and Hajo Boomgaarden*

### **Introduction**

The concept of populism has a long history in Austria and has received considerable attention in the scholarly literature. Due to the huge success of the Austrian Freedom Party, relevant research has mostly focused on right-wing populism. Various scholars have analyzed the communication strategies of the populist right from a longitudinal perspective, and they have identified unique communication styles and principles. A key finding of those studies is the Austrian Freedom Party's heavy reliance on personalization strategies, such as a strong focus on a charismatic leader or on the party's top candidate. Furthermore, like other European right-wing populist parties, the Austrian Freedom Party's communication is characterized by an anti-immigrant and anti-establishment rhetoric, as well as a tendency toward Islamophobia. Finally, literature has emphasized the Austrian Freedom Party's media centeredness. Unlikely as it is for a populist party, the Austrian Freedom Party is highly dependent on its presence and performance in the mass media. These findings and further insights from research on the content and effects of political populist communication will be discussed in the following sections.

### **Research on Populism in Austria**

The debate about the concept of populism in the Austrian literature is controversial (Howard, 2001; Luther, 2007). Populism can be understood as policy (Pelinka, 2002, 2013), as a political strategy (Wohnout, 1993), or as a sociopolitical movement (Howard, 2001; Reisingl, 2002). However, although Austrian authors use various definitions for populism, the following common elements can be identified.

First, populist political parties or actors try to reach as many voters as possible to gain political power (Luther, 2007; Winder, 2012; Wohnout, 1993). In this sense, populism's approach is characterized by a considerable degree of ambivalence (Heinisch, 2003). Second, several authors define populism as a vague understanding of democracy, emphasizing direct democratic elements over a representative indirect democratic structure. Populism is therefore not anti-democratic but claims to give the power to "the people" (Hafez, 2010; Pelinka, 2002, 2013). Third, populist parties evince key features of personalization strategies: Populist communication is usually based on a charismatic leader with mass appeal, and it applies strong self-portrayals of certain candidates (Betz, 2001; Heinisch, 2003; Reisingl, 2002; Wohnout, 1993). Fourth, a common defining element is the distinction between "us" and "the others." Populist parties position "the ordinary people" and "the establishment" in an antagonistic relationship (Heinisch, 2003; Pelinka, 2013; Reisingl, 2002; Winder, 2012). According to Reisingl (2002), criticizing the government in charge is a core success strategy for populist parties. However, depending on the definition of "the others," populist phenomena can be categorized in different ways. Populism is neither leftist nor rightist per se (Heinisch, 2003). Thus, when populism is combined with xenophobia and exclusionary

ideas—directed against an ethnically, nationally, or religiously defined “other”—it transforms to right-wing populism (Betz, 2001; Heinisch, 2004; Pelinka, 2013). How all these elements apply to Austrian political parties will be discussed in this chapter.

Overall, the identified Austrian literature on populism mainly consists of theoretical and content-analytical work on the key theme of “populist actors as communicators.” The number of single-case studies (e.g., Duncan, 2010; Luther, 2007; Plasser & Ulram, 2003; Wohnout, 1993) and comparative analyses (e.g., Albertazzi & Mueller, 2013; Art, 2007; Heinisch, 2003; 2004; Helms, 1997; Pelinka, 2002, 2013) is almost equal. Most of the empirical studies on Austrian populist communication either employ discourse analyses (e.g., Krzyzanowski, 2013; Krzyzanowski & Wodak, 2011; Reislgl, 2002; Wodak, 2011, 2013; Wodak & Köhler, 2010) or quantitative content analyses (e.g., Brantner & Lobinger, 2014; Marquart, 2013; Winder, 2012). Surveys (e.g., Aichholzer, Kritzinger, Wagner, & Zeglovits, 2014; Schulz & Weiss, 2005) and experimental designs (e.g., Appel, 2012; Arendt, Marquart, & Matthes, 2015; Matthes & Schmuck, 2015; Schmuck & Matthes, 2015) are scarce and are a new phenomenon in the Austrian populism research.

In Austria, three political parties can be considered as populist parties: The Austrian Freedom Party, the Alliance for the Future of Austria (BZÖ), and Team Stronach. All these parties belong to the right-wing political camp.

The Austrian Freedom Party is one of the most prominent right-wing populist parties in Europe. With an average of roughly 15% of the vote in national parliamentary elections, and never falling below nine percent, this party has had continued electoral success since 1986. It achieved its record vote share (27%) in 1999. The Austrian Freedom Party is one of a small number of right-wing populist parties that have participated in government (Aichholzer et al., 2014), although the party proved to be rather unsuccessful in parliament (see Albertazzi & Müller, 2013; Heinisch, 2003). In the parliamentary elections of 2013, the Austrian Freedom Party achieved a vote share of 21% and became the third strongest parliamentary party (Hofer & Tóth, 2013).

According to Pelinka (2013), the Austrian Freedom Party can be distinguished from other European populist parties by its pre-populist, anti-democratic past (see also Taggart, 2004). The party underwent a fundamental change, moving away from the German nationalist camp within Austrian society and strongly toward liberalism, becoming populist in the 1980s (Aichholzer et al., 2014; Helms, 1997; Pelinka, 2013). The Austrian Freedom Party fulfills all the criteria for Jagers and Walgrave’s (2007) definition of complete populism, which contains three basic elements: (a) reference and appeals to the people, (b) anti-elitism, and (c) exclusion of out-groups. The party claims to act on behalf of the people, often asking for more direct democratic power (Heinisch, 2003). Furthermore, it follows a clear anti-elitist agenda, mainly directed against the parties in government or economic elites (Helms, 1997; Pelinka, 2002). Finally, the Austrian Freedom Party’s populism is characterized by a strong exclusive rhetoric directed against an ethnically, nationally, or religiously defined “other.” Anti-foreigner initiatives and the party’s stance on migration-related matters has contributed to the significant rise of the Austrian Freedom Party’s vote share (Pelinka, 2013).

The Austrian Freedom Party’s offshoot, the Alliance for the Future of Austria, was founded in 2005 by Jörg Haider in reaction to internal party disputes. After successfully entering the Austrian parliament in 2006 (with four percent of the vote) and 2008 (11%), the political strength of Haider’s Alliance for the Future of Austria went into steady decline. In 2008, the

party was severely affected by Jörg Haider's sudden death in a car accident only two weeks after the parliamentary elections. Josef Bucher, a member of parliament since 2002, became Jörg Haider's successor. From then on, the party lost several elections and was no longer represented in any state parliament. Moreover, it lost several members of its national parliamentary group to both the newly founded Team Stronach and the Austrian Freedom Party. Finally, in the Austrian parliamentary elections of 2013, the Alliance for the Future of Austria lost parliamentary representation, and party leader Bucher resigned immediately after the election (Dolezal & Zeglovits, 2014).

Both scholars (such as Gruber, 2011) and the media (including such outlets as Spiegel Online [Smith, 2008] and *Die Presse*, ["BZÖ: Programmatisch und doch populistisch," 2008]) have repeatedly labeled the Alliance for the Future of Austria a right-wing populist party. Despite the party's claims of a fresh approach, the Austrian Freedom Party's offspring quickly drifted back onto familiar ideological territory (Duncan, 2010). The Alliance for the Future of Austria's populism under Jörg Haider's leadership can be defined as *complete populism* (Jagers & Walgrave, 2007). However, under Josef Bucher, the Alliance for the Future of Austria emphasized mostly economic issues such as tax cuts and tried to position itself as a right-liberal party in an attempt to become more distinguishable from the Austrian Freedom Party (Dolezal & Zeglovits, 2014).

Team Stronach was founded by and named after the Austrian-Canadian businessman Frank Stronach in 2012. The newly founded party participated for the first time in the nationwide parliamentary elections in 2013. It achieved a voter share of six percent and is currently the fifth largest party in the Austrian parliament (Dolezal & Zeglovits, 2014). According to Mudde (2014, p. 11), Team Stronach can be defined as a "neoliberal populist party" with a strong focus on economic liberalism rather than cultural nationalism. Similarly, Dolezal and Zeglovits (2014) argue that the party does not pursue the issue of migration but stresses Euroskepticism and antipathy for the "political elites." Following Jagers and Walgrave's (2007) definition, Team Stronach falls under the *anti-elitist populism* category, with anti-establishment elements and references to the people.

Regarding contextual factors, most scholars have dealt with Austria's largest and most successful populist party, the Austrian Freedom Party. According to Plasser and Ulram (2003), essential preconditions for the Austrian Freedom Party's success have been the erosion of traditional party alignments, the loosening of sociocultural milieus and ideological cleavages, and the diminishing capacity of former large conservative and democratic parties for integrating and mobilizing the electorate. Other important factors are fears of new socio-economic threats, the development of the migration and integration issue, and modernization and marginalization processes.

The Austrian Freedom Party's electoral success can also be explained as a reaction to political unresponsiveness of the established party elites. For a long time, the Austrian Social Democratic Party (SPÖ) and the Austrian People's Party (ÖVP), Austria's two largest parties, formed a government coalition (interrupted only in 1966–1987 and in 2000–2007). The Austrian Freedom Party acted as a corrective influence to the grand coalition, scoring electoral successes mainly as a voice of protest. Furthermore, in public administration, the Social Democrats and People's Party were seen to be the gatekeepers of many social and economic sectors through practices such as the *Proporz* system. This produced an anti-system sentiment that the Austrian Freedom Party fanned and exploited (Art, 2007; Heinisch, 2002,

2003; Plasser & Ulram, 2003). Finally, charismatic leadership figures played an important role in the Austrian Freedom Party's emergence (Heinisch, 2003; Helms, 1997).

### **Populist Actors as Communicators**

Regarding qualitative discourse analyses, several authors have examined the communication strategies and tactics of Austrian right-wing populist parties with a special focus on the Austrian Freedom Party. They have identified several principles of right-wing populist rhetoric, including a simple dualistic friend-foe mindset, strong emotionalization and dramatization, repetition, calculated ambivalence, and the discursive strategy of conveying double messages (Reisigl, 2002; Wodak, 2013). Intentionally provoking scandals is also a central communication strategy of the Austrian Freedom Party. The party often launches xenophobic or racist statements and slogans (e.g., "More Courage for 'Viennese Blood'!"), which—when attacked by the opposition—are often redefined and reformulated by the party (Wodak, 2013).

Scholars describe the charismatic leadership figure as a central element of Austrian populist parties (Heinisch, 2003; Plasser & Ulram, 2003; Reisigl, 2002). The Austrian Freedom Party tends to be oriented exclusively toward its top candidate in order to personalize its politics (Heinisch, 2003). It has benefited enormously from its two charismatic leaders, Jörg Haider (1986–2005) and Heinz-Christian Strache (after 2005) (Hartleb, 2011). Plasser and Ulram (2003) link the Austrian Freedom Party's political success in the 1990s inseparably to Jörg Haider's rhetorical strength. His rhetoric was characterized by aggressive tactics of discourse, a taboo-breaking political style, and an offensive visual rhetoric (Heinisch, 2003). Moreover, his personal appearance—in particular, his fashionable and casual way of dressing—stood out. Following Haider's death, the Austrian Freedom Party has continued its "extremely candidate-centered" (Plasser & Ulram, 2003, p. 40) political communication, with a strong focus on its new charismatic leadership figure, Heinz-Christian Strache (Hayek, 2012).

Luther (2007) analyzed the Austrian Freedom Party's communication strategies from a longitudinal perspective. He identified three core strategies: a populist strategy aimed at maximizing votes (mainly 1986–99), communicating responsibility in government (2000–2005), and a return to a populist strategy with the goal of maximizing votes (from 2005). Under the leadership of Jörg Haider, the party's communication strategy aimed at reaching as many voters as possible. The Austrian Freedom Party strived for a professionalization of campaigning in the sense of permanent campaigning (Luther, 2007; see also Heinisch, 2003), constantly checking the potential of maximizing vote shares and addressing new voter segments, particularly so-called blue-collar voters (see also Bale, 2003; Oesch, 2008). However, during the coalition years 2000–2005, it was an ongoing challenge for the Austrian Freedom Party to persuade voters of its credibility as a government party. After the aggressive opposition campaign prior to the election, this task was not easy to accomplish. Internal party conflicts aggravated the situation. The former successful Austrian Freedom Party was now unable to develop a uniform communication strategy (Luther, 2007). After the party's split, the Austrian Freedom Party returned to its prior goal: maximizing electoral votes. Under the new party leader, Heinz-Christian Strache, this goal was mainly pursued by focusing on the campaign issues of immigration and crime. Competing for the voters' attention, the Austrian Freedom Party and the Alliance for the Future of Austria were constantly attacking each other, which led to an overall negative and aggressive election campaign during the nationwide elections in 2006 (Luther, 2007).

Marquart (2013) analyzed the political content of right-wing populist poster campaigns from a longitudinal perspective between 1978 and 2008. She identified inclusionary elements that constructed a symbolic sense of belonging to one's homeland as an important advertising strategy for the Austrian Freedom Party. Issues of migration and crime are of minor relevance but have been growing in importance since the turn of the 21st century. Finally, although stereotypic slogans are used, stereotypical pictures of immigrants in advertising are limited. In contrast to similar posters of the Swiss People's Party (SVP) or the National Democratic Party of Germany (NPD), images in the Austrian Freedom Party's political advertising mostly show the top candidates. Thus, besides issues of migration, a strong focus on personalization continues to be one of the Austrian Freedom Party's political advertising strategies.

Hayek (2012) found that the Austrian Freedom Party places a stronger emphasis on personalization strategies in campaign posters than all other Austrian political parties. This emphasis was especially strong under the leadership of Jörg Haider and later Heinz-Christian Strache.

In his content analysis of campaign posters during the 2006 parliamentary elections, Lederer (2006) found that the Austrian Freedom Party and the Alliance for the Future of Austria apply more populist communication strategies in their poster campaigns than other Austrian parties. Specifically, the Austrian Freedom Party and the Alliance for the Future of Austria refer to resentments toward specific population segments and try to mobilize negative emotions toward these minority groups. Among all parties, the Austrian Freedom Party applies the most negativity strategies in their poster campaigns (Lederer, 2006).

Populist communication strategies are the focus of Winder's (2012) content analysis of press releases during the 2008 national elections. He systematically investigated whether the dimensions inclusion and exclusion were present in Austrian parties' press releases. The inclusion dimension referred to communication strategies that aimed at constructing a common identity between the communicator and the recipients, whereas the exclusion dimension focused on the construction of "the others" as antagonists of "the people." Although these populist communication strategies could be found in all parliamentary parties' press releases, the "usual suspects" (Winder, 2012, p. 238)—the Alliance for the Future of Austria and the Austrian Freedom Party—have tended to use more populist communication strategies in press releases than other Austrian parties. Their press releases have defined and addressed the Austrian population more often as a homogeneous group (inclusion dimension). Most exclusion strategies that were found in the Austrian Freedom Party's press releases referred vaguely to "foreigners" and "criminals" without describing these groups in more detail.

A further analysis by Lengauer and Winder (2013) focused on individualization and leader representation in Austria's political parties' campaign communications and press releases. In contrast to findings from political advertising (see Hayek, 2012; Marquart, 2013), Lengauer and Winder found leader centrism and individualization in party press releases of right-wing populist parties to be surprisingly low. Hence, these findings suggest that right-wing populist parties use personalization strategies in their political communication mainly when they make an appeal to the electorate rather than when they address the media.

Furthermore, a series of studies has been dedicated to the discourse of right-wing populist parties in Austria. These studies reveal that Haider's leadership of the Austrian Freedom Party and later the Alliance for the Future of Austria was characterized by anti-immigrant,

revisionist, nationalistic, and anti-establishment rhetoric (Krzyzanowski, 2013; Wodak, 2011, 2013; Wodak & Köhler, 2010). Although campaigns during the years under Strache's leadership also focused on anti-immigrant issues (Wodak & Köhler, 2010), an overt turn to Islamophobia as one of the party's central policy frames can be observed (de Neve, 2013; Dolezal, Helbling, & Hutter, 2010; Krzyzanowski, 2013).

### **The Media and Populism**

To date, only few studies focus on the interaction of Austrian populist actors and the media. This paucity is rather surprising given the important role that the mass media plays for the right-wing populist Austrian Freedom Party. Plasser and Ulram (2003, p. 29) define the Austrian Freedom Party as a "media-centered protest party" that is highly dependent on its presence and performance in the mass media (see also Lederer, Plasser, & Scheucher, 2005). The Austrian Freedom Party is more dependent on its resonance with the media than other parties due to its weak anchoring in the social structure and its high dependence on public moods and emotions (Plasser & Ulram, 2003).

Looking at the relational patterns between the Austrian Freedom Party and the news media, Plasser and Ulram (2003) found that a market-focused, populist, newsroom logic displayed by various Austrian mass media might multiply populist emotive messages. Even though the media may not intentionally promote populist mobilization strategies, this newsroom populism provides windows of opportunity for populist actors to get public attention.

More general insights into how the Austrian media deals with populist discourse can be obtained in Seethaler and Melischek's study (2013). The authors analyzed the mutual influences of Austrian political parties and the journalistic media during two different nationwide election campaigns. Overall, they found the media to have hardly any influence on political parties' agenda-building processes, whereas political parties' election topics significantly influence the media's agenda. The Austrian Freedom Party's issues were mostly presented in the news coverage of the Austrian free press, private TV stations, and the left-wing, liberal, quality newspaper *Der Standard*.

Lengauer and Hayek (2012) investigated political print advertisements in newspapers as a variety of mediatized populism. They compared the amount of print advertisements in Austrian newspapers with the overall tonality of news coverage of political candidates and parties. Their results reveal a significant positive relation between the amount of print advertisements and overall candidate evaluations in the Austrian free newspapers *Heute* and *Österreich* as well as in the paid-for daily newspaper *Kurier*. No significant relations between advertising intensity and tonality were found either in the quality newspapers or in Austria's largest tabloid newspaper, *Die Neue Kronenzeitung*.

Finally, Forchtner, Krzyzanowski, and Wodak (2013) have looked at the Austrian Freedom Party's self-mediatization in terms of new genres of political communication. According to the authors, the Austrian Freedom Party has accommodated to the mediatization of politics much better than other Austrian parties. As mentioned above, more than other parties, the Austrian Freedom Party must try to guide the media agenda and deal with political and societal issues in an active way in order to direct public attention to their particular way of framing the issues (Plasser & Ulram, 2003). Under its leader Heinz-Christian Strache, the party has increasingly turned to new web-based media as its main channels of political communication (Forchtner et al., 2013). Currently, the Austrian Freedom Party maintains an extensive presence on the Web by means of official channels on Facebook and YouTube, an

official blog called *Uncensored*, and various web pages. The Austrian Freedom Party's mobilization of new media is additionally characterized by the production of various rap songs performed by Heinz-Christian Strache (see Turner-Graham, 2008) as well as xenophobic comic books. Both genres attracted massive public and media attention (Brantner & Lobinger, 2014; Forchtner et al., 2013; Wodak & Forchtner, 2014). The comic books received even more media response than traditional campaign posters or print ads (Brantner & Lobinger, 2014). The media response was mainly negative and located in opinion-oriented articles. In particular, the comics' controversial content in terms of xenophobia, anti-Islamism, right-wing radicalism, and sexism was addressed by journalists.

To sum up, research has mostly neglected how populist actors and their communication strategies resonate with journalistic media. In particular, there is a dearth of research on how media outlets deal with populist discourse and on the resonance of populist communication in non-journalistic online media. Finally, comparative research addressing differences between European countries, types of journalistic media, and individual media outlets is also lacking.

### **Citizens and Populism**

Research on Austrian citizens and populism is scarce. In the Austrian literature, two lines of research can be identified regarding this subject matter. The first concerns what drives citizens to vote for the populist right, and the second, the effects of right-wing populist communication on people's thinking and attitudes.

Data from Austrian parliamentary election studies from 1990 to 2013 (Kritzinger, Müller, & Schönbach, 2014; Kritzinger, Zeglovits, Lewis-Beck, & Nadeau, 2013) provide an overview of the electorate of Austria's populist parties (the Austrian Freedom Party, the Alliance for the Future of Austria, and the newly founded Team Stronach).

First, a gender gap is evident in right-wing populist support; around two-thirds of supporters for Austria's populist right parties have been male over the years (Johann et al., 2014; Kritzinger, Zeglovits et al., 2013). Regarding age, younger voters have always been more supportive of the populist right, with a significant decrease in 2013, when the generation gap was less visible (Aichholzer et al., 2014; Johann et al., 2014; Kritzinger, Zeglovits et al., 2013). In terms of occupation, a high percentage of blue-collar workers are among the Austrian Freedom Party and Team Stronach supporters (each around 45% in 2013). In contrast, the right-wing populist Alliance for the Future of Austria addressed mostly white-collar voters, presumably because voters perceived the Alliance for the Future of Austria as more moderate than the Austrian Freedom Party (Kritzinger, Zeglovits et al., 2013).

In terms of education, right-wing populist parties are extremely successful among the less-educated. An above-average number of supporters for the Austrian Freedom Party, the Alliance for the Future of Austria, and Team Stronach have completed only lower educational levels, such as compulsory school, an apprenticeship, or below. Regarding religious affiliation, rightwing populist voters describe themselves as less religious compared with other Austrian party voters. With regard to regional differences, no consistent pattern can be found for supporters of the populist right (Kritzinger, Zeglovits et al., 2013).

In terms of attitudes, support for right-wing populist parties is directly connected to voters' positions concerning immigration and integration, and their hostile attitudes toward the European Union. Finally, higher political cynicism and neoliberal ideologies explain support

for the populist right (Aichholzer et al., 2014; Johann et al., 2014; Kritzinger, Zeglovits et al., 2013; Schulz & Weiss, 2005).

Thus far, few empirical studies have addressed the effects of right-wing populist political communication on citizens' attitudes. This line of research has mostly been devoted to the effects of right-wing populist poster ads on anti-immigrant attitudes and has included citizens of different ages, educational levels, and migration backgrounds.

An experimental study by Matthes and Schmuck (2015) investigated the effects of right-wing populist political poster ads on anti-immigrant attitudes. They found that individuals with lower educational levels were more susceptible to these anti-immigrant messages due to higher activated negative stereotypes and inter-group anxiety. For higher educated respondents, no such effect was found. However, when automatically activated implicit attitudes were taken into account, an effect of populist ads on higher educated individuals could be detected. These implicit attitudes are based on negative "gut feelings" and can predict social behavior, in particular, in situations when lower cognitive capacity is available to control or suppress stereotypes.

Arendt et al. (2015) provide further evidence that individuals can intentionally reject stereotypic thoughts in response to anti-immigrant populist communication and decide not to use them for an overtly expressed judgment (explicit stereotypes). Implicit stereotypical associations, however, can become automatically activated regardless of whether a person considers them as accurate or not (implicit stereotypes). Even though individuals might be aware of mediated stereotypical content and critically negate it, anti-immigrant populist advertisements may still have an impact on individuals' implicit stereotypes.

Finally, two experiments by Schmuck and Matthes (2014) and Appel (2012) examined the effects of right-wing populist political ads on a population segment that is particularly vulnerable to political persuasion intentions— young adults. Schmuck and Matthes (2014) distinguished between two different persuasive strategies in right-wing populist advertising: economic and symbolic threat appeals. The findings revealed that these threat appeals do not equally affect all young adults. Economic threat appeals increased less-educated young adults' negative attitudes toward immigrants, whereas those with higher education were resistant to the effects of the same appeal. In contrast, symbolic-threat appeals in rightwing populist political advertising did not depend on young voters' formal education level. Exposure to symbolic threat advertisements led to a significant increase in negative attitudes toward immigrants among all young voters, suggesting that perceived threats to cultural identity are more general than perceived economic threats. These effects did not depend on party predisposition.

Appel (2012) addressed the effects of right-wing populist posters on the intellectual behavior of adolescents with immigrant background. The experiment investigated whether anti-immigrant propaganda undermines the intellectual performance of immigrant adolescents in Austria. Young adults were exposed to populist advertisements of the right-wing populist Austrian Freedom Party, which prominently displayed anti-immigrant slogans. Before and after ad exposure, the participants worked on a fluid intelligence measure. The findings revealed that the intelligence test performance of immigrant adolescents decreased after exposure to right-wing populist posters. Those adolescents with immigrant background who saw election posters by other Austrian parties and those with no immigrant background remained unaffected. Thus, by signaling the prospects of social exclusion, populist anti-



immigrant propaganda may not only initiate or strengthen negative attitudes toward immigrants but may also contribute to the performance deficit of immigrant youth. Hence, the existing research suggests inter-individual differences in citizens' reactions to populist messages that are qualified by education, age, and immigrant background. Future research should extend these studies by addressing not only citizens' attitudes and opinions but also their emotions, knowledge, and—most importantly—behaviors.

### **Summary and Recent Developments**

In sum, populism has found noticeable attention in the Austrian literature. However, most research follows a theoretical, comparative approach or focuses on single-case analyses. In particular, in the field of populism and the media, research is lacking. To date, studies have dealt insufficiently with the mediatization of populism in Austria. Besides other issues, content features of media discourse on populism and the role of media content in the rise of populist parties have yet to be investigated. Moreover, there is a dearth of research on populist communication and its effects on citizens. Although central to Austrian populist parties, the role of charisma and of leader effects on citizens' attitudes have so far not been empirically examined. Overall, empirical research on the effects of populist communication on citizens' attitudes, emotions, and behavior is scarce. Even though empirical studies on populist communication in Austria have increased over the past few years, the low number of studies dealing with attitudinal and behavioral outcomes of populist communication is alarming. In particular, in Austria—where the populist right's recent nationwide support is estimated at approximately 30% (Krzyzanowski, 2013), often exceeding the support for Austria's two mainstream parties—populist political communication certainly deserves more empirical research.

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The book is available online at: <http://www.tandfebooks.com/doi/book/10.4324/9781315623016>. 1 Introduction. *Comprehending Populist Political Communication*. The purpose of this book is to provide information and knowledge about the conditions that give rise to the presence (or absence) of populist political communication and about its impact in different European democracies. Over the years, as populist parties have gained electoral success, an increasing number of researchers have started to study populist parties and their supporters. This book offers the first systematic, large-scale, comparative review of extant research on populist political communication in Europe.