

For “Most” People

A case study of the discursive strategies and rhetorical appeals of the Norwegian Progress Party between 08.05.21-08.05.23

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Preface

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Abstract

This thesis is a rhetorical discourse analysis of FrP and party leader Sylvi Listhaug's use of right-wing populist discursive strategies and rhetorical tools in Facebook posts between 08.05.21-08.05.23. This approach is used to understand how they are using populist discursive strategies on social media and to which degree social media as a platform can enable populist rhetoric and function to influence and manipulate the masses.

The theoretical approach to populism in this thesis bases itself in the discursive approaches of Laclau and Wodak and emphasises how the homogenising effects of empty and floating signifiers appear in the discursive strategies characteristic of right-wing populists and strengthen an equivalential chain.

The data material that is analysed consists of three posts from Listhaug's personal Facebook account and three posts from FrP's main party account, selected out of two data sets which gathered a total of 657 posts. Through a rhetorical discourse analysis, we identify discursive strategies employed by these two actors and analyse how rhetorical tools function to strengthen these.

In the discussion we then establish that Listhaug and FrP both make exemplary use of both discursive strategies and the rhetorical tools and have a highly populist mode of articulation in the expression of their equivalential chain. On social media their discourse functions to unite its voters using empty and floating signifiers while forming an antagonistic relationship with the "elite", oppositional parties, and the "others", immigrants mainly of Muslim origin and those who do not conform with Norwegian tradition. This discourse is strengthened by their appeal to emotions, pathos, to strengthen both their credibility, ethos, and allow them to utilise common-sense lines of argumentation, logos.

Connected to their exemplary use of discursive strategies and rhetorical tools, we identify Listhaug being particularly prone to the accusation that she is using propaganda. Propaganda here in terms of manipulating the masses through language. In the context of this case, social media could therefore be said to enable populist rhetoric to a degree, but it is not without its limitations bound in the existence of discourse and challenging offline as well as online.

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1.0 Introduction

Who are the men, who, without our realizing it, give us our ideas, tell us whom to admire and whom to despise, what to believe about the ownership of public utilities, about the tariff, about the price of rubber, about the Dawes plan, about immigration; who tell us how our houses should be designed, what furniture we should put into them, what menus we should serve at our table, what kind of shirts we must wear, what sports we should indulge in, what plays we should see, what charities we should support, what pictures we should admire, what slang we should affect, what jokes we should laugh at? (Bernays, 1928, p. 59)

In the last years populist movements have shocked the contemporary political mainstream as seen in the success of the Brexit campaign, Donald Trump's presidency and the many movements across the world who resisted government restrictions and spread misinformation during the COVID-19 pandemic. One aspect that all these movements had in common was the proficient use of social media as a platform to reach their audience. With the victory of the Leave campaign, news broke of the involvement of Cambridge Analytica, a company specialising in online advertising and customer outreach (Boffey, 2020; Cadwalladr, 2017). With Trump we saw former White House press secretary confirm that Trump's tweets should be considered official statements of the President, in a daily briefing given to the press (Landers, 2017). And with the spread of misinformation about COVID-19 we saw that Facebook, compared to other social media platforms, moderated the least amount of such content posted to their platform (Theocharis, et al., 2021, p. 8).

As two Norwegian students who have grown up in the era of social media, we are therefore particularly interested in how this platform is linked with the usage of populist discourse relying on anti-intellectualism and exclusionary practices to manipulate the masses. Tired of complicated political solutions to incomprehensible issues many have sought after a credible politician who fights the cause of the "people", speaks at their level, understands their frustrations, offers an alternative, and finally provides a solution that reaches the mind of the average voter (Bernays, 1928, p. 110). However, in a time when the world is facing problems on a global scale, anti-intellectualism and a disdain for the many perceived "elites" in society functions to weaken the trust in some of our most important institutions and, as seen with the

spread of misinformation, could in some cases be linked to avoidable deaths (Samuels, 2020). On an issue as important to humanity such as climate change academic research is portrayed as pointers, not facts, while the politicians know best (Farstad, 2021). Because of this, we believe it is particularly important in these crucial moments of human history that we are aware of who the people who shape the opinions of and manipulate the masses are, as well as understand the discursive and rhetorical strategies they employ on social media in doing so.

1.1 The Case & Research Questions

This then brings us to the case of the Norwegian Progress Party¹ (FrP) and their leader Sylvi Listhaug's posts on Facebook through the period of 08.05.21-08.05.23. This period was chosen based on Listhaug's election to party leadership at FrP's national party congress on the eighth of May in 2021 and is concluded at the end of a two-year period, allowing us to focus on Listhaug's time of leadership so far (Helljesen, Krekling & Tollersrud, 2021). With her political past filled with controversies, such as accusing the Labour Party² (Ap) of being on the side of terrorists rather than being concerned of the nation's security (Torset, Ask & Halvorsen, 2018). Additionally, when Listhaug had to backtrack her steps and offer an apology post to answer the vast amounts of criticism she received because of this post, she reached an audience of over one million unique visits on Facebook. In comparison, the website of Verdens Gang (VG), the most visited Norwegian website only achieved approximately 900k unique daily visitors at the end of 2017 (Stolt-Nielsen, Gjerde & Torset, 2018). With a combination of controversial remarks and a large visibility on social media we believe that Listhaug's entry to party leadership marks an interesting starting point for the case.

Following this we have formulated two research questions:

1. *How are populist discursive strategies being used on social media by FrP?*
2. *Is social media enabling populist rhetoric in Norway?*

To answer these questions, we will use earlier research on populism, primarily from Ernesto Laclau and Ruth Wodak as they offer an authoritative account of populism and discourse, as

¹ Fremskrittspartiet

² Arbeiderpartiet

well as research from the field of rhetorical theory and the use of rhetoric to manipulate the masses from Edward Bernays. While we will only briefly cover the core aspects of these theories here in the introduction, an in-depth explanation on terms and their combined use will be provided in the theory chapter.

First, to understand how populism has reached the minds of so many we first need to understand what populism is. Providing an ontological and discursive approach to populism Laclau (2005) presents populism not bound to ideology or the contents of a political platform, but rather the logic of articulation a movement's demands are expressed. At its core this definition requires the divide of society into two camps, the "people" vs. the "elite", the aggregation of unmet demands into a differential equivalential chain, and the use of homogenising empty and floating signifiers to maintain the differential nature of the equivalential chain in order to keep it intact (Laclau, 2005).

Second, more closely focusing on the discursive strategies employed by right-wing populist movements, Ruth Wodak (2015) presents an ontic approach to populism where she highlights the techniques used by these movements in empirical examples. While these strategies are varied in the nature, they work to strengthen the antagonistic divide in society through anti-intellectualism, xenophobia, and fear (Wodak, 2015).

Third, is the rhetorical theory gathered from the ideas of Aristotle and the art of persuasion, through Jens Kjeldsen (2006) and Øivind Bratberg (2017), as well as rhetoric seen as propaganda or a means of mass manipulation through Edward Bernays (1928). Kjeldsen and Bratberg provide an understanding of the rhetorical tools a rhetorician can utilise to strengthen their discourse through appealing to the emotions and logic of their audience. From Bernays we get a wider perception of rhetoric, showing the importance of thorough research and investigation from the side of the rhetorician. Good rhetoric should not only properly utilise the emotions and ideas of a crowd but should be able to formulate arguments and discourse based in an understanding of the audience's wants and needs which, as mentioned in the opening quotation, influence its audience without them even realising it.

Through our research we hope to contribute to a better understanding of how populist discursive strategies are used on social media, and whether it can be said that social media is enabling these strategies. While our research is based on a Norwegian case with specific ties to anti-intellectualism and xenophobia, we believe the spread of such strategies and discourse

should be a concern. Not just to the Norwegian case, but also the other Scandinavian countries that share many of the historical similarities of a welfare state, and the contemporary presence of right-wing populism (Wodak, 2015 p. 2-3). We therefore hope that this thesis can provide a comparative point of view to be used in further research on populist discourse on social media in the Scandinavian countries.

1.2 Thesis Structure

This thesis has been structured into six main chapters. Following the introduction of the thesis in this chapter, we establish the theory that will be used in the analysis and discussion in chapter 2. Here we provide an explanation of our two theories on populism, rhetoric, and propaganda. We provide explanations to relevant terminology from each field and present our argument for the combined use of these theories to achieve a better understanding of the use of populist discourse on social media. Chapter 3 describes the methodological structure of this thesis and presents the research paradigm, decisions regarding data collection and the analysis of this empirical data, as well as the research ethical considerations related to internet research. In chapter 4 a brief history of FrP is provided to provide additional context, before we analyse 3 posts from Listhaug's personal Facebook account followed by 3 posts from FrP's main party account. This is followed by Chapter 5 where, based on the findings from the analysis, we establish to which degree FrP can be labelled a populist party, and then discuss their use of discursive strategies on social media and whether social media is enabling populist rhetoric. In chapter 6 we then conclude the thesis with a summary the findings from our research.

2.0 Theory

In this chapter we want to present the theoretical foundation for the research process of this thesis. This is primarily based on discursive approaches to the topic of populism as well as research on the topic of rhetoric. First, we present two discourse-focused approaches to populism and then highlight discursive strategies characteristic of right-wing populist movements. Thereafter, we will present rhetorical terms which will help us point out elements of the populist discourse linked to our case, and how the forms of appeal can function to strengthen discourse. Here we also introduce a figure of our own creation that will help us answer our research questions through the analysis. Finally, we present Edward Bernays' theory on propaganda which covers the instrumental use of rhetoric to manipulate the masses as well as two term explanations linked to the contemporary format of social media. This theory will be applied to put the timeless concept of rhetoric, into the world of modern media democracies such as Norway.

2.1 Populism

While the 21st century has seen an increased use of the term populism, its usage is often contested by its recipients, and the label often holds negative connotations (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017). Moreover, the term's more frequent use has not led to less confusion on its actual definition, but rather the opposite. In contemporary Norwegian politics there seems to be an inclination towards populism as a negative label, with FrP and Listhaug often being accused of leading a populist narrative (Eikefjord, 2023; Stavanger Aftenblad, 2022; Vårt Land, 2022). Amongst the academic circle however there are clear definitions of populism, yet these are varied and none of them command a clear consensus. Some of these definitions work well with specific cases, but struggle with transferability when applied to another case of populism (Laclau 2005; Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017). In the following pages we will therefore look at the works of Ernesto Laclau, Cas Mudde, Cristobal Rovira Kaltwasser, and Ruth Wodak to establish and justify the definition of populism used in this thesis.

2.1.1 Defining Populism

Ernesto Laclau and Ruth Wodak present two discursive approaches to populism, but where Laclau defines populism as a discursive strategy to construct the political identities of the people and the elite (Laclau, 2005), Wodak sees populism as composed of discursive

practices which construct a polarized “us vs. them” narrative (Wodak, 2015). This then becomes a difference between an ontological and an ontic understanding of populism. Laclau’s definition emphasises the discursive construction of political identities, the formation of a “chain of equivalences,” and the role of antagonism in populism. With this approach, Laclau has developed an understanding of populism as a discursive strategy and political logic, rather than focusing on observable manifestations of populism or empirical characteristics. Therefore, his definition can be seen as more ontological (Laclau, 2005). While Wodak does not explicitly define populism her approach predominantly falls within the ontic, focusing on the analysis of right-wing populist discourse, the linguistic strategies employed, and the construction of populist narratives. Her approach studies concrete manifestations, rhetorical devices, and the social and political implications of populist communication (Wodak, 2015). By combining Laclau’s more ontological definition with Wodak’s ontic approach to populism we hope to display in the analysis how populism is used as a discursive strategy and political logic through Laclau, while more closely looking at the empirical usage of populist rhetoric through Wodak.

One additional clarification is the difference in views on ideology between Laclau and Wodak. While Wodak acknowledges the ideological aspects of populism expressing that right-wing and left-wing populism must be distinguished from each other (Wodak, 2015, p. 47). Laclau takes a different position stating that “No political movement will be entirely exempt from populism because none will fail to interpellate to some extent the ‘people’ against an enemy, through the construction of a social frontier” (Laclau, 2005, p. 47). This implies that any political actor be it a small local action committee, a nation-wide movement, a communist party, or a national socialist party will to some extent be populist. Herein lies another argument for the combined use of the two scholars as we believe this view of ideology to be compatible in an analysis. While Wodak’s differentiation between left- and right-wing populists aids the study of empirical examples of a rhetoric characteristic of right-wing populism, Laclau’s focus on populism as a discursive strategy opens for a deeper understanding of how discursive practices and linguistic elements contribute to the formation and mobilisation of populist movements.

Moving on we will be looking at some of the aspects of Laclau’s definition of populism, starting with the construction of a chain of equivalence. To illustrate this, we would like to use two examples. First, a group of residents in a Norwegian neighbourhood are infuriated by

the standard of their eldercare facilities compared to the options available to those living closer to town. In this example, the group files a petition to their elected officials and through the government institutions their demand is met, and the eldercare facility receives additional funding for refurbishment. In the second example, this petition is denied and as this only constitutes one unmet demand the situation does not change. However, if this group discovers that others in their neighbourhood have had issues with the local school, public transportation, healthcare services, etc. solidarity tends to arise between them as all have their demands left unsatisfied. If these demands then reaggregate themselves we find the basis for an equivalential chain where each demand holds its particularity, but the equivalential chain displays the shared dissatisfaction of unmet demands (Laclau, 2005, p. 36-37). In the first example, we find what Laclau labels a *democratic subject*, with the issue of the demand being as specific as the demand itself. In the second example however, we find what Laclau labels a *popular subject*, as several unmet democratic subjects are incorporated into a larger popular subject through the equivalential chain (Laclau, 2005, p. 37). Here the popular subject can still lose its momentum if its democratic subjects are individually processed by government institutions. If not, the scale of the democratic subject and its unmet demands facilitate the conditions for a populist rupture, leading to an equivalential social discourse aimed at dividing society between power and underdog, people vs. elite. As Laclau expresses, “There is no populism without discursive construction of an enemy: the *ancient regime*, the oligarchy, the Establishment or whatever” (Laclau, 2005, p. 39). At this point the demands from the popular subject shift from being mere requests into fighting demands (Laclau, 2005, p. 38).

Then is the matter of the two rather similar terms, *empty* and *floating signifiers*, and their role within the populist discursive strategy. As the equivalential chain expands an increasingly heterogenous popular subject will weaken its connection to its particularistic demands. To maintain its popular subjectivity, the equivalential chain, therefore, must produce empty signifiers, which are void of their particularity as to bring homogeneity to a heterogenous equivalential chain. This process, where one demand loses its specificity to represent the whole of the equivalential chain is what Laclau has labelled hegemony. (Laclau, 2005, p. 38-40). As these signifiers are not specified, they can be filled with different meanings depending on the needs and desires of the political project, while remaining open to interpretation and contestation. When taken to its limits, “this process reaches a point where the homogenising function is carried out by a pure name: the name of the leader” (Laclau,

2005, p. 40). This use of the leader as an empty signifier, stripped of particularity, introduces a particularly interesting aspect for the analysis as it will be seen whether Listhaug can achieve this role. As for floating signifiers, these are also used to bridge the heterogeneous gap which an expanding equivalential chain experiences. Unlike empty signifiers which are completely void of fixed meaning, these could be argued to merely be detached from meaning. Instead, they can take highly flexible positions, meant to represent a wide range of demands, and can be interpreted differently by different actors. Floating signifiers can therefore be used to link diverse, and even contradicting, demands into a unified discourse (Laclau, 2005, p. 41-43). It should however be noted as Laclau expresses on the difference between empty and floating signifiers that, “The distinction is, however, mainly analytic, for in practice empty and floating signifiers largely overlap” (Laclau, 2005, p. 43).

As mentioned above, while Wodak does not explicitly provide a definition in her book *The Politics of Fear: What Right-Wing Populist Discourses Mean*, she does provide an extensive analysis of right-wing populism and its discursive strategies and outlines important aspects of populism based on her discourse analysis (Wodak, 2015). Here she examines how the discourses of fear, contextually linked to right-wing populism, can shape public opinion, influence political processes, and foster societal divisions. Again, Wodak’s work and empirical examples here are specifically linked to right-wing populism, we believe that Laclau and Wodak will be compatible based on what is stated above. Any political movement will have some articulation of the people against an enemy (Laclau, 2005, p. 47).

As we’ve discussed Laclau and Wodak’s work offer distinct, yet complementary perspectives on populism. We believe that by integrating their insights we will be able to provide a more comprehensive understanding of our research question. Below we present the three main reasons we believe that their work can be beneficially used together:

1. **Discursive Strategies:** Both Laclau and Wodak focus on the discursive strategies used by populist movements. Laclau’s concept of the populist articulation of empty and floating signifiers, combined with Wodak’s analysis of right-wing populist discourse highlights the importance of language, symbols, and rhetoric in constructing populist narratives. By combining their approaches, we hope to gain a deeper understanding of how discursive strategies contribute to the construction of populist identities and the mobilization of a cause.

2. Power and hegemony: Laclau's theory of populism emphasises the role of power and hegemony in the construction of a populist movement. Arguing that populism arises as a response to the failure of existing structures, incapable or overwhelmed by democratic subjects. Wodak's analysis of right-wing populism explores the power dynamics inherent in populist discourses, particularly the construction of an antagonistic relationship between the populist movement, us, and its enemy, "them." By integrating their insights, we hope to analyse how power relations and institutional struggles shape the discursive practices of populism.
3. Contextual analysis: Both Laclau and Wodak recognize the importance of context in understanding populism. Laclau emphasises the contextual nature of populist mobilisation and its transformative potential, while Wodak examines the specific political, social, and cultural contexts in which right-wing populism emerges (Laclau, 2005, p. 40-41; Wodak, 2015). Combining their approaches here allow for a more comprehensive analysis that considers both the broader theoretical aspects and contextual factors which shape populist movements.

Therefore, by using Laclau's and Wodak's works together, we hope to benefit from a broader perspective on populism. Their theoretical frameworks, discursive analyses, and consideration of power and context offer us complementary insights which we hope will contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of a complex topic.

The answer to how we understand and define populism in this thesis therefore comes down to the discursive approaches of Laclau and Wodak seen together. For Laclau, it is not a matter of whether a movement or party is populist or not, but the extent to which it is populist through discursive practices. While Laclau's perspective enables us to provide a clearer presentation of the ontological makeup of a populist movement, Wodak's more ontic approach will provide us with empirical examples of right-wing populist discursive practices. Our definition of populism, therefore, comes down to the use of certain discursive practices, such as empty and floating signifiers from Laclau, and some of the empirical examples from Wodak which will be more closely covered in the following pages.

2.1.2 Theories on Populism

Following the definition, this chapter will broaden the discussion of our selected theories of populism. In the 21st century, many politicians are being labelled as populist despite not necessarily articulating their demands through a clear populist logic. However, as all political movements will include some articulation of the people against an enemy, we can see where the confusion around the term originates (Laclau, 2005, p. 47). This terminological confusion therefore creates the varied media presentation which can be observed in contemporary politics where the term is applied to actors with vast gaps in the populist logic of their articulation. Covering this confusion Mudde and Kaltwasser write this on the current usage of the term:

Populism is one of the main political buzzwords of the 21st century. The term is used to describe left-wing presidents in Latin America, right-wing challenger parties in Europe, and both left-wing and right-wing presidential candidates in the United States (2017, p. 1).

As Mudde and Kaltwasser point out in this citation, the term populist is being used to describe no specific ideology as it can cover both left- and right-wing candidates from different geographical areas of the world. Additionally, they point out that when political actors are described as populist, or their rhetoric is described as such, it is seldom themselves that use this wording (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017, p. 2). Due to this excessive use of the term populism, we will now provide a broader outline of the term populism using some varied examples to clarify some of the confusion surrounding the term and its use.

As discussed above, the people play a central role in populism, as an empty signifier capable of uniting homogeneous groups and in the role of dividing society, marking the separation between the people and its enemy (Laclau, 2005, 38-39). To further bring attention to the contextual nature of populist mobilisation in Laclau's work, we will present three different examples of the construction of the people from Mudde and Kaltwasser. These are the people as sovereign, as the common people and as the nation (2017, p. 9-11). The first of the three, the people as sovereign, looks at the people both as the source of political power and by putting the people in charge. While democracies are built on the idea that power originates in the people, dissatisfaction with elected representatives can occur in any democratic nation.

Left unchecked this can result in the aggregation of democratic subjects into popular subjects through an equivalential chain, eventually leading to a populist rupture (Laclau, 2005). The second, the common people, focuses instead on socio-economic and cultural factors that divide society. In an antagonistic manner, the ideas and values of the constructed common people are given high acclaim while those of the elites are viewed with suspicion and disdain. On the other hand, values and customs amongst the people that are already looked at with disdain by the elites can also be chosen to accelerate the antagonistic relationship between people and the elite. Going back to the importance of context we refer to the example of the French food riots used by Laclau. Despite struggling with riots since the Middle Ages, Laclau notes that it was not until the drastic changes of the 18th century that the equivalential chain of the French Revolution consumed society and saw the monarchy as its enemy (Laclau, 2005, p. 41). The third, as a nation, views the people as defined by their nationality. This definition of the people can be narrowed down further to be based on for example culture or ethnicity as often seen with the empirical examples of right-wing populist parties (Wodak, 2015).

Seen together, these three separate constructions of the people all follow a populist logic of articulation yet leaves us with a quite vague definition of who exactly the people are. However, this vagueness is an important part of the people being able to be used as the empty signifier by an equivalential chain. The function of this vagueness, or poverty of populist symbols as Laclau puts it, “is to bring to equivalential homogeneity a highly heterogenous reality, they can only do so on the basis of reducing to a minimum their particularistic content.” (Laclau, 2005, p. 40). Due to not having any specific ties to any groups, the term can be used to unite groups to fight for a common cause and can be changed to fit any rhetorical situation.

Moving on to the enemy of the people in the populist narrative we are again dealing with a rather broad term used to describe as many different adversaries of the people as there are movements with a populist logic to their articulation. At its core, the enemy of the people, the elite, the establishment, etc. will always be constructed in accordance with the construction of the people, again related to the homogenising vagueness of the populist articulation (Laclau, 2005). The enemy can, for example, be more specifically linked to the political, economic, cultural or media elite, but again this is influenced by the equivalential chain of the movement practising a populist logic (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017, p. 11-12). To illustrate

this, one populist movement, through its specific equivalential chain, may have a construction of the elite based on political power while holding no antagonistic views to the economic elite, and vice versa. In terms of rhetoric and discursive strategies, the gap between the people and the elite does not need to be based on empirical differences or grievances, but rather through the implication of these through the populist discursive strategy of creating an antagonistic relationship between the people and its enemy (Laclau, 2005; Wodak, 2015).

One of the issues that arises from the relationship between the people and the elite is therefore the transition when a populist movement enters political office after a populist rupture. In the populist narrative, the hero has slain his enemy, yet many of the issues the people were concerned about remain. When there is no one left to pin as the enemy the antagonistic relationship that can hold a populist movement together falls apart, and its equivalential chain weakened, making it difficult for populists to sustain power (Laclau, 2005; Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017). However, the articulation of a populist movement is continually changing, and the elite could in theory be replaced by changing focus from internal agents to external ones (Laclau, 2005). A theoretical populist movement could at first focus on the economic elite inside the country and once the election is won, shift their focus to the international economical elites. The same applies to populist leaders as well. Despite being in positions of power prior to party leadership, this can be disregarded or even be labelled as what Mudde and Kaltwasser describe as an “insider-outsider” style of leadership. Possessing the cultural and economic capital of the political elite yet fighting for the cause of the people (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017, p. 73).

One last aspect of the elite is that several of the definitions used to label them are often used together. The economic elite can be portrayed as not only holding power over a country’s financial institutions but that they additionally have gained political influence through lobbying (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017). However, the exact definitions of the elite used by populist movements will be a result of their chains of equivalence and articulated to best fit the purposes of uniting a specific movement. As an example, a right-wing populist group and a left-wing group may articulate the elite based on ethnicity. The right-wing group frames the elite through a lens of xenophobia and anti-immigration articulating a difference between “us” and “them” where the elite are both those in power as well as immigrants themselves (Wodak, 2015, p. 47). Here it should be noted that while the immigrants themselves may be a powerless group in society, due to the perceived special treatment given to them by the

political elite, they become a part of the antagonistic “them” in relation to the pure us. On the other hand, the left-wing group may frame the elite based on a colonial past as seen with Evo Morales’ campaign in Bolivia (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017, p. 14). Both sides of the ideological spectrum use ethnicity as the basis for their populist articulation, yet their demands stem from entirely different backgrounds and ultimately from their specific equivalential chain.

2.1.3 Populist Discursive Strategies

Next, having established an understanding and cleared up some of the confusion surrounding the term populism, we will review some of the empirical examples of discursive strategies employed by right-wing populist movements as presented by Wodak (2015), which we will later apply to the Norwegian case. This is done to provide a better baseline for the analysis of populist rhetoric in contemporary Norwegian politics. While we have established that ideology is of no concern to whether a movement is more or less populist in their mode of articulation, these specific discursive strategies are more frequently used in specifically right-wing movements. This we believe can be said as equivalential chains based on left-wing ideology will usually practice a more inclusionary discursive strategy, compared to the exclusionary discourse which can be observed in populist movements bound to right-wing ideologies. Serving to homogenise an otherwise heterogeneous group of demands or used to create a divided society, these discursive strategies are utilised in a populist logic of articulation. The separation of the people and the elite is itself a trait of populist articulation and rhetoric, but several other traits are also used to strengthen this divide. For example, the use of a scapegoat has been seen often in contemporary right-wing populism in Europe. Based on ethnicity, religious beliefs or other factors playing on the public fear of the unknown, certain groups can be portrayed as the root cause of a nation’s problems (Wodak, 2015). In the following paragraphs, drawing on Wodak’s work, we will expand upon some of the discursive strategies characteristic of right-wing populism to provide a better baseline for the analysis (Wodak, 2015, p. 21-22). These discursive strategies, expressed in brief first and then covered more in depth, are:

1. Right-wing populism claims to represent the people through a homogenised ideal based on an ideologically nativist construction of the people.

2. Right-wing populism adopts a political style that can relate to various ideologies, rather than being tied to a single ideology.
3. Right-wing populism does away with the traditional left/right divide, in turn creating new social divides.
4. Right-wing populism's success depends on performance strategies in modern media democracies, such as Norway, with extensive use of the media.
5. Right-wing populism personalises and commodifies contemporary politics and politicians leading to a focus on charismatic leaders.
6. Right-wing populist politicians use frontstage performance techniques, closely linked to popular celebrity culture seen in tabloids and sensationalist journalism.
7. Right-wing populism often correlates with anti-intellectualism, often utilising a common-sense line of argumentation.
8. Right-wing populism often features a pseudo-emancipatory gender policy, closely linked to anti-Muslim rhetoric.
9. Right-wing populism often takes use of a scapegoat on which they can pin complicated societal issues and concerns.

Before going into the in-depth coverage of these discursive strategies, we want to point out some of the similarities shared between some of the points. Both point two and three, relate to the crossing of ideological boundaries to attain a broader appeal. Adopting ideological styles separate from right-wing ideology will inevitably lead to creating new social divides, not bound to ideology, but instead the societal context of the equivalential chain. The same can be said for points four, five, and six, as they too have a lot in common. All related to, especially in our analysis of populism on social media, the use of discursive strategies in the media to strengthen the homogenising position of the charismatic leader, or the empty signifier. The last shared similarities we find are in points seven, eight, and nine. These we believe could all fit within the strategy of anti-intellectualism as they all require a common-sense line of argumentation, and a resentment and disdain for intellectuals, experts and others who are deemed as such (Hofstadter, 1963, p. 6-7). In its nature, pseudo-emancipatory gender policy is contradictory as it preaches liberation for some, and oppression of others. The use of a scapegoat also has its roots in anti-intellectualism as this discursive strategy demands of the recipient an acceptance of extremely simplified explanations to similarly complicated issues. Finally, we want to state that this does not mean that these similar strategies become

redundant, as they can be used to better analyse different empirical examples when used individually.

1. First, while the construction of a people has been mentioned earlier, in the case of right-wing populism specifically, we find a much more exclusionary construction of the people. This construction is often based on the shared historical and cultural context of the homogenous majority in a country, resulting in an exclusionary and nativist definition of the people. Through this lens the enemy of the people are not just the elites and the powerful, but the “others” such as immigrants and minorities can also be viewed with hostility and scepticism (Wodak, 2015, p. 43). Based on the historical background of the people, immigrants can be perceived both as a threat to the culture and history of a nation-state, but also viewed as a threat in socio-economic conditions such as immigrants stealing jobs from the native population. This construction of the people opens for the right-wing populists to be portrayed as the saviours of the people, currently under attack from the elite and the “others”, both vying to corrupt their way of life. As with many of the discursive strategies presented by Wodak, a right-wing populist movement may use this strategy of constructing the people based on nativism and a fear of the foreign to maintain its equivalential chain.
2. Second, by employing a broad political style, right-wing populists can appeal to voters from different ideological backgrounds who share common concerns. Since right-wing populism is not strictly rooted in a singular ideology but rather adopts a pragmatic approach, their flexible political style allows them to connect with individuals who may not align with a particular ideology at all. Instead attracted to the populist discourse that resonates with their concerns and fears through the equivalential chain (Wodak, 2015, p. 3). Immigrants can be portrayed as a threat to the welfare state, based on a right-wing xenophobic view, while the defence of the welfare state for the people is based on left-wing values. Further examples of this are as innumerable as there are ideological differences, but at its core, this strategy can function to capture voters disillusioned by the ideologically bound established parties through their appeal to the empty and floating signifiers visible in populist discourse.
3. Third, we look to the cutting across of the traditional ideological divides. A common characteristic of right-wing populist discursive strategy, this ideological jumping across the aisle can include issues like financial crises, unemployment, loss of sovereignty to organisations like the EU, and much more (Wodak, 2015, p. 21). These

are all legitimate issues many modern democracies face due to increasing globalisation and enable populist parties to gain wider support. Once more, populist articulation becomes central to how we should interpret this trait. Where right-wing parties may base their opposition on some form of xenophobia, left-wing parties oppose the same issues, but with an equivalential chain bound to socialist theory (Laclau, 2005; Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017). Despite ideological differences, left- and right-wing populist parties are willing to include areas of policy typically not prioritised by them to unite the heterogeneous groups that make up their movements.

4. Fourth, the use of performance strategies in modern media democracies, this being especially relevant to the case this thesis will analyse. Extensively using both traditional and new media such as social media platforms like Facebook, as well as presenting a new image for the right-wing populist politician. Having evolved from the far less publicly appealing, rugged skinhead apparel of the past, the new populist leader is a professional politician who knows how to use all the advantages modern media democracies can offer. This new type of populist leader can take the role of empty signifier to homogenize the differential equivalential chain of their movement (Laclau, 2005). With an antagonistic depiction of the elite and the “others”, this charismatic leader holds symbolic weight and can be portrayed as a protector of the people. By appearing this way, populist politicians can be seen as more relatable and down to earth by their constituents relative to their established political counterparts. Where mainstream politicians suffer from being seen as detached from everyday issues, a cunning populist leader can reap great rewards from being seen as a part of the people they represent.
5. Fifth, the personalisation and commodification of politics. While some aspects of this trait have been covered earlier, this paragraph will delve a little deeper. This trait often leads to a strong hierarchy within a political organisation with an emphasis on a charismatic leader in the fore (Wodak, 2015, p. 21). From another perspective, we see how the reflections of Bernays regarding the necessary evolution of a politician require utilizing the rhetorical strategies of the businessperson if they were to capture the people (Bernays, 1928). A propagandist should be able to see the benefits of treating policy as commodities to be sold to the public and use the correct advertising campaigns to succeed. This commodification brings the risk of simplifying political issues but can be a successful tool for the populist. From the perspective of Laclau, this trait could also be argued as important to the creation of an empty signifier in the

leader of the populist movement. With more personalisation of politics, the character of the charismatic leader can reduce the internal focus of the heterogeneity of a populist movement, instead drawing attention to the uniting leader figure (Laclau, 2005).

6. Sixth, front stage showmanship, the transition to celebrity-like public performances linked to populist politicians. These politicians are skilled in the use of rhetoric and tailor their statements to fit the audience wherever they are. At the pub for a meeting with their constituents, they appear as a man of the people, in the press they can appear as highly professional politicians, and through social media they can easily engage with the people. This is one of the areas where we see the importance of context in right-wing populism, as the politician can easily adapt their rhetoric and appearance to best fit any given context (Wodak, 2015, p. 21-22). Through these techniques, the populist politician can ingratiate themselves in the public mind as separate from the elite, while garnering vast amounts of media visibility and strengthening their position within the societal discourse.
7. Seventh, the discursive strategy of anti-intellectualism, or as Wodak (2015) refers to it, “the arrogance of ignorance” (p. 22). This type of rhetoric appeals to the common sense of constituents and can be tied to the vox populi style of leadership mentioned by Mudde and Kaltwasser (2017, p. 62) based on how it enables the populist leader to further say what the people are thinking. On the topic of engaging the voters, Edward Bernays (1928) mentions this, “The political apathy of the average voter, of which we hear so much, is undoubtedly due to the fact that the politician does not know how to meet the conditions of the public mind” (p. 110). Anti-intellectualism can be used to combat political apathy by making complex political issues understandable for the people, and resultingly gain much more support compared to their mainstream counterparts (Bernays, 1928). This rhetoric can also be used to further strengthen the divided society populism needs. By implying there is a simple solution the elite simply will not go through with, the elite is seen as unempathetic to the worries of the people while the populist can promise salvation if elected. The same applies if xenophobia or a scapegoat is included with the anti-intellectual rhetoric as the people receive a clear enemy and a root cause of their problems.
8. Eighth, the use of a pseudo-emancipatory gender policy, and its link to anti-Muslim rhetoric. As the patriarchy has been progressively weakened, right-wing populists, often supporters of traditional and conservative gender policies, propose a right-wing

feminism. Highlighting the importance of the traditional role of women as caretakers and mothers yet arguing for freedom for women specifically regarding Muslim women (Wodak, 2015, p. 22). The Muslim woman does not make a conscious choice to wear a religious headscarf or other covering but is oppressed into this position. Again, the construction of a narrative of fear becomes present as these ideas are projected as a threat to the nativist construction of the people (Wodak, 2015, p. 153). As the traditional wearing of headscarves and other religious clothing does not fit in with the majority culture, right-wing populists can emphasise the narrative of “us” and the “others”, solidifying the equivalential chain through their similarities as opposed to the “others”.

9. Ninth, and the last discursive strategy is the use of a scapegoat (Wodak, 2015, p. 153). Here the divide between left and right becomes more visible, but at the same time, the populist mode of articulation remains focused on the divided society. If we look at the work of Giorgios Katsambekis and Yannis Stavrakakis (2020) on the COVID-19 pandemic, we find one of the differences in the ideological gap of populist movements. While left-wing populists in Spain and Argentina prioritised social cohesion and the protection of minorities during the pandemic, right-wing actors used the pandemic to further portray immigrants as a scapegoat, potentially carrying disease into the country (Katsambekis & Stavrakakis, 2020, p. 7). This again shows us the difference between the inclusionary left-wing and exclusionary right-wing populist construction of the people and the “others” as a threat. The trait more often accredited to the right specifically is, therefore, the use of a minority as the scapegoat (Wodak, 2015). In these situations, the scapegoat despite clearly not being in a position of power, is regarded as being favoured by the ruling elite at the cost of the people. The fear of the foreign can be used to present people with simple alternatives to complex issues, such as the handling of a pandemic, and holds significant discursive potency, engaging in one of man’s most primal emotions. If there is a shortage in the job market, or the economy is pointing downward, these issues may have their root causes based on several factors related to a plethora of societal areas. By being able to point towards a scapegoat, however, populist actors gain an advantage over their mainstream counterparts in terms of how simple and understandable a proposed solution can be.

Before going into the chapter on rhetorical theory we want to reiterate our goal by combining these discursive theories with a rhetorical perspective. While these discursive strategies focus on the functional and contextual use of language to achieve objectives within the populist articulation, the rhetorical theory provides a focus on the persuasive use of language (Arribas-Ayllon, et al., 2009, p. 175). How the forms of appeal work to strengthen the discourse of fear prevalent in many of the strategies mentioned above. This interdisciplinary approach allows us to reach a more comprehensive understanding of how language and rhetoric function within the context of our case, Listhaug and FrP on Facebook.

2.2 Rhetoric

While rhetoric and the art of persuasion have evolved following the technological progress providing new mediums, requiring new formats, the core ideas of how to appeal to an audience have remained the same for around 3,000 years. When looking at rhetoric, it is therefore natural to highlight Aristotle. Although these theories are very old, they are still as relevant today. Considered to be one of the first to explore the topic of rhetoric philosophically, he defined it as follows:

Rhetoric is a counterpart to dialectics; after all, both revolve around things which all humans can understand to a certain extent, no specific knowledge is required. Therefore, both parts concern all humans to a degree; everyone attempts to a certain extent to test the tenability of an argument, or make one themselves, and defend themselves or accuse another (Aristotle, n.d., as cited in, Kjeldsen, 2006, p. 32, translated from Norwegian).

Aristotle states that it is possible to study the reasons why people succeed with their rhetoric and that some proceed routinely while others proceed completely unsystematically and may succeed with a stroke of luck. Evidence is the most crucial tool for rhetorical success and Aristotle distinguishes between two forms of evidence: technical means of proof, and non-technical means of proof. The non-technical means of proof are the elements that are available in advance that the speaker can choose to use to strengthen his arguments, for instance, tables, graphs, and other types of collected data. On the other hand, technical means of proof primarily occur through the use of *ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos*, which are three technical forms of appeal (Kjeldsen, 2006, p. 32-33). Although *ethos*, *pathos* and *logos* will always be observable to a certain extent in speeches, a good speaker will intentionally be able to use

these technical means in her speech to strengthen her message. In addition, the rhetorical terms *doxa*, *kairos* and *aptum* are looked at in more detail in this chapter. These are other essential parts of the art of rhetoric. This is because *doxa* relates to the audience's understanding of reality, closely linked to our social constructionist research paradigm. As for *kairos* and *aptum* which are linked to the context, important in discourse, as to when and how any appeal to the public would be strengthened by its relevance to the given context. As we will be conducting a rhetorical discourse analysis in this thesis, we will also introduce a new figure within this chapter in an attempt to visualise the connection between discourse and rhetoric.

2.2.1 Ethos

Ethos is about the speaker persuading the recipient through the power of their message and their credibility. It is this person, or organisation, that will make the public trust and believe the content they are conveying. *Ethos* is about the audience's impression, so the presentation, whether oral, written, or visual, is particularly important to succeed in getting one's message across. Those who succeed in reinforcing their *ethos* have a greater chance of persuading their audience and influencing them towards a desired outcome. The receivers' prejudices related to the sender are the starting point for the *ethos*, but through the presentation of the message that is conveyed, the sender is capable of both strengthening and weakening their *ethos* (Bratberg, 2017, p. 130-131). Organizations therefore often choose spokespeople who are well-known to most people to have a stronger *ethos* based on the prejudiced opinions of their recipients. For example, ahead of the presidential election in Brazil in 2022, Brazilian star footballer Neymar appeared on a live stream on the YouTube channel of presidential candidate Jair Bolsonaro. Neymar spoke of his and Bolsonaro's shared values, which is why he expressed support for the controversial presidential candidate (Bird, 2022). Here, Neymar becomes a messenger for Bolsonaro to get people to vote for him as President of Brazil. Neymar is a big figure in the football nation of Brazil, and the joint top scorer for the men's national team through time alongside Pelé with 77 goals (Pattle, 2022), thus, it is a wise choice of messenger to promote Bolsonaro as the best president for the Brazilian people.

2.2.2 Pathos

Another necessary element in the persuasion process is *pathos*, that is, appealing to the emotions of the audience that one is trying to persuade. The speaker aims to get the audience

emotionally engaged in the speech. This is essential for the message to be able to influence those who listen to it. A powerful speech plays on the emotional strings – anger, sadness, empathy, happiness, fear etc. – and the spokesperson often combines strings to reach out to the majority. Linguistic images are used to spice up the message and make it, more or less, non-technical, giving the message a more public appeal (Bratberg, 2017, p. 132-133). As an example, one can look at speeches where the speaker appeals to a better future, a future where dreams become reality. Martin Luther King Jr.’s famous speech “I have a dream” and the mantra of the Greek radical left-wing party Syriza “Hope begins today” are examples of this, and the Norwegian King Harald’s opening speech at the royal couple’s garden party the first of September 2016 is another. To begin with, in his speech, he describes Norway’s geography. Emphasising that Norway is a mountainous country with fjords and valleys, its population living both in the far north with harsh winters in total darkness in contrast to the far south with its more forgiving climate. Choosing to focus especially on the contrasts that make up the country’s material nature, the speech is primed for the next part focusing on the humane aspects that truly define the nation. Where we live, the different interests, jobs, ethnicity, sexuality, age, etc. are the many differences that make up a whole. To sum up he says the following (translated from Norwegian):

My greatest hope for Norway is that we will be able to take care of each other.
That we will continue to build this country - on trust, togetherness, and generosity.
That we should know that we - despite all our differences - are one people.
That Norway is one³ (Kong Harald, 2016, Det Norske Kongehuset, 2016).

In this speech King Harald speaks to the whole, but also the individual. Here he expresses a collective identity from the differences all over Norway. Because the guests at the garden party were invited from all over the country, the message could not be more apt.

2.2.3 Logos

In persuasion through logos, the speaker must convince his audience through well-formulated arguments so that they are perceived as correct and important. It aims at the more rational

³ “Mitt største håp for Norge er at vi skal klare å ta vare på hverandre.
At vi skal bygge dette landet videre – på tillit, felleskap og raushet.
At vi skal kjenne at vi – på tross av all vår ulikhet – er *ett* folk.
At Norge er *ett*.” (Kong Harald, 2016, Det Norske Kongehuset, 2016).

side of the audience; when it comes to the use of logos argumentation, the spokesperson must convince the critics of the idea and the doubters that there is a simple and unambiguous true “common sense” in what is proposed. Therefore, it is useful to look more closely at the patterns in the general argumentation and the inferences between the various parts of the arguments (Bratberg, 2017, p. 133-134). As an example, we can look at the Centre Party's (SP) criticism of the current government in 2020 for high ferry prices in coastal counties. Party leader Trygve Slagsvold Vedum said at the time that "under the current government, ferry prices have skyrocketed. For people along the coast, the ferry is as important as the subway and the tram in Oslo. We can't have it so that an ordinary family cannot afford to get to work, school and leisure activities because the ferry prices are far too high⁴" (Senterpartiet, 2020, translated from Norwegian). Furthermore, it is pointed out that these increases in ferry prices are the consequence of the government's failure to prioritize coastal counties. Siv Mossleth, parliamentary representative for SP, points out that the government "delivers beautiful words" when it comes to transport policy in central Eastern Norway, but that rural Norway has a bleak outlook. In conclusion, she says: "Without a quick change of government, I fear that this will mean even more difficult times for the districts in the future⁵" (Senterpartiet, 2020, translated from Norwegian). Vedum here uses an argument that points to the importance of the ferry trips, an importance that perhaps not everyone in the country of Norway is familiar with. By emphasizing this importance by drawing the comparison to public transport in Oslo, possibly more people will see this as an important issue to fight for. By arguing for state responsibility for ferry and boat prices in the districts, and by telling that the outlook is bleak, it is suggested that if the districts are to be prioritized in this matter, there should be a change of government since it is pointed out that the Solberg government, "tightens the county economy and closes its eyes to everything called ferries and boats in the districts⁶" (Senterpartiet, 2020, translated from Norwegian). For people in the rural areas of Norway, it may seem that a change of government is common sense, or necessary, to get the support from the state that they want and need.

⁴ "Under dagens regjering har fergeprisene skutt ii været. For folk langs kysten er ferga like viktig som t-banen og trikken er ii Oslo. Da kan vi ikke ha det slik at en vanlig familie ikke har råd til å komme til job, skole og fritidsaktiviteter fordi fergeprisene er altfor høye" (Senterpartiet, 2020).

⁵ "Uten snarlig regjeringsskifte frykter jeg at dette vil bety enda vanskeligere tider ii distriktene fremover" (Senterpartiet, 2020).

⁶ "strammer inn på fylkesøkonomien og lukker øynene for alt som heter ferge og båt ii distriktene" (Senterpartiet, 2020).

Aristotle believes that logos is essential for creating rhetorical ethos. This means that the arguments one chooses, and how they are used in the speech, are part of creating the speaker's ethos, and not based on prior knowledge of the speaker or the organization itself (Kjeldsen, 2006, p. 116-117). As with the example above, SP strengthens its ethos as the party willing to fight for the districts through the arguments in the ferry and boat price case.

These three forms of appeal are not usually seen as alternatives to each other, but they are combined and complement each other in a speech or a post. There will potentially be signs that show that the speaker's persuasive strength is stronger with one or the other form of appeal, but the speech that uses the strengths of all forms of appeal has the greatest probability of success. But the forms of appeal are also dependent on context, and the strategies are adapted to the listening public. This is where the concept of *doxa* comes in, in other words, the audience's understanding of reality. One must know one's audience, know where the shoe pinches, and support the main arguments on premises they share (Bratberg, 2017, p. 135).

2.2.4 Kairos

The right moment is crucial for successful rhetorical communication, kairos (Bratberg, 2017, p. 139). This describes the time when a message relating to a particular event or matter should ideally be conveyed. There is an opportunity for action and for the speaker it is important to take advantage of the opportunity while it is there. Now the speaker can get support from his audience if he succeeds. For example, US President Joe Biden has been criticized for prioritizing travelling to Ukraine instead of visiting East Palestine, Ohio, where a freight train with chemicals crashed on February third this year. Former President Donald Trump visited East Palestine three weeks after the accident. He gave a speech in which he criticized Joe Biden for not having visited the place yet and added that despite this, the population has not been forgotten. Concerns about whether the drinking water is safe are great, and Trump organized transport with thousands of water bottles to the residents. Some of them with Trump logos on them (Arntsen & Nilsson, 2023; Holmes & Bradner, 2023). In this example, one can see that Donald Trump is trying to take advantage of the moment to highlight himself as a good and safe leader, as well as that he emphasizes that Biden has not visited the place and prioritizes foreign affairs over pressing domestic issues. Trump shows concerns about public safety by utilizing Biden's absence to garner local political support.

2.2.5 Aptum

In the art of persuasion, the side of linguistic communication known as aptum is important.

This is about what is appropriate, and one must consider external and internal aptum.

External Aptum is the relationship between the speech or message and the current context. A useful tool in connection to the assessment of aptum is Cicero's five constants. But instead of using the five original constants, we use Kjeldsen's (2006, p. 72) adapted versions to best fit the newer media. These are the consignor, the case, the mode of expression, the recipient, and the specific circumstances. The five constants can be put in a pentagram:

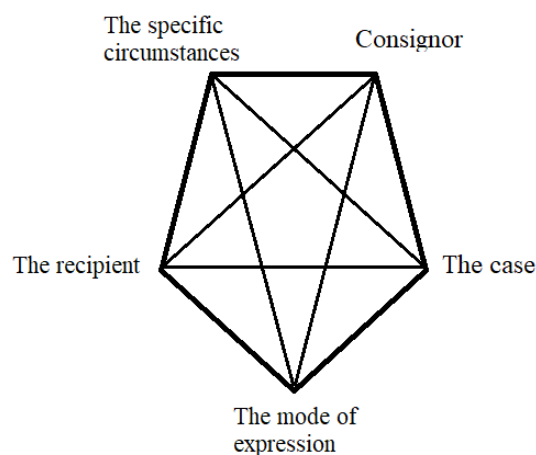


Figure 1: External Aptum. Own translation based on Kjeldsen (2006, p. 73)

For the message to work persuasively, these five constants must be in balance. This means that any constant must be in the right relationship to the other four (Bratberg, 2017, p. 136; Kjeldsen, 2006, p. 71-74). One can also put the constants linked to internal aptum – the case, the content, the organization, the mode of expression and the presentation – in a pentagram because any of these constants must also be in the right relationship to the other four:

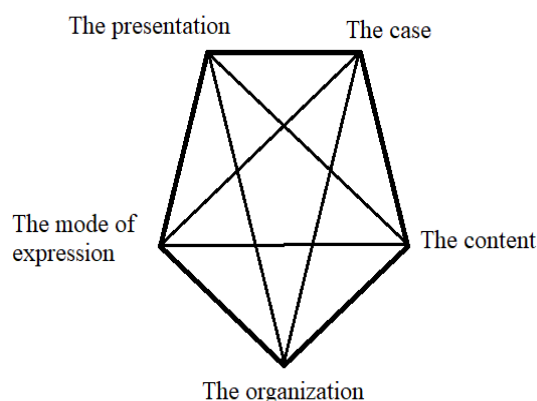


Figure 2: Internal Aptum. Own translation based on Kjeldsen (2006, p. 75)

Internal aptum is the relationship between the different internal parts of the speech or message (Bratberg, 2017, p. 136; Kjeldsen, 2006, p. 75-77).

To illustrate the importance of aptum, we can look at a statement that the parliamentary representative for the Norwegian Progress Party (FrP) Jon Helgheim made in 2021 as a guest on *Helgemorgen*. In addition to Helgheim, Rødt's second candidate in Oslo, Seher Aydar, and a representative from the activist group Extinction Rebellion, which had demonstrated in several places in Oslo the same week, were also present. This program was broadcast on the Norwegian television channel NRK 1, to a nationwide audience. The topic was civil disobedience, and as an example of civil disobedience, the demonstrations against the establishment of the mining company Nassir ASA at Repparfjorden are discussed. The presenter asks questions related to the FrP's wish to remove state support for organizations that engage in civil disobedience and what that will change, and Helgheim responded (translated from Norwegian):

People's tax money, from honest working people who drive income into the state, should not be used to support rebels who destroy the same workplaces. If you fail to comply with the law, then the state should not finance and sponsor it. Then that money should rather go to people who get involved legally, who are actually helping to make a difference, who develop this society in a positive direction, and not to

people who rave around in clown costumes in the middle of working hours and ruin it for them who have actually raised this income⁷ (Nordeide, 2021).

The demonstrators pointed out that mining in Repparfjord will affect the Sami interests related to reindeer herding, and that the calving area will become an industrial area (Måsø & Verstad, 2021). Several have claimed that Helgheim was racist towards the Sami, the indigenous people of Norway, by calling their national costume a "clown costume". Historically, the Sami, along with other minorities in Norway, have received harsh treatment from the national authorities, and the fact that a parliamentary representative makes such statements makes matters worse. Sami youth struggle with shame or feelings of inferiority over their Sami identity (Hansen & Skaar, 2021, p. 144). 95% of young Sami experience prejudice against Sami culture and three out of four of the young people have themselves been exposed to discrimination (ibid.). Helgheim himself says that the statement had nothing to do with the Sami and that he meant something other than what was debated (Nordeide, 2021). Nevertheless, the statement is linked to the Sami and an underlying dimension of discrimination with social and historical roots. This is neither appropriate nor expedient for the Progress Party or Helgheim himself as a political representative. Describing the outfits of demonstrators, regardless of whether it is the Sami people or Extinction Rebellion he is describing, as "clown costumes" is not an appropriate choice of words. Back in 2019, a Norwegian man was sentenced in court for hateful statements against the Sami people. He also used "clown costume" to describe the traditional garment of the Sami (Utsi & Verstad, 2019). Since the quote does not point out who he is describing, it is understandable that the Sámi, based on historical and present-day discrimination, feel that he is talking derogatorily about their traditional garment.

2.2.6 Introducing Our Own Analytical Framework

Drawing inspiration from Kjeldsen's pentagram presented above, we have chosen to create our own visual representation for the analytical framework used to analyse the case of the

⁷ "Folks skattepenger, fra ærlige arbeidsfolk som driver inntekter inn til staten, skal ikke brukes på til å støtte opp rebeller som ødelegger for de samme arbeidsplassene. Hvis man ikke klarer å holde seg til loven, så skal i hvert fall ikke staten finansiere og sponse det. Da bør de pengene heller gå til folk som engasjerer seg på en lovlig måte, som faktisk er med på å gjøre en forskjell, som utvikler dette samfunnet i en positiv retning, og ikke til folk som raver rundt i klovnekostyme midt i arbeidstida og ødelegger for dem som faktisk har skaffet disse inntektene. Det er det som er viktig her. Vi skal ha litt respekt for ærlige arbeidsfolks penger og ikke bruke det på dem som ødelegger" (Nordeide, 2021).

thesis. As we are not conducting a standard rhetorical analysis, but instead a rhetorical discourse analysis, we saw it beneficial to provide a visual representation more fitting with this approach.

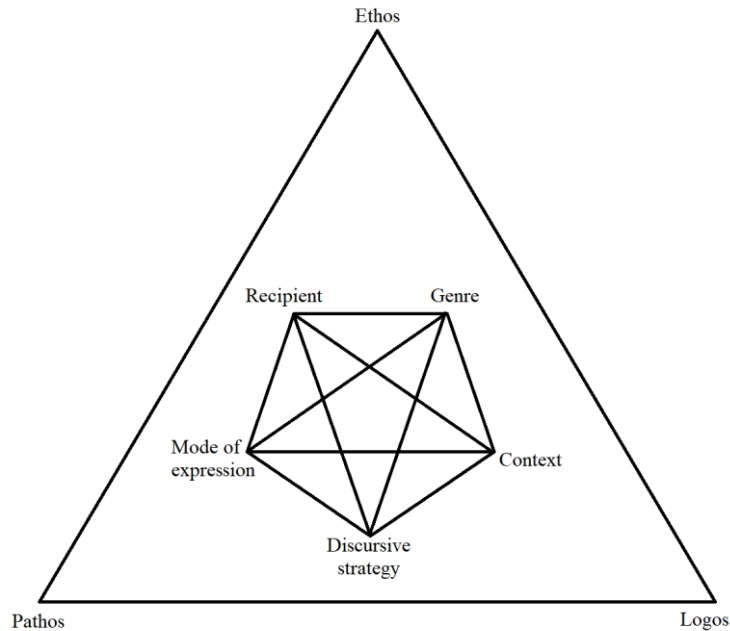


Figure 3: Discourse-Analytical Pentagonam enclosed by Rhetorical Triangle

If we look at Figure 3 attached above, we have chosen to represent the primary modes of appeal as a triangle encapsulating our alternative pentagram. This is done to show how ethos, pathos and logos provide an immovable foundation for our discourse analysis, as the five parts of the pentagram within will never be able to circumvent the use of the forms of appeal. As for the pentagram within, the lines connecting each part symbolise the connection each individual part has to every other part in our analysis.

The above figure illustrates the dimensions of our analysis.

- Ethos: Related to the persuasive ability gained through the power of the message as well as the credibility of the consignor. As ethos is important for the audience's impression of the consignor, it holds influence on whether the message gets across to the audience or not.
- Pathos: Appealing to the emotions of the audience, making a stronger appeal based on the emotional aspects of the message.

- Logos: Aims to connect with the more rational side of the audience, the consignor appealing to the simple and unambiguous, true common-sense of the message.
- Mode of expression: As Facebook is the platform on which the posts for this case were gathered, the modes of expression separate between types of posts. Here we separate text-only, picture, video, and linked-article posts. The connection to the four other parts is that the mode of expression will influence how the content of the post is expressed.
- Discursive Strategy: As mentioned in the chapter on populism this relates to the discursive strategies employed by movements with a populist logic of articulation. To truly understand how the discursive strategy functions, we need to understand its position related to the other four points.
- Context: The context of the posts provides us with an insight into the contemporary societal situation. This is then connected to the four other points, as a post's context will shape and influence all of them.
- Genre: For this point, we will at a later point in the text be presenting two figures of posted content to both Sylvi Listhaug and FrP's Facebook pages where according to the main message of the post, each has been assigned a genre related to its core message. The subject of a post will always be connected to the four other points as it constitutes what is being discussed, and therefore how it should be presented.
- Recipient: Who a message is intended for is extremely important in connection with the four other points. A message that may seem revolting to some, can seem completely appropriate for others as will be highlighted in the use of right-wing populist discursive strategies in the analysis.

By introducing this new figure, we hope that it can be of help through the analysis process of populist discursive strategies on social media, and to answer whether social media is enabling populist rhetoric. We also hope that this figure and approach to a rhetorical discourse analysis can be of use to others researching this area and may be used in future research.

2.3 Propaganda

In his book *Propaganda* (1928), Edward Bernays presented a view of rhetoric as an instrumental tool to manipulate the masses. Since the advent of modern mass media, this manipulation of the masses had grown exponentially, and with the introduction of the Internet his theories are still as relevant today. Bernays provides us with an insight into the principles

and techniques of persuasion and shows how communication strategies can be used to shape public opinion, by appealing to emotions and employing persuasive language. From this, we can also trace the influence Bernays' has had on the shaping of contemporary rhetorical strategy, such as in a political party like FrP. In the opening paragraph of this book, Bernays introduces the reader to the concept of the masses being led by an elite group:

The conscious and intelligent manipulation of the organized habits and opinions of the masses is an important element in democratic society. Those who manipulate this unseen mechanism of society constitute an invisible government which is the true ruling power of our country. We are governed, our minds molded, our tastes formed, our ideas suggested, largely by men we have never heard of. This is a logical result of the way in which our democratic society is organized. Vast numbers of human beings must cooperate in this manner if they are to live together as a smoothly functioning society (Bernays, 1928/2005, p. 37).

In this introduction, the manipulation of the masses is not only described as something which is operating on a larger scale but also the logical result for a democratic society. This line of reasoning shares similarities with the construction of objective realities which Berger & Luckmann would write about in their book *The Social Construction of Reality* (1966). Through efficient methods of propaganda, leaders can shape public opinion, influence discourse, and create consent for the current ruling regime. In the following paragraphs, we will look at the ideas presented in Bernays' work considering the number of advances which have revolutionised mass media since the book was originally published.

Starting with a definition of the term propaganda, Bernays (1928) writes, "Propaganda is the executive arm of the invisible government" (p. 48). Through propaganda, the invisible government can secure their hold on society and maintain order through cleverly formulated messaging, advertising, and other forms of appeal to the public. We would therefore suggest the term propaganda is closely linked to discourse. Therefore, without carrying the negative connotations often associated with the word, propaganda could be defined as a discourse with an especially refined ability to sway opinions and alter views. While all human communication is a discourse, propaganda is the discourse which has been meticulously crafted to act as the executive arm of those in positions of power. Propaganda considers all the forms of appeal mentioned in the rhetorical theory to convey a message so convincing

that the recipients themselves might just believe that they are merely having their own views reaffirmed.

With a definition of propaganda, the next step will be to define who exactly the propagandists are. The term invisible government may not bring any positive connotations, but it does allude to the nature of those well-versed in manipulation through propaganda. Heads of state, important politicians, and wealthy elites all have a vested interest in influencing societal development to achieve a desired outcome (Bernays, 1928). However, these privileged few are not the only ones to wield propaganda. Populist movements and political action groups, which are the focus of this thesis, also need to use propaganda to reach out to potential voters disillusioned by the state of contemporary politics.

The use of propaganda in a political context contrary to commercial usage may bring connotations to authoritarian regimes where dissenters are suppressed, but we would argue that its usage is widespread even in liberal Western democracies. As discussed in the prior chapter on the forms of appeal, commercials have progressively leaned towards favouring the emotions and impulses of a crowd rather than rationalising a purchase through only logic. For example, when buying a car, a good salesperson would never sell a car the same way every time. Based on the customer's preferences the salesperson should adjust their pitch to cater to the customer's every desire. Rather than selling the car based on its capabilities, the customer purchases it based on impulse after being influenced by their own concerns. In this way, the salesperson can simplify the purchasing process. Instead of selling the car based on its mileage or expected runtime, the customer can be lured in through promises of torque and engine volume. The car itself is no longer the main concern of the customer, but the status, the experience, or the feeling of owning a car one can be proud of (Bernays, 1928, p. 75). If we translate this to a political context, the same techniques used to sell any commodity can be adapted to sell policy. Voters seldom have complete knowledge of complex internal and external political issues, which can present a problem of political apathy since people are less likely to care for something they cannot understand. By instead presenting easily available alternatives which seem self-evident the most complex political issues can appear as easily solvable. For example, a society struggling with high unemployment rates may have a complex domestic issue at the root of the problem. While properly fixing this issue could be strenuous work, the same cannot be said of selling the public a simple solution. A trusted and charismatic politician, such as an empty signifier, who can promise to fix complex issues can

not only garner considerable support in the electorate but lead by example trusting that the public will follow based on their credibility (Bernays, 1928, p. 73-74). Here we see a strong similarity with the emphasis on anti-intellectualism as a populist discursive strategy. The leader presents a common-sense argument, and their supporters stand by them.

Finally, we consider the role of social media in the context of the contemporary use of propaganda. A well-versed propagandist should know which media channels to use to spread their messaging most efficiently (Bernays, 1928). One of the first to truly put this into motion was the Propaganda Minister of Nazi Germany, Joseph Goebbels, who introduced the low-cost radio to the German market to put propaganda in the home of every citizen (Meier, 2018). Much like the radio introduced in German homes, social media is available to virtually all of Norway's citizens on account of its high rate of digitalization and relative purchasing power. Social media also introduces a low point of entry since many services only require the user to go through a short signup process and most of the popular platforms are free to use. Due to the nature of social media, compared to traditional media outlets, all that is required to access it is an internet connection and a smart device. For propagandists, this means that not only can potential voters be influenced in their homes by their radios, but wherever and whenever they are carrying their smart devices.

Due to the technological advances since Bernays' Propaganda was written, we will also introduce two terms based on social media which will be used in the discussion, the first of these being *microtargeting*. Microtargeting is a form of advertising that utilizes user data to deliver advertising that is relevant to the user. By gathering data points such as geographic location, demographic factors, and interests, microtargeted advertisements can reach the right recipient at the right time (Lavigne, 2020, p. 965). For political advertisement, this means that a political actor can reach out to voters who are concerned about specific issues, and directly target areas where they would receive the highest reach for their investment. This gain in technology since Bernays' writing enables the propagandist to do away with much of the labour-intensive work associated with studying the needs and wants of their desired audience (Bernays, 1928, p. 65-66).

The second term we will introduce is *echo chamber*, specifically regarding internet-based communication on social media. Echo chambers are used as a metaphor reflecting the interaction between like-minded individuals on social media. In these chambers, differing opinions and viewpoints are seldom seen, and often quite vigorously opposed. Combined

with the microtargeting of political advertisements this can lead to online meeting places where opinions can become further entrenched (Kitchens et al., 2020, p. 1619).

2.4 Summary and Conclusion

To conclude the theory chapter, we want to briefly summarise how the various parts of the theory we have presented will be utilised together. Placed first is the populist theory based primarily on the combination of Laclau and Wodak's discursive approaches to the topic. Here we establish an ontological understanding bound to Laclau, an ontic understanding based on Wodak's examples of discursive strategy characteristic of right-wing populism, and finally argue for their complimentary use together when analysing a populist movement. Next is the rhetorical theory which lays out the complimentary rhetorical aspects which will be used in our analysis of Facebook posts. This provides us with empirical tools allowing us to analyse how the different discursive strategies presented in the populism chapter inevitably make use of the primary forms of appeal. The third and final part, Propaganda, focuses primarily on the work of Edward Bernays providing a perspective on the evolution of rhetoric and propaganda, but also a clear study on the power and influence of someone well-versed in rhetoric can wield. Additionally, this chapter also includes two explanations of terminology, microtargeting and echo chambers, closely linked with the use of social media.

When using these three theoretical perspectives together we hope to provide a better understanding of the discourse of populist politicians. The theory on populism is highly relevant in uncovering to which degree FrP practice a populist logic of articulation as well as establishing whether they use the discursive strategies typical of right-wing populists. The rhetorical theory will be used to analyse the rhetorical qualities of a post and to identify these within FrP's discourse. Finally, is the theory on propaganda regarding the efficiency of rhetoric. Bernays covers the use of good rhetoric, or propaganda in his words, and adds depth to the rhetorical analysis while approaching the territory of discourse analysis. Combining all three parts of our theory we aim to produce a thorough rhetorical discourse analysis, focused on populist discourse in contemporary Norway.

3.0 Research Methodology

In this chapter, we present the process of how we arrived at our research methodology and collected data material to study how social media is enabling populism in Norway, as well as the discussions we had while making these choices. To start we explain our approach against the background of a social constructionist research paradigm. Afterwards, we look at how we selected the research literature, data material as well as problems we faced in this process. Moving on, we look at our primary tools of analysis, namely document analysis and rhetorical analysis as well as the validity and reliability of both methods. Lastly, we discuss problems and solutions regarding research ethics.

3.1 A Social Constructionist Perspective

This chapter will cover our scientific research paradigm and the subsequent epistemological approach to studying the presence of populist attributes and rhetoric in Norwegian social media. Our research paradigm, social constructionism, bases itself on an understanding of reality and knowledge as something that is shaped and constructed through social interactions (Burr, 2015, p. 4-5). Just as the radio was replaced by the television as the popular method of mass communication, social media has replaced the role of the television and enabled social interactions that are structured by discourse to circulate in a new easily accessible arena. As language plays a significant role in the research of social constructionists, we regard our data material gathered from discourse in the public channels of social media as highly relevant for study through the discourse-oriented paradigm that is social constructionism. We do not however regard our research paradigm as infallible and recognize the difficulties of conducting scientific research within an epistemological framework that supplies no objective truths. Therefore, our aim through this chapter is to acknowledge both strengths and weaknesses, as well as present an argument for the reliability and validity of this thesis.

As our thesis bases itself on data gathered from Norwegian sources, we will start by acknowledging the importance of historical and cultural context regarding our social constructionist framework. Discourse and social interactions are the primary drivers of an agent's view of reality, yet the historical and cultural context of that agent will play a vital role in those social interactions. For example, one can see how the commonly accepted understanding of reality has changed as humankind's knowledge of the world has progressed. Ideas such as flat earth, a geocentric system, or the existence of supernatural entities to

explain naturally occurring phenomena were previously regarded as the truth (Russel, 1997). Through social interactions and discourse scientific findings gained legitimacy over time and replaced old ideas with new, ones to transform our commonly accepted reality. The second example is based on contemporary Norwegian society where this study takes place. Although cultural differences may not be as polarised as contrasting world views, within the confines of Norway, prior local elections have made it clear that populist causes have rarely gained a nationwide consensus. A prime example of this is ‘Folkeaksjonen Nei til mer bompenger’ (The Public Action No to More Toll Roads), which changed its name to ‘Folkets Parti’ (The People’s Party) after the general elections of 2021, hereafter referred to as FP (NTB, 2022). Starting as an opposition group on Facebook FP gained most of their popularity through their opposition towards toll roads. Despite the unprecedented media coverage of the party during the local elections of 2019, the election results clearly showed that interest in FP was primarily based around cities with a high density of toll roads (NRK, 2019). Without jumping to conclusions regarding correlation and causation, one could argue that this is an example where people’s geographical and cultural background has caused people to engage in dialogue against toll roads. Conclusively, this can have led to other pressing issues having to recede as FP managed to shape the discourse to present toll roads as the most important contemporary issue on the political agenda (Burr, 2015, p. 3-4).

Moving on to the topic of discourse, not only is it essential within social constructionism where it acts as the crucible of knowledge, but also within this thesis as one of the two primary methods of interpretation. In the words of Foucault, discourses are, “practices which form the objects of which they speak” (Foucault, 1972, as cited in Burr, 2015, p. 74). In essence, this means that our human interpretation of the natural and social world through discourse shapes our view and understanding of events, people, objects, etc., are shaped. In terms of a broad example, we could present two separate people with an object of which they have no former knowledge. If the object in this case is a normal smartphone, the two people in our example would be rendered helpless in identifying the nature of the object due to their lack of relevant prior knowledge. However, through discourse, the two would be able to identify potential use cases for this object based on their prior experiences and socialization. If the two people have different historical and cultural backgrounds, we could also see them conclude on completely different use cases (Burr, 2015, p. 100-108). Interpreting our broad example into a more specific one, we could once again look at the case of toll roads. Out of two people, one might live inside the city centre near the goods and services they require. For

this person, the discourse on toll roads could emphasise its use as a political tool to curb local traffic, increase safety for pedestrians, lower air pollution, and provide funding for the local government. In this case, toll roads can be constructed as a political intervention to combat several other pressing issues. The other person lives outside of the city centre, but their goods and services are most easily accessible by car. For this person, toll roads can be constructed as the primary proponent of a perceived or real financial burden, as everyday routines like trips to the store, delivering a child to school and getting to work all involve a small fee. The importance of discourse here is that instead of looking towards other solutions such as improved public transport and better access to local services, the antagonistic construction of toll roads is the primary focus and argues for a common-sense approach. As this person already has to utilise their car in most everyday routines, their construction of reality is already bound to a car-dependent way of life, thus other alternatives may not seem as viable as continued reliance on the car. Despite living within the same municipality, the two people have a completely contrasting view of what a toll road placed in their local area symbolizes, and consequently how its portrayal is shaped through discourse and their pre-existing construction of reality. Through social interactions with others both these people are then capable of sharing their views on toll roads, potentially influencing others' perceptions of them as well (Berger & Luckmann, 1966, p. 173-175; Burr, 2015, p. 3-5, 74-79). In this thesis, discourse is particularly important, as mentioned at the start of this paragraph, specifically due to our data interpretation method of a rhetorical discourse analysis of social media posts. Using the framework of social constructionism, we can study the ongoing discourse on social media in Norway by questioning how it shapes people's perceptions of contemporary issues.

Considering the examples of discourse mentioned above a problem related to discourse and objective truth arises, specifically whether we as researchers can find any tangible truths if all knowledge is produced through discourse and social interaction. The question that becomes highly relevant then is whether we can claim that anything exists outside of discourse. In this regard we find ourselves agreeing with the argument presented by Mouffe and Laclau:

The fact that every object is constituted as an object of discourse has nothing to do with whether there is a world external to thought, or with the realism/idealism opposition. An earthquake or the falling of a brick is an event that certainly exists, in the sense that it occurs here and now, independently of my will. But whether their

specificity as objects is constructed in terms of ‘natural phenomena’ or ‘expressions of the wrath of God’, depends upon the structuring of a discursive field. What is denied is not that such objects exist externally to thought, but the rather different assertion that they could constitute themselves as objects outside any discursive condition of emergence. (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985, as cited in Burr 2015, p. 101-102)

As Mouffe and Laclau argue here, we do not deny the reality of events outside of discourse, but rather that discourse is required for an object or event to be constituted into something which we can perceive as real. Just like a falling brick, a tree falling in the middle of the forest is still a real event despite nobody being there to see it. Here we can apply the essence of Mouffe and Laclau’s argument. Despite nobody being present to watch the tree fall, people will still present explanations as to why the tree fell through discourse, thereby bringing the object into the world of social constructionism. Much like Schrodinger’s cat, the tree in this example could be standing tall or laying on the forest floor, but until someone has observed the fallen tree and it enters the area of discourse the object would not be known to us and therefore fall outside the area of discourse. Since this thesis looks at populist rhetoric in Norway the toll road example from before can be put into this line of argumentation. A toll road still exists independently of someone's will and brings real consequences along with it. However, how someone perceives the toll roads will still entirely depend on discourse. We regard this view as a near-perfect fit with our thesis, as politics not only in Norway, but most of the world is a public arena dedicated to discourse. Differing opinions from interest groups, lobbyists, politicians, etc, all come together to create an ideological marketplace. If society were to arrive at absolute truths to explain objects, events or politics, discourse would be left redundant (Burr, 2015, p. 101-107). Therefore, despite potential issues of relativity and truth we regard social constructionism as the perfect tool for an analysis of such a discourse-oriented field as politics.

Now we will look at some of the challenges and opportunities social constructionism brings, namely: objectivity, reliability, and validity. First is objectivity. With social constructionism being an undeniably relativistic research paradigm, despite what is mentioned in the prior paragraph, the aim for objectivity in research becomes impossible to achieve. When conducting social constructionist research, our discourse working on this thesis is itself shaped by our socialisation and therefore will never be capable of being truly objective (Berger & Luckmann, 1966, 0. 151; Burr, 2015, p. 172). To explain this lack of absolute

truths further we can use an example of an androgynous man who both dresses and acts in a more feminine manner than their contemporary society. Any assumptions about this person's gender identity or sexual orientation would be just that, assumptions based on other people's socialisation that have influenced how they perceive others in society. When applied to politics as in this thesis, a man could be seen wearing stereotypical symbols of political affiliation to a party or an ideology. If this symbol were the frequently seen t-shirt bearing the likeness of Cuban revolutionary leader Ernesto 'Che' Guevara, one might assume that they have socialist or communist loyalties, however, it could also be a mere fashion statement. If we as researchers were to approach this person for an interview, our discourse would still be constrained not only by this person's willingness to share information with us but also by our perception of their political views (Burr, 2015, p. 172-173). With this view on objectivity, apparent facts proclaimed by politicians become more ideological than factual. Regarding the first example of gender identity the question of trans people as a political fact is highly relevant. A conservative person may view a trans-woman as nothing more than a disillusioned man due to their physiological traits. On the other hand, a liberal person may accept the trans-woman as a woman, disregarding the gender they were assigned at birth, instead choosing to accept their construction of reality in which the gender of the trans-woman is an absolute fact. As Berger and Luckmann (1966, p. 184) express, "A knight *is* a knight and a peasant *is* a peasant, to others as well as to themselves."

Lastly, looking at reliability and validity within social constructionist research. Starting with reliability, the usual definition relates to whether a research project can be repeated and still produce the same results as before (Postholm & Jacobsen, 2018). In the social constructionist case, on the other hand, one should not regard a thesis' repeatability as a proving factor of the conducted research. As covered previously both researchers and those being researched are constantly changing. Be it through the socially constructed objective reality being reinforced by a society's institutions or otherwise (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). Repeating this thesis later with different researchers would therefore open for different results due to the researchers having different biases, and those researched having changed their perceptions. Validity on the other hand is, "the requirement that the scientist's description of the world matches what is 'really there'" (Burr, 2015, p. 177). As with reliability, this too becomes obsolete in social constructionist research. As prior examples in this chapter have shown, asking the question 'what is really there' invites a subjective answer based on any given individual's socialisation (Postholm & Jacobsen, 2018). While it is impossible to see the

world through the lens of those we research, we should do our best to understand the social context that created their political demands. Therefore, instead of arriving at a definitive conclusion at the end of this thesis, we want to create more discourse on the subject and open more approaches to the study of populism in contemporary Norwegian politics.

3.2 Research Methods

Here we present document analysis, rhetorical discourse analysis and the collection of two small datasets related to the case analysed in this thesis. After a period of some deliberation, we chose these methods as we believe they are well suited for the analysis of this case as we are primarily interested in specifically FrP's discourse and rhetoric on social media, and whether social media platforms, such as Facebook, are enabling populist rhetoric.

One last note before we delve into the research methods is related to determining to which degree the case, FrP led by Sylvi Listhaug through the period of 08.05.21-08.05.23, is populist in the logic of articulation. While FrP and Listhaug have received the populist label in the past, when conducting the analysis, we want to retain all focus on the discursive and rhetorical qualities of our posts and therefore choose to postpone this to Chapter 5.1.

Additionally, as our theory on populism approaches the topic from a discursive angle, we first need to analyse their discourse, as it is the populist logic of articulation that tells us to which degree they can be defined as populist. By first conducting an analysis where we can study their discursive strategies through empirical examples, we can then provide a more extensive discussion where we establish to which degree populist logic is visible in the modes of articulation.

3.2.1 Document Analysis

In this chapter, we will cover document analysis considerations as a qualitative research method used for this thesis. Initial thoughts regarding document analysis were focused on the plethora of available sources available which could provide useful empirical data for the analysis and discussion chapters (Asdal & Reinertsen, 2020). These sources can provide useful data for our research and strengthen confirmability as mentioned in chapter 3.1 on the research paradigm. Gathering empirical data from multiple sources will help us avoid leaning into our own interpretations too heavily, shying away from problems related to social constructionist research also mentioned in chapter 3.1.

Many contemporary Norwegian political movements have, like their European counterparts, been labelled as populist by news outlets. This label can bring negative connotations when used in liberal democracies and is often applied regardless of ideological standpoint. For us as researchers, this provides a large amount of available discourse on populism and how the media portrays it. One aspect that should be taken into consideration here is the monopolization of Norwegian media, led by the Schibsted Media Group. When considering their reach in conventional newspapers, the group currently owns and distributes the two most circulated nationwide newspapers, namely VG and Aftenposten (Medienorge, 2023). Monopolies not only pose a research-related obstacle when trying to find diverse and nuanced coverage on a topic but can also be linked to the social constructionist paradigm of this thesis (Asdal & Reinersten, 2020). Media coverage of contemporary issues in society holds a symbiotic position in discourse, playing an influential role in shaping and encouraging discourse while simultaneously being influenced by the societal discourse itself. Thus, securing a key role in the maintenance of social reality as it both influences and is influenced by discourse. When the editor of a major newspaper chooses which articles to include and which to exclude, this influences which issues are to be considered important and which are not (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). This presents certain challenges regarding the subjectivity of both writers and editors employed by the largest media groups. On the other hand, it also shows a highly relevant connection between the rhetoric and actions of populist movements and how they are portrayed by major news outlets.

Another issue of document analysis closely tied to Internet research is algorithms. Based on prior internet activity diverse sources of all kinds will be suggested to cater to what the algorithm believes we want to read. This provides the possibility of finding sources that would otherwise have remained unknown to us but could also lead to information becoming increasingly biased over time. The possibility of algorithms having influenced what sources appear to us is therefore important to have in mind both during the data collection and analysis phases of this thesis (Postholm & Jacobsen, 2018, p. 207-209).

Overall, document analysis provides a research methodological point of entry which can provide a multitude of sources and differing views. The aim of document analysis in this thesis is to gather as much data as necessary to properly analyse and discuss our findings. This is also in part influenced by our doing away with the traditional research terminology regarding validity and reliability in favour of transparency and plausibility. Carefully selected

data material is necessary to argue that our thesis, despite its social constructionist paradigm can be regarded as valid research. We will therefore supply additional sources where necessary to further strengthen our work.

3.2.2 Rhetorical Discourse Analysis

In this subchapter, we will present our plan for the analysis. The rhetorical part of this analysis bases itself on the rhetorical theory presented in the theory chapter. The discourse part of this analysis on the other hand bases itself on the social constructionist view on discourse as presented earlier in this chapter on methodology as well as the use of discursive strategies by populist actors. By using a rhetorical discourse analysis, we hope to reach a better understanding of how populists can use language to their advantage as both approaches hold the view that, “discourses change the world, and discourse is shaped by the world” (Eisenhart & Johnstone, 2008, p. 11). In this regard, we believe that the rhetorical aspect of this analysis will give an insight into the technical structure of language, while the discourse analysis provides an opportunity to assess socioeconomic factors and power relations in language. In the following paragraphs, we will therefore provide information on how our analyses were structured.

Starting we present the case: the political party, the politician, as well as the context of the social media post. For the political party, a brief historical overview will be provided as well as current political affiliations and key areas of policy. Next is the politician, where a summary of their current and past political activity will be provided. Then there is the context of the social media post. In some situations, the timing or circumstances in society can influence the effect of a publicly posted social media update. In these situations, the context of the social media update will be provided to better understand this situation. On the other hand, if there were no special events surrounding a social media update a shorter summary will be given of the context. The aim of presenting these three pieces of background information before the analysis is to provide a more insightful, as well as neutral, analysis of the posts.

For the rhetorical aspects of the analysis, we will use the rhetorical theory presented earlier to get an understanding of the technical means of proof, the primary forms of appeal, used in the discourse of our collected posts. In this part, a rhetorical analysis will be conducted drawing on the main forms of appeal to see which parts of the language populist politicians use, as

well as the rhetorical quality of the post. One of the aims of this analysis is not only to understand the technical build-up of the post, but also to see whether FrP use a standardised rhetorical strategy, or if they liberally use different forms of appeal to fit with different messages. While it would be interesting to notice any type of patterns within populist social media communication, we will at the same time remain cautious of jumping to any conclusions on this topic.

The discourse analysis in this thesis is bound to the understanding of discourse as all forms of communication between humans. Discourse is the foundation for the social construction of reality, from primary socialisation with one's family to adulthood with politicians vying for their constituents' votes during election times. Just as institutions reinforce the objective reality of a society, politicians can influence and reinforce the constructed realities of their voters through engagement, especially on a low bar-of-entry medium such as social media. In the discourse analysis, we want to look at the societal issues that may influence how a politician articulates. For example, whether any populist logic of articulation or discursive strategies of right-wing populism makes themselves visible during analysis. It should however be acknowledged that we will again attempt to avoid speculation and assumptions regarding a politician's intent, basing our findings on what is empirically available to us.

Temporarily stepping back from the analysis structure, we want to illustrate the opportunities available when using a rhetorical discourse analysis. Rhetorical analysis is about looking at the influence that speeches, texts, images, or videos have on the audience, through the language, forms of appeal and terms described in chapter 2.2, and whether it is effective in the form of the audience agreeing to the message presented (Bratberg, 2017, p. 191). The prerequisite for discourse related to this thesis is that there are competing perceptions of reality in society and that not everyone has the same view of what is right to do in one or the other matter. Fundamentally, discourses are about arriving at a collective understanding of reality, and in a discourse analysis one looks at how these collective perceptions are created, mirrored, and maintained through language (Bratberg, 2017, p. 32-36, p. 198). According to Werner Christie Mathiesen (1997, as cited in Bratberg 2017, p. 37), discourse analysis is an "analysis of use of language in a societal context, with a focus on how ideas and concepts produced in this context interpret and help shape (a certain section of) the social reality". The shaping of the collective social reality is based on different views of reality from several different actors, such as politicians, interest organisations, protestors, and the people in

general, or as in our case, the discourse of Listhaug and FrP. Everyone has an opinion on what is right and wrong to do in the various cases where the authorities intervene, so a completely collective way of thinking is almost impossible. For populist actors, the need to create the dominant social construction of reality is not necessarily the measure of success. This is because the primary focus of discourse in a populist movement should be to maintain the inherently differential equivalential chain focusing instead on the similarities that bind them together.

We choose to combine these two methods because, while the discourse analysis deals with how the competing perceptions of reality are created, mirrored, and maintained through language, the rhetorical aspects look at whether the sender succeeds in making the audience part of his own political project by influencing them through argumentation and presentation (Bratberg, 2017, p. 198). "The process by which collective perceptions of reality are shaped, honed and changed is portrayed as static" (Finlayson, 2007, as cited in Bratberg, 2017, p. 192). Discourse analysis mainly shows how discourses are reproduced and lacks an understanding of change. Finlayson believes that in the analysis one should focus on arenas where opinions meet and are challenged, through argumentation and debate. This is where these original ideas are recited, revised, and articulated. Power and direction come through argumentation. The rhetorical aspects draw the discourse analysis into a concrete empirical situation (Bratberg, 2017, p. 193).

Finally, while not explicitly mentioned in any of the steps in the analysis structure, we would like to point out the importance of Edward Bernays' *Propaganda* (1928) to the general analysis. Especially useful in the rhetorical and discourse parts of the analysis, Bernays' work provides a good frame of reference when working with well-executed rhetoric. Maybe most relevant for this specific thesis is therefore Bernays' mention of the importance behind a good propagandist using the best-suited medium to spread their rhetoric. This idea is closely tied to the use of social media for political rhetoric as will be further discussed later in the thesis.

3.3 Sample & Data Selection

This chapter will briefly cover the considerations made regarding how and where the data selection for this thesis were made. Drafting a thesis focused on populist rhetoric and discourse on social media in Norway we originally wanted to explore different points of entry into the topic and various methods of data collection were discussed before settling for the

two presented in the chapters above. Another consideration that had to be made during the initial process of this thesis was where our posts for analysis would be gathered. With social media functioning as the new public square, there were a plethora of potential candidates for sites which could be used as sources. There is also the challenge of how to choose which posts would be used. As mentioned earlier, the case analysed in this thesis covers Facebook posts from FrP under the leadership of Sylvi Listhaug in the period 08.05.21-08.05.23 and further information as to why specifically this party and this timeframe were selected will be provided later in this chapter. While this chapter focuses on data selection, more information related to the research ethical considerations of Internet research will follow in Chapter 3.4.

Here we will explain our reasoning behind choosing Facebook as our source when searching for material for the analysis of social media content posted by FrP. Starting with a look at the use of social media in Norway as a whole, one can see through data provided by Statistics Norway (Statistisk Sentralbyrå) that usage has increased steadily. In 2019 when asked how often they used social media respondents who answered ‘daily or almost daily usage’ amounted to 73% of those questioned (Statistics Norway, 2019). Likewise, more recent data in the “Norwegian Media Barometer” showed that for those questioned in 2021, 93% of respondents answered that they used the internet as a type of media in an average day (Statistics Norway, 2022). Social media usage could therefore be argued to be a widespread practice throughout Norwegian society. Moving on to looking at the different social media platforms specifically, we will illustrate some statistics from Ipsos on social media usage in the fourth fiscal quarter of 2022 (Ipsos, 2023).

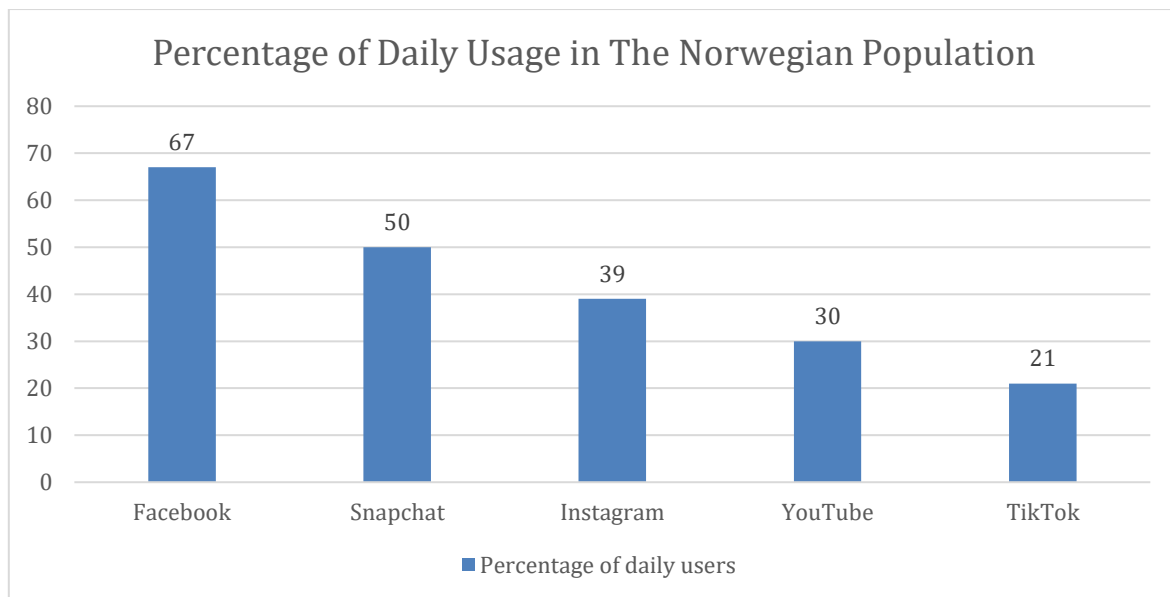


Figure 4 "Percentage of Daily Usage in the Norwegian Population" (Ipsos, 2023)

As can be seen in Figure 4, while both Snapchat and Instagram have an active user base, Facebook was prioritized as it holds a clear lead in terms of market share. Additionally, despite Snapchat's high market share, this social media platform was deemed unfit for analysis due to its short form and temporarily available content. A post that is only available for 24 hours is not only a challenge to collect but is susceptible to alterations as the original post is no longer available to the public after its expiration.

Furthermore, we will cover what kinds of posts were chosen for this thesis. All the authors that are included are public figures or political actors and are active participants in Norwegian politics through their ties to FrP. This gives us relevant insight into the political discourse while avoiding research ethical grey areas related to privacy concerns in internet research, which will be further explained in chapter 3.4. These posts will not be limited to only text-based statements, but also multimedia content such as videos, political posters, campaign ads, etc. While the vast selection of posts available on social media makes it possible to explore populist rhetoric from left-wing to right-wing actors, we chose to focus on the case of FrP due to the scope of this thesis. The starting point is anchored to the election of Listhaug as leader of FrP, while the finishing point was chosen due to the natural span of a two years. Regarding which posts qualified when gathering our datasets, the two profiles covered, Listhaug's personal account and FrP's main party account, had two differing qualifiers. All posts above 5k reactions or likes from Listhaug's profile in the given timeframe were gathered and amounted to 215 individual posts. From FrP's account, the qualifier was set at

1k reactions or likes and amounted to 442 individual posts. Furthermore, these posts were sorted into genres based on the observed main message within each post. With these datasets, we hope to provide further transparency regarding the posts selected for analysis as well as strengthen the plausibility of our interpretations throughout the discussion chapter.

For the document analysis aspect of this thesis, sources will primarily be gathered from reputable news outlets and relevant contemporary research as social media is a rapidly advancing field. News outlets cover the topic of populism in varying shades of grey, whereas some openly condemn its influence while others are less opposed and provide more neutral coverage. This provides another perspective on the topic and can act to clear up biases generated by working solely with posts from social media, where subjective opinions are much more likely to be promoted. Relevant contemporary research will allow us to put the discursive strategies and rhetorical appeals in FrP's posts in a broader research perspective. While it would be interesting to include statistical data from political opinion polls to see whether FrP's support increased through the two-year period, we chose to exempt these due to their imprecise nature.

3.4 Research Ethics

According to the National Research Ethical Committee for Social Science and the Humanities (NESH), researchers have a responsibility to all those who are involved or participate in research. The commonly established practice is therefore that all participants in a research project should be both informed and have given their consent to the researchers (NESH, 2021). Another special concern regarding research is the protection of children and other especially vulnerable groups. When collecting data from these sources, researchers should acquire consent from both the child as well as their legal guardian (NESH, 2021).

When researching on the internet the same foundational values of research ethics are still applied, but the nature of internet research poses some particular challenges. For this reason, NESH has provided five areas of particular interest in their guidelines specifically regarding internet research ethics. These five areas are as follows: 1. The divide between public and private, 2. Consideration of children and vulnerable groups, 3. The responsibility to inform and acquire consent, 4. The responsibility of confidentiality and anonymity, 5. Sharing of data, open data, and big data (NESH, 2019). In the following paragraphs, we will be using the

abovementioned guidelines to explain the ethical considerations regarding the data we will be gathering throughout this thesis from internet sources.

Firstly, establishing the divide between the public and private spheres is essential for Internet research, but can be quite challenging. While the established research practice involves informing and acquiring consent from participants, there are exceptions where no such requirements exist due to the public nature of the research subject. Observing someone on public transport may be seen as research in the public sphere, therefore not requiring either consent or information. At the same time, it is important to separate how publicly the statement was made as well as the sensitivity of the information the researcher received (NESH, 2019). Something said in public, could therefore potentially be regarded as private based on the nature of the conversation. As we will be gathering data for our discourse analysis on the social media platforms Facebook and Instagram we are therefore presented with an ethical grey area. Both social media platforms provide options for their users regarding the privacy of their accounts, who can view their posts, groups set to members only or open to the public, geolocation services, etc. Because of this NESH presents the term *forventet offentlighet*, translated to “expected publicness” (NESH, 2019, p. 10). This term refers to whether it is reasonable that an informant or individual understands that their statements are made public and may be used for, in this case, research purposes. If an individual posts a statement on their account, they may perceive the expected publicness of the statement differently based on their background. A public figure like a politician should expect that their social media activity is usually closely followed by both researchers and journalists, while a randomly selected person may feel taken advantage of if their statements are used for other purposes than they originally intended. This reflects the social constructionist view that different people may have entirely different views on something like privacy based on their social background. Regarding groups and communities, the reasoning for our research ethics when considering the expected publicness is based primarily on a scale. A group or community with a high member count should also expect a higher level of expected publicness. While researchers should be more wary of private or locked groups, the same applies and information should be seen as increasingly public in turn with membership numbers.

Secondly, the consideration of children and vulnerable groups. Maintaining the privacy of these individuals is of the utmost importance considering various levels of capacity relating

to consent and informing. In this thesis, we are focused on those in Norwegian society who are legally allowed to vote and therefore include no one below the age of eighteen. At the same time, social media makes it extremely easy for someone to appear as someone else than themselves, and at times this includes children. To avoid including statements written by minors or vulnerable groups, we need to evaluate the legitimacy of an account case by case before we apply it to this thesis. One of the tools provided by social media platforms to counteract this is a checkmark or other indicator that shows us the authenticity of a user; however, this option is primarily available for public figures. Out of ethical concerns we will therefore mostly look at, and gather the statements of, confirmed accounts as this is the primary method of ensuring that we do not unknowingly gather research data from minors or vulnerable groups.

Thirdly, the responsibility to inform and acquire consent. Here the expected publicness, the sensitivity of the information collected, the vulnerability of those involved and the research's interaction and consequences lay the foundation for the responsibility to inform and acquire consent (NESH, 2019, p. 13). The extracts selected for this thesis will, as mentioned earlier, primarily be gathered from public figures who should assume that any of their posts will receive an elevated level of expected publicness. However, at some points in this thesis, it could be particularly interesting to also consider a post's comments. Here a researcher can find the official profiles of politicians, political groups and actors engaged in open debate with the public. From a research ethics perspective this provides an obstacle since those engaged in debate with the public figure might object to their statements being included in the research. Here we must undertake both an ethical and a judicial evaluation, staying in line with both the established norms of research ethics as well as the judicial implications of handling personal information. While we will not intentionally be gathering any sensitive data on individuals, the political focus of this thesis will undoubtedly result in posts alluding to an individual's political affiliation which could conflict with Norwegian privacy law and the General Data Protection Regulation (Personopplysningsloven, 2018, art. 9). This presents a research ethical and judicial grey area where our understanding of the Norwegian privacy law requires consent to research this area. Another difficulty in this regard is the anonymity of social media sites. As mentioned above, social media accounts are notoriously easy to replicate. Not only can this be done to misinform, but it also presents researchers with a challenge as to the legitimacy of the consent. Has the researcher informed and acquired consent from the actual person in question or was it merely someone abusing the anonymity

of social media to impersonate someone else (NESH, 2019)? The research consequences should also be considered here, as bringing attention to statements made by individuals on social media can bring real consequences. Statements that are seen as radical or extreme can lead to an individual being socially ostracised, potentially bringing adverse consequences to this individual. Therefore, while it would be interesting to include comments, this thesis will choose to exclude these from the thesis to maintain the research ethical guidelines provided by NESH.

Fourth, is the responsibility of confidentiality and anonymity. Those who participate in research have the right to remain anonymous, but the need for anonymisation can be evaluated based on the expected publicness. Since public figures and actors involved in politics should expect that their statements are continually in the searchlight and should therefore be exempt from the responsibility of anonymity. Their political affiliations are already made public by their participation in online forums, and the sensitivity of the information we as researchers are handling is severely lowered. (NESH, 2019; 2021).

The fifth and final point is, sharing of data, open data, and big data. While being able to share data is essential in legitimising research, it raises concerns related to privacy (NESH, 2019, p. 16-17). One of the major privacy concerns this aspect of internet research raises is the amount of data the average user leaves behind. When using social media especially, various data packets, also known as cookies, let the social media sites track user activity and enhance the user experience. However, cookies and other trackers left behind on social media can also be a risk factor for an informant's anonymity. This risk is another aspect which could pose a threat to informants that was considered when evaluating which posts to include in this thesis.

4.0 Analysis

In this part of the thesis, we present the political party used as the case for this thesis, the right-wing party FrP and party leader Sylvi Listhaug. This presentation of FrP will provide a historical overview of the party's founding, provide insight into their ideological framework, and present the current party leader Sylvi Listhaug whose period as leader forms the timeline for posts gathered from Facebook.

In the analysis process, we will use concepts introduced in the theory chapter to conduct a rhetorical discourse analysis of three posts each from Listhaug and FrP's Facebook pages. These three posts were selected based on two requirements: first, their level of engagement overall, and second, the frequency of the post's genre. By using the most engaged posts and most frequent genres we hope to avoid cherry-picking posts that merely fit the narrative of this thesis, and through displaying the three most published genres we aim to show a more diverse selection of posts. In the analysis, we will look at the rhetorical aspects of the posts as well as any discursive strategies employed by either Listhaug or FrP, as well as their relation to one another as visualised in Figure 3. That is, which forms of appeal are being used, whether they are used effectively, and the relationship between forms of appeal, as well as the discursive strategies typical of right-wing populism drawn from Wodak. Through this analysis we hope to illustrate how Listhaug and FrP's discourse is used, providing a frame of reference for the subsequent discussion where we establish to which degree a populist logic of articulation is visible. Additionally, we aim to find through the analysis whether Listhaug and FrP in their discourse utilise the possibilities gained using social media, and in the discussion, whether it can be said that social media is enabling populist rhetoric.

4.1 Fremskrittspartiet (The Progress Party) – Historical Overview

Originally founded in the early 1970s, Fremskrittspartiet (FrP) first appeared in Norwegian politics bearing the name of its founder, "Anders Langes party for a strong reduction in taxes, fees and state intervention"⁸(Bjerkem, 2016). Anders Lange was a journalist and editor and was considered a charismatic leading figure. Steering the party in a liberalist fashion, Lange consequently led the party to their first victory in the general election of 1973, winning 5% of the electorate and 4 seats in parliament (Bjerkem, 2016; Jupskås, 2015). Shortly after, in

⁸ "Anders Langes parti til sterk nedsettelse av skatter, avgifter og offentlige inngrep"

1974, Lange died and despite changing the party name to the current FrP, they faced electoral setbacks in both local and general elections until 1981. At this time the party was being led by Carl I. Hagen and the elections of 1981 not only marked a change in popularity, but also a change in ideology (Jupskås, 2015).

During the late 1980s immigration became a hot topic issue in Norwegian politics and FrP changed its political platform to prioritize immigration, criminality, and eldercare (Bjerkem, 2016). Potentially the biggest turn for their platform at this point however was the plan to decrease taxes as originally proposed by Anders Lange, yet at the same time increase public spending. While in most countries this combination would have been economically unfeasible, the increasing profits from the oil industry gave the Norwegian government a large budget surplus. While all major parties at this time argued for the conservative use of these new funds, FrP became the main political proponent of spending rather than saving (Bjerkem, 2016; Jupskås, 2015).

After a period of steadily climbing in the polls, Siv Jensen was elected party leader in 2006 and ushered in a new era of professionalism (Bjerkem, 2016). At this point, FrP had already been labelled as right-wing populists by both media and their political contenders, but under Jensen, the party would change their outward appearance (Raknes, 2013). The change in leadership from Hagen to Jensen was a welcome change to many, with Jensen cooperating well with other party leaders and toning down the controversial xenophobic rhetoric, while still maintaining the policy (Bjerkem, 2016, p. 236-237). With this change in leadership and outward appearance, FrP went on to achieve their first period in position after gaining 16.3% of the vote in the general elections of 2013 and went on to create a minority coalition government alongside Høyre (The Conservatives). Thus, breaking the norm of European right-wing populist parties not being invited to govern alongside their established counterparts (Jupskås, 2015; Bjerkem, 2016, p. 237).

FrP's period in government would last for six years and six months and contained both scandals and victories. Needing the support of two smaller parties, Venstre (The Liberals) and Kristelig Folkeparti (Christian People's Party), FrP had to make concessions on their electoral promises to retain power in government (Bjerkem, 2016). Facing more scrutiny in government, FrP also saw seven of their ministers of justice leave the government after scandals. Out of these scandals, two of the ministers faced the most public attention, namely those involving the current leader of FrP Sylvi Listhaug and Tor Mikkjel Wara who briefly

served as minister. Listhaug, after sharing a xenophobic post on her public Facebook page became the centre of attention for the Norwegian press. Facing a vote of no confidence proposed by Rødt (The Socialist Party), Listhaug decided to leave office. Wara on the other hand ended his period as minister after a police investigation uncovered that the apparent attacks, threats, and graffiti he had been facing were staged as a form of false-flag attack by his then partner, Laila Anita Bertheussen (Prestegård, 2020). Despite losing voter confidence for unkept electoral promises and several more scandals, FrP managed to win several policy victories. Amongst them, shorter queues in the health sector, more road infrastructure as well as cutting 25 billion NOK in fees and taxes (Prestegård, 2020).

Through FrP's period in government, the coalition had grown to include ministers from Venstre and Kristelig Folkeparti, but despite securing a majority government, the concessions had become too much for FrP (Bentzrød, 2020). Choosing to take the party out of government and into opposition again seemed the logical choice for a party currently suffering from discontent among both its voters and members (Bjerkem, 2016). Having left government, the party leadership changed once again in 2021 when Siv Jensen appointed Sylvi Listhaug as her replacement. Listhaug was subsequently elected leader at the national party congress, vowing to lead the party into the general elections of 2021 (Helljesen, et al., 2021).

This change of leadership leads us to the contemporary situation of FrP. Listhaug promised to intensify the political campaign, bringing attention to further distancing from China and Russia, the economic risks of increased taxation, anti-immigration, anti-EU, and crime (Helljesen, et al., 2021). Despite the change of leadership however, the conservative coalition lost the elections and was ousted by a new centre-left government (Eilertsen, 2021; Regjeringen, 2021). This new government has faced severe scrutiny since the elections and is currently facing dismal numbers in the polls, providing FrP leadership with breathing room until the ballots are counted in the 2023 local elections (Andreassen, 2022).

4.2 Post Analysis – Sylvi Listhaug and FrP

As a basis for our analysis, we have created two data sets which span the period of 08.05.2021 to 08.05.2023. The start of this timeframe is marked by the election of Sylvi Listhaug as party leader, following former leader Siv Jensen's departure from politics (Ruud, 2021). As for the reason behind starting the timeframe at the point of Listhaug's rise to party

leadership, we want to bring attention to her controversial history in Norwegian politics. Through the years both her colleagues from politics as well as the media have remarked on the often xenophobic, with an Anti-Muslim flair, nature of Listhaug's statements (Berge, 2021; Krekling, 2018; Ytterstad, Hillestad & Ottosen, 2016). While FrP has always been a controversial oppositional party, as mentioned in the historical overview, Listhaug's level of controversy before becoming leader marks a new chapter for the party. The first data set covers Sylvi Listhaug's posts with more than 5k likes, or reactions, while the second set covers posts to the FrP main account with more than 1k likes. These cut-off points were introduced to the number of posts within the given timeframe primarily as these were the most significant posts based on engagement, amongst the large amount of activity on both Facebook pages. We then assigned each post a genre related to the main message being conveyed. While several of both Listhaug and FrP's post feature mentions of more than one genre, for the sake of clarity we decided to label only the main aspect. As an example, a post related to cheaper petrol could be included within both the "Finance" and "Pro Car" genres, but the main message is related to the cost-of-living expenses related to car ownership. A "Pro-Car" post on the other hand would instead be primarily focused on issues such as road improvement, maintenance, and expansion. While these examples relate to two specific genres, the same practice of labelling a post's genre presented here has been applied to all posts within both data sets. With these data sets, we believe that we can more accurately analyse the contents of the posts as well as observe patterns within FrP and Listhaug's rhetoric on social media.

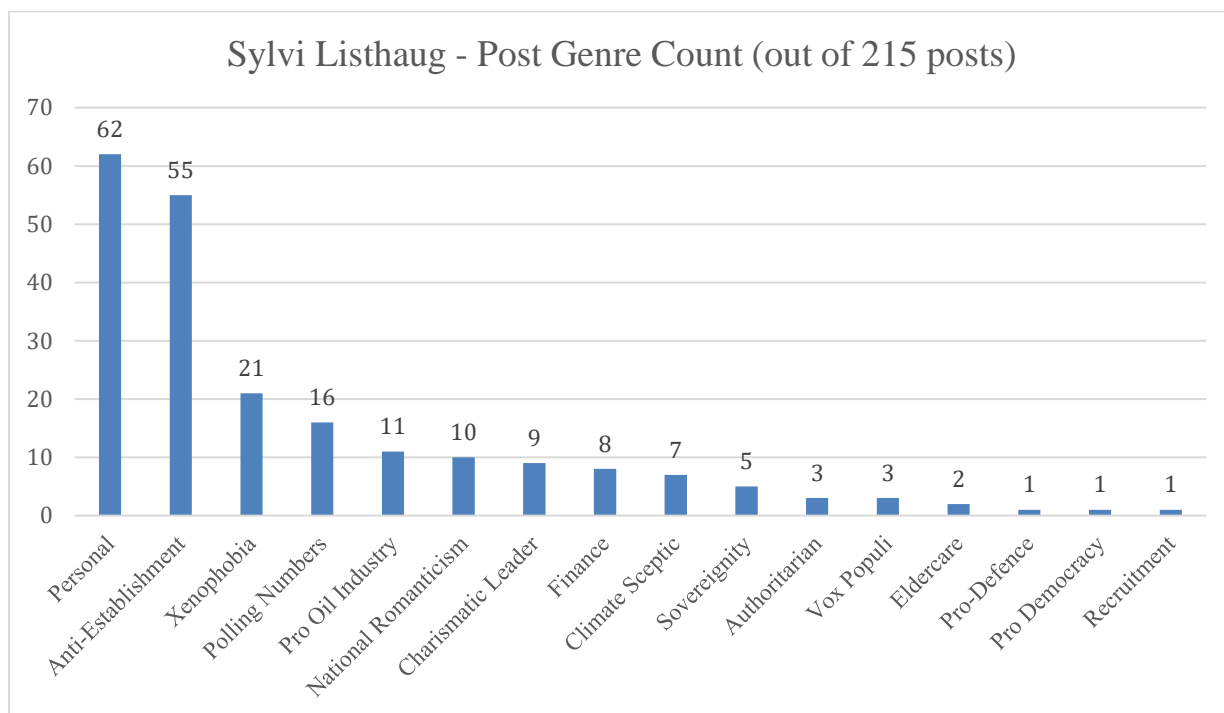


Figure 5 "Sylvi Listhaug – Post Genre Count (out of 215 posts)"

First, we would like to present Figure 5 for Sylvi Listhaug where a total of 215 posts were collected. For the table with the individual posts sorted see Appendix A. All posts were ranked according to their levels of engagement with the different factors: reactions, comments, and shares, being weighted in this order. Most notable from Listhaug’s posts was the amount labelled “personal” making up more than one of a quarter of all posts above 5k reactions during the two-year time frame. Posts in this genre are closely related to Listhaug’s personal life, and almost entirely disconnected from any mention of politics or policy. Close behind is the genre anti-establishment which covers posts giving critiques of both parties in government and political opponents of FrP. The third most frequently appearing genre, xenophobia, relates to posts criticising immigrants, immigration policy and rhetoric aimed to induce a fear of the foreign. Beyond this point we see that the frequency of genres tapers off and becomes gradually more diverse, marking a rather clear preference for the contents of Listhaug’s posts.

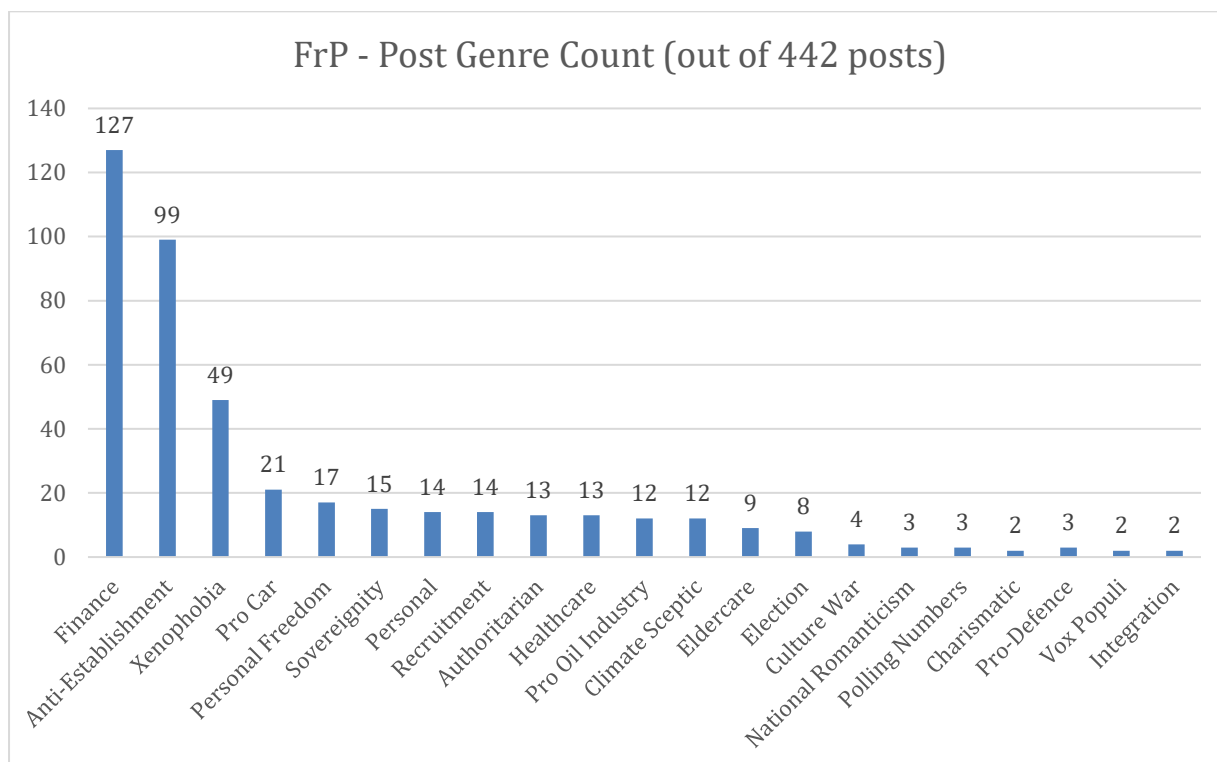


Figure 6 "FrP Post Genre Count (out of 442 posts)"

If we look at FrP's main party account, shown in Figure 6, we see that out of 442 posts, approximately 62% of the posts (275) were under the categories finance, anti-establishment and xenophobia. For the full table with all individual posts see Appendix B. The finance genre covers cutting taxes and fees on property, petrol, inheritance, and energy, as well as income for pensioners. In short, we would say that this post covers most expenses related to the cost of living and covers more than one quarter of the genres by itself. Side by side, we also observe that the genres anti-establishment and xenophobia appear in the top three positions of posts made by both Listhaug and the main party account. The clear difference between the two is Listhaug's favouring of personal posts and FrP's favouring of finance posts. As with Listhaug's posts we note that after the top three genres, the frequency starts to taper off. This could indicate that both FrP and Listhaug prefer to keep their rhetoric contained within certain areas of policy. Alternatively, this could allude to an intentional effort to maintain their chains of equivalence through their articulation on social media, but this will be covered in the discussion chapter (Laclau, 2005). In the subsequent analysis, we will be looking at six posts, three of which are from Sylvi Listhaug's Facebook page and the other three from FrP's main party account. These six posts were selected by looking at the top genres in which the two accounts most frequently posted. This choice was made to avoid

analyzing mostly the same genres and get a better representation of the different discursive strategies used. The posts from Listhaug's account will therefore be the most engaged posts within the genres personal, anti-establishment and xenophobia, while the posts from FrP's main party account will be the most engaged posts within the genres finance, anti-establishment and xenophobia. The analysis will therefore start with three of Listhaug's posts followed by three of FrP's posts.

Post 1 “44th Birthday Celebration”

To start the analysis, we will be looking at the post which received the most engagement from both Listhaug’s and FrP’s main party accounts. Posted on December 25th of (2021a, Listhaug) the post features Listhaug holding a homemade cake in her home, celebrating her 44th birthday. As can be seen in the post Listhaug’s home is decorated for Christmas, and we can see children’s toys scattered around a brightly lit Christmas tree.

From a rhetorical point of view one can first note that Listhaug uses simple language in this post, using emojis, and short and compact sentences giving the post an informal flair and making herself seem more approachable. Despite Listhaug’s position, a common theme for her personal posts is the use of “normal” language, closely linked to everyday speech and the feeling of being invited into her home and personal affairs. Instead of talking down to her audience as her inferiors, her use of language makes it so that she is talking with them as one of the people herself.

Out of the forms of appeal pathos clearly distinguishes itself in this post. Based on the main message of her post, the celebration of her 44th birthday as well as sending her Christmas greetings, Listhaug can tap into two of the events closely linked to strong emotions for a large portion of the Norwegian population. Both celebrations usually come with an air of intimacy, mostly celebrated with close friends and family, but by sharing this insight into her own home Listhaug brings the viewer closer to her own celebration. Another point of interest regarding pathos is the mention of her age along with the question, “Where have the years gone??” Approaching 50 years, Listhaug again makes herself relatable as she jests about the unstoppable march of time. Whether her followers agree or disagree with her, this question relates to something all humans as mortals one day might ask themselves. Looking at the next point of interest regarding pathos in the text, Listhaug makes a joke on her own behalf



Post 1 "44th Birthday Celebration"

regarding her homemade cake, mentioning that it tastes better than it looks. Yet again Listhaug makes herself relatable by humbling herself through her baking skills. Instead of opting for a store-bought cake, Listhaug instead proudly displays her homemade cake despite its aesthetic imperfections. The last point we can extract from pathos comes from the background of the picture. A model train track is winding its way along the hardwood floors, the Christmas tree is shining brightly, and various decorations can be seen scattered around the floor and windowsill. Here Listhaug gains pathos through the simplicity of her birthday and Christmas celebration. This is a normal celebration within a normal home, not a luxurious or extravagant celebration disconnected from the reality of the “normal” Norwegian. Here we see a connection to the discursive right-wing populist strategy of a pseudo-emancipatory gender policy. First, we see Listhaug depicted here as the conservative stereotype of a woman in the home as the caretaker. Standing in front of the Christmas tree having baked a homemade cake for the celebration of her birthday. Secondly, we note Listhaug’s concern about her age. Another gender stereotype is based on women being more concerned about their age than men. Both approaches can work to strengthen the authenticity of Listhaug as she allows herself to be shown from a more human and relatable side, contrary to a vane and impersonal politician more concerned with outward appearance. While Listhaug holds the position of party leader of FrP where she appears as strong and decisive, this more personal side allows the audience to form a much more personal connection with her. The appeal of pathos here only strengthens this discursive strategy, and as we will see, also strengthens her ethos.

Listhaug’s ethos is however not only based on the message present in this post but also her *prejudiced ethos*⁹. Her position as party leader of FrP, her position as a member of parliament, and her controversial political past will always influence this aspect of her ethos. However, in this post, Listhaug gains ethos from the aforementioned pathos. By portraying herself as an ordinary person, enjoying an ordinary birthday and Christmas celebration, Listhaug brings herself closer to the people. As mentioned above, this is a picture from a very typical Norwegian home, which many of her followers might see themselves in. All in all, this strengthens Listhaug’s credibility by detaching herself from the notion of a political elite, while being brought closer to the ideals and everyday lives of the people.

⁹ The prejudiced credibility is based on the recipient’s perception of the speaker.

Furthermore, despite this post primarily commemorating Listhaug's birthday, we see symbolism in that Listhaug is specifically wishing her followers a continued merry Christmas near the end of the post as well as the visual context of the photo. This draws back to the historical link most Norwegians have to Christianity, continued by the traditional celebration of the religious holiday. As mentioned above, Listhaug's Christmas celebration can be more closely compared to a celebration found in a normal Norwegian home rather than an extravagant one. This strongly conveys a sense of authenticity, as well as a sense of 'us' where the celebration is a shared activity with her followers who share the same historical and cultural background. This is then only strengthened by her exemplary use of pathos.

As for the less visible rhetorical tools: logos, kairos and aptum. Since this post falls under the personal genre, logos do not necessarily hold any sway in this post as it does not attempt to argue for a cause, instead mostly appealing to the emotions of the audience and working to strengthen Listhaug's authenticity. Regarding kairos, it should be noted that since the post is posted during the Christmas holidays and on her birthday, it is safe to say that it was published at the right time, reaching her audience in the middle of their own respective Christmas celebrations. Finally, with aptum, we note that the message and its simple language fit well within the context of this post. All in all, the rhetoric in this post is used well, strengthening Listhaug's public image.

Post 2 “Money for Norway, Not for Symbolic Policy”



Sylvi Listhaug

12. september 2021 · 🌐

De andre partiene har alltid penger til å redde verden. Men ikke til å løse problemene her hjemme i Norge. Nå må vi stoppe Rødt, SV og MDG. Og vi må stoppe sløsing på symbolske klimatiltak, bistand og innvandring og integrering. Vi må sikre de beste medisinene for de syke, en god pensjon og kutte avgiftene for folk flest. I morgen gjelder det. Stem FrP!



👍 19 k

2,2 k 💬 4,2 k ➦

Post 2 “Money for Norway, Not for Symbolic Policy”

The second post from Listhaug is her number six post overall and falls within the genre of anti-establishment. The post features a short, written introduction, as well as a one-minute and eight seconds long video from the party leader debate the day before the general election of 2021. Now we will briefly summarise the contents of the written portion of the post.

Listhaug opens her post by emphasising how the other parties always have funding to save the world yet cannot find the funds to solve problems at home. She goes on to criticize the two left-wing parties Rødt and SV, as well as the green party MDG. In the last portion of the post Listhaug proposes to stop wasting funds on symbolic policy regarding climate, foreign aid, immigration, and integration and instead help normal people. She then ends the written portion by urging voters to vote for FrP on election day.

Next, we will provide a summary of her message in the attached video. First, it should be mentioned that much of what is said in the written portion of the post is also repeated in the video. The video begins with Listhaug confronting current PM Jonas Gahr Støre on his wishes to use the Norges Bank Investment Management, often referred to as the Oil Fund, on what she labels climate symbolism. She also mentions how FrP wants no part in the reckless spending on foreign aid and immigration. Meanwhile, Listhaug mentions the hypocrisy of how she and FrP are called reckless when they want to use the Oil Fund to provide better pensions, better access to medicine and new roads without tolls. Again, turning her attention to Støre she mentions that any possibility of AP cooperation with Rødt and MDG after the elections frightens her. She then accuses Rødt and MDG of having economic policy completely detached from reality. Nearing the end of the video, Sylvi lashes out against what she perceives as climate fearmongering towards the younger parts of the population perpetrated by MDG, stating that Norway does not have its own atmosphere.

Going into the rhetorical analysis of this post we would like to begin with ethos. As with the prior post, Listhaug holds a much-prejudiced ethos going into the debate based on her position, both for better and for worse. To most Norwegians FrP is known as the farthest right-wing party, with their proposals often being ridiculed as reckless by other politicians as seen in the video. This antagonistic relationship with the mainstream parties can however weigh positively for Listhaug, especially regarding those in the electorate suffering from political apathy (Bernays, 1928). All in all, Listhaug's prejudiced ethos is a double-edged sword. Working as a disruptor can create a sense of authenticity compared to the mainstream candidates, while at the same time, Listhaug's rhetoric may become too radical for most at times.

Moving on, we will be looking at pathos. In this post, we see a clear shift towards discontent and fear. Both in the written portion as well as the video Listhaug mentions her fear that Rødt, SV, and MDG may cooperate with AP after the elections. She emphasizes her discontent with wanting to waste money on saving the world while Norway is left with too little. Here she connects with the feelings of nationalism and an "us" with the discontent some feel towards the economic priorities of the other parties favouring the "others". Finally, and perhaps one of the strongest uses of pathos is her critique against MDG for exposing the youth to climate fearmongering. As a mother herself, Listhaug commands more pathos when voicing concern for the youth. She ingratiate herself with other parents who may be worried

about how the climate doomsday prophecies affect their children. Motherhood also strengthens her ethos on this matter as she has personal experience with how children handle difficult issues. This can be drawn back to the stereotype of a mother's concern and care for her children. Listhaug's concern in this situation is that Norway's youth and through the sense of an "us", our youth, have to be exposed to unnecessary fear in their formative years. This is of course relying on whether the audience knows that Listhaug is a mother herself. Ending the video on the mention of Norway not having its own atmosphere, she also gets to include a statement displaying the futility of Norwegian climate policy on the world stage.

For the final form of appeal, we will look at the use of logos. In both parts of the post, Listhaug comes across as a well-versed orator, using short and concise arguments in the written portion and gesticulation and passionate speech to emphasise her points in the video. The arguments presented are structured to counter criticism and are mostly hard to attack based on their point of origin. As pointed out above, FrP faces criticism for wanting to use the Oil Fund to strengthen Norway domestically, yet the same criticism is not applied to the other parties' wishes to fund foreign aid and symbolic policy. In her criticism of Rødt and MDG, her arguments appear to be based on logic as removing profitable projects while funding unprofitable projects will always be a losing equation. Not going into the exact numbers weakens her logos due to a lack of evidence, in the form of non-technical means of proof, but the simplicity of the argument makes it come across to a wider audience closer to a common-sense style of argumentation linked to the arrogance of ignorance. Thus, strengthening its overall logos. Lastly is the critique of MDG's climate fearmongering towards the youth. Again, as Listhaug does not go into precise talking points on what this propaganda includes, the simplicity of the argument once more serves to make it reach a wider audience. All the audience gets to know is that MDG want to frighten the Norwegian youth, despite Norway's limited capability to affect real change. Throughout the use of logos, it becomes apparent that the discursive strategy of anti-intellectualism and common-sense rhetoric.

As for kairos and aptum, we see good use of both kairos and aptum. Here Listhaug appears in a party leader debate the night before the general elections with a strong message against the other parties and in favour of FrP. She presents her message to show the importance of the coming elections, and how Norwegian society will be affected if the left-wing parties are allowed to govern. Due to the timing of this debate, Listhaug's post could almost be

compared to a rousing speech before battle, namely the elections. It is therefore safe to say that this post has good kairos. When it comes to aptum, the message should be suitable and properly serve its purpose for the given context as described in Chapter 2.2.5. In this context, Listhaug is criticising the left-wing parties to strengthen her own party's position before election day. The message is therefore considered highly suitable for the given context, as a last attempt to persuade doubting voters.

Additionally, it is important to note the anti-establishment genre of this post. Listhaug not only challenges the other parties in this post, but she also challenges many of the facts shared within the constructed reality of a large portion of the Norwegian population (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). Labelling foreign aid, immigration and integration as money wasted sends a clear message on the political prioritisation of FrP and points towards these areas of policy being labelled as a scapegoat for the domestic financial state of Norway. More money for "them" results in less money for "us". Including her mention of alternatively using the funding to strengthen Norway domestically, the discourse of the post also leans towards nationalist and xenophobic construction of an "us". Regarding her views on climate change, we see based on the rhetoric used that this is labelled as fearmongering towards the youth. Based on this articulation it becomes apparent that FrP at the least appears as a climate sceptic party. While this post not going as far as being climate change deniers, they still employ a strategy of anti-intellectualism regarding a topic as complicated as climate change and Norway's potential impact through policy.

Post 3 “Taliban on Luxury Trip to Norway”



Sylvi Listhaug

9 May 2022

Norske politikere sin naivitet kjenner ingen grenser! Etter terroristene i Taliban sin luksustur med privatfly til Norge, støttet alle partier utenom FrP dialogen og samarbeidet med Taliban.

Generalsekretær i Flyktningehjelpen og tidligere Ap-politiker Jan Egeland uttalte etter møtet i Norge at Taliban hadde gitt klare og forpliktende løfter om at det blir undervisning for jenter på alle nivå. De skulle også respektere kvinner og jenters rettigheter.

Fasiten er selvsagt det motsatte, og det var akkurat det vi advarte mot! Nå innfører Taliban burkapåbud, nekter eldre jenter å gå på skolen, begrenser kvinners rett til å kjøre og å oppholde seg alene utenfor hjemmet.

FrP vil nå ha svar fra regjeringen hvor mye kontakt norske myndigheter har hatt med Taliban, og om Norge har gitt penger til det middelalderiske terrorregimet i Afghanistan. Jeg forventer klare svar, og at norske myndigheter kutter alle bånd til terroristene.



11K

1.4K 812

Attachment 3 "Taliban on Luxury Trip to Norway"

In January 2022, a delegation from the Taliban arrived at Oslo airport for talks with the international community. Among the important topics for these talks was the handling of civil society in Afghanistan (Wolasmal & Skjeseth, 2022). Listhaug's post published in May of 2022 is then a reaction to the progress made in Afghanistan, and the handling of the matter by the other Norwegian parties. Ranked 34th amongst Listhaug's posts by engagement, this

post was given the genre xenophobia. While this is a clear critique of the established parties, this post was not given this genre on account of its xenophobic articulation.

Listhaug labels Norwegian politicians as naïve and points out that all the other political parties except for FrP supported the dialogue and cooperation with the Taliban. Here, Listhaug also describes the members of the Taliban as terrorists on a luxury trip to Norway via private jet. In the next paragraph Listhaug explicitly mentions that the general secretary of the Norwegian Refugee Council was a former member of AP. She then goes on to mention that the promises made by the Taliban during their visit have now been broken, just as FrP warned. Instead of liberation, the Taliban is now enforcing stricter control over women. To end her post, Listhaug wants answers from the government on how much contact they have had with the Taliban, as well as if they have given funding to them. Describing them here as a medieval terror regime. Finally, Listhaug expresses that she expects clear answers, and that the Norwegian state should cut all ties with the terrorists.

As mentioned in the introduction to this post, it was put into the genre of xenophobia, and we would therefore like to start the analysis by looking at pathos. First, by using highly critical language labelling the Taliban as terrorists and thereafter describing their regime as a medieval terror regime, we see words closely connected to fear and hatred, and a further portrayal of “us” and “them”. Due to the negative connotations of the word terrorism, the diplomatic delegation from the Taliban is stained by the wording. Instead of talks to improve a regime, the narrative is transformed into what Listhaug describes as a luxury visit to Norway for terrorists. Next, Listhaug utilizes the broken promises to show that FrP was right all along when warning about trusting the Taliban’s commitment to any promises. Already portrayed as terrorists, Listhaug now manages to imply that the Taliban are clearly not to be trusted. She also directs clear criticism towards the increase in social control over women in Afghanistan, further strengthening the feelings of aggression towards the regime. This also plays into the pseudo-emancipatory discursive strategy on gender issues. Muslim women are portrayed as oppressed by the Taliban, and Listhaug expects answers as to why the Norwegian government would have any relation with such a repressive regime. Through the use of pathos, Listhaug has made it clear that this is a group FrP does not want to associate itself with and expects the government to do the same.

With logos we again see Listhaug using a less complex language, opting for a concise, understandable, and well-formulated line of argumentation. The most important use of logos

in this post is describing the Taliban as terrorists and their regime as medieval. Through this description Listhaug makes a clear case as to why Norway as a developed nation should have nothing to do with the Taliban, making a distinct separation between “us” and “them”. The argument almost writes itself, as it appears to be mere common sense not to cooperate or enter dialogues with repressive terrorist regimes. Also linked to the notion of common-sense is when Listhaug addresses the fact that FrP warned about cooperation with the Taliban only ending in broken promises. Despite the level of the recipient’s political knowledge, she can then present her argument as the common-sense idea that you simply do not make a deal with an untrustworthy actor. Especially here as the untrustworthy actor comes from outside the “us” group and should therefore be perceived with less credibility regardless of their intentions. It should also be mentioned that FrP’s predictions could be based on a xenophobic view against Islam, equating the religion with an inevitable tendency towards more social control against women. This strengthens Listhaug’s ethos because FrP warned against this outcome and was subsequently correct in their predictions.

For ethos, the usually prejudiced ethos remains with Listhaug for good or worse, yet we again see how she strengthens her position through her rhetoric. Based on the use of pathos Listhaug can be portrayed as showing concern for women’s rights, with an ambivalence that does not necessarily portray a xenophobic sentiment, as well as concern for the safety of Norway while working with the Taliban. As mentioned above with logos, the simplicity of the arguments and the easily understandable ideas she conveys, also work to strengthen her ethos further. Despite covering a complex issue, she is still talking to her recipients at their level, instead of down to them from a position of superiority.

Lastly, on the topic of rhetoric, we will be evaluating kairos and aptum. Starting with kairos, we note that despite the post being made several months after the Taliban visited Norway, the timing is still highly appropriate as this timespan has allowed observation of the Afghan society. Through this observation it can then be seen, as Listhaug makes apparent, that the promises the Taliban made have been broken, with social control over women steadily increasing. These broken promises strengthen the post’s aptum since it serves its purpose by highlighting that FrP were correct from the start and promoting a negative view of further cooperation with the Taliban.

Post 4 “Ban Prayer Calls from Mosques”



Fremskrittspartiet

6 October 2021

Fremskrittspartiet har flere ganger tatt til orde for å forby bønnerop fra moskeer. Vi har da blitt møtt med at bønnerop ikke eksisterer i Norge og at dette ikke er et problem. På tross av advarsler fra FrP ser vi nå at en moské i Drammen jobber for å kunne ha bønnerop. FrP mener at offentlige bønnerop og liknende innkallinger til bønn som bryter med norsk tradisjon ikke hører hjemme i landet vårt. Hva mener du?



FB.ST

FrP vil forby bønnerop fra moskeer

– Fremskrittspartiet er helt tydelige på at vi sier nei til bønnerop fra moskeen på Fjell i Dr...

7.8K

1.1K comments 163 shares

Post 4 "Ban Prayer Calls from Mosques"

The next post comes from the main party account of FrP, is ranked first by engagement, and falls under the genre xenophobia. Linking to a longer article, the politician depicted is Erlend Wiborg, a member of Parliament for FrP calling for a ban on prayer calls from mosques. The general content of this post is as follows: FrP has proposed banning prayer calls several times but has been countered by the absence of prayer calls in Norway so far. However, FrP has noted that a mosque in Drammen wants to introduce the practice. FrP believes that prayer calls break with Norwegian tradition and have no place in the country. Ending on a rhetorical question, “What do you think?”

Next, we will provide a summary of the article linked within this post. Out of the general concerns mentioned by FrP politician Erlend Wiborg are the noise levels that might bother nearby residents, as well as this area of Drammen having a high proportion of immigrants. Closely linked to the immigrant population, Wiborg utters concerns that many inhabitants close by may have fled from religious extremism and should not have to hear prayer calls. However, this point is not founded on any facts as Wiborg does not reference any statistics or numbers stating that the inhabitants of this area have fled religious extremism. The last point Wiborg makes is that prayer calls and church bells cannot be compared to each other. Basing this statement on Norway's historic attachments to Christianity he expresses that church bells are based in Norwegian tradition and should have an exemption. Conclusively, Wiborg goes as far as to say that this ban on public prayer calls that do not fit with Norwegian tradition is a matter of FrP principles (FrP, 2021a).

Starting with the most prevalent form of appeal within this post, we begin by looking at logos. By mentioning that this has been proposed by FrP several times in the past, yet having their concerns cast aside as non-existent, FrP can now point out that a mosque in Drammen is working towards permission to conduct prayer calls. This line of argumentation is solid, since FrP's long-time concerns have now come true despite their opposition claiming this to be a non-issue. Here we see a clear link to a xenophobic discursive strategy as FrP had voiced concerns for Muslim prayer calls even before any such activity had taken place. Their argumentation was therefore not based on observable practices, but rather on the perception of this being an inevitable threat. Moving towards the end of the post, the argument is rounded off with a clear message about FrP's stance against prayer calls and similar activities that break with Norwegian tradition and do not belong in Norway. This points towards a separation of "us" and the "others" based on a nativist construction of the people. Here FrP makes it clear that they want to protect "our" traditions from the traditions of the "others". The last sentence, utilizing the possibilities gained through social media, then asks the rhetorical question "What do you think?" opening for engagement in the comments as well as emphasising that FrP cares about the input of their constituents (Bernays, 1928).

Continuing to pathos, we see how the xenophobic nature of the post works to utilise the fear of the foreign. In combination with the argumentation mentioned above, the pathos of this post shapes the topic of prayer calls being introduced to Norway as a cultural threat that does not fit with Norwegian tradition. Being largely homogenous and with a long-standing

Christian history, Norway has never had prayer calls in its society before. This would therefore be a completely new practice introduced to Norway, with its closest comparison being that of church bells ringing. Based on a nativist view, Wiborg also explicitly states in the linked article that church bells cannot be compared to other forms of prayer calls, based on their historical context. This similarity might be used advantageously by the FrP politicians in this post, as the church might be seen as losing ground to a foreign and unfamiliar religion, posing an existential threat to Norwegian heritage. This use of pathos resultingly strengthens the logos of the argument, as the threat can be perceived as more dangerous when it could threaten Norwegian tradition and culture.

FrP as a party can be considered a double-edged sword regarding prejudiced ethos. For some, the party projects truth and speaks out whereas others remain silent, and for some, the party is a far-right group with little credibility (Jupskås, 2015). In this specific post however, the proficient use of logos and pathos strengthen the ethos of the post in its entirety. As mentioned above, the argumentation is laid out convincingly and strengthened by appealing to the recipient's emotions. Additionally, the use of a rhetorical question at the end of the post opens for further discussion in the comments, allowing FrP's followers to feel heard by their elected representatives. While this may not sway the most ardent of FrP's opposition, the message in its entirety has a good rhetorical structure and manages to strengthen the division between "us" and the "others".

For this post's kairos and aptum we see similarities to that of the prior post. Looking at kairos first, we see that FrP before this post has proposed a ban on prayer calls in Norway several times yet faced ridicule in the past since no such practices had been conducted. However, at the time of posting a Mosque in Drammen is working towards introducing prayer calls. Therefore, the kairos is strengthened as this has become a contemporary issue that needs immediate political action. The aptum is again strong, due to the message of this post partly being about FrP's predictions once again reaching fruition.

Post 5 “The Government Needs to Do Its Job”



Fremskrittspartiet

19 August 2022 ·



Partileder Sylvi Listhaug sa tydelig til regjeringen i gårsdagens partilederdebatt at de må slutte med å se på, følge og vurdere den alvorlige priskrisen og begynne å gjøre jobben sin. Nå må politikerne sørge for at folk har råd til å betale regningene sine. FrP vil begrense strømekSPORTEN, ha makspris på strøm og kutte i avgiftene for å få ned prisene for folk og bedrifter. Hva mener du?



5.3K

456 143

Post 5 "The Government Needs to Do Its Job"

Ranked number 4 by engagement of FrP’s main party account and placed in the anti-establishment genre, this post from August 2022 critiques the government’s handling of the cost-of-living crisis. Posted after a party leader debate, this post covers how Listhaug expressed that the government needed to stop standing on the side-lines and do their jobs.

Providing heavy criticism of the increase in cost-of-living expenditures, such as electricity, FrP wants to limit energy exports and cut fees to lower the costs for both people and businesses.

Beginning the analysis of this post, we again identify pathos as the most important form of appeal used. Out of the emotions in play throughout this post, we believe that frustration and discontent would be the most fitting description. Listhaug starts by identifying what she and FrP believe to be the root cause of the cost-of-living crisis, namely the actionless government who would rather, “look at, follow, and evaluate the substantial price crisis, than do their job” (FrP, 2022b). Through this appeal to emotions Listhaug manages to shift the discourse away from the European energy crisis caused by the Ukraine conflict, and towards the actionless government (Horowitz, 2022). She then goes on to say that politicians should make sure that people can afford to pay their bills, which connects closely with the frustration many people might feel suffering under a cost-of-living crisis. By drawing attention to the worsening conditions in Norwegian society, Listhaug shields herself from criticism for a lack of solidarity with the Ukrainian cause. Conclusively, FrP leaves one last remark, separating them from the government by stating their alternative solution. Through this rhetoric, FrP can not only harness the frustration growing amongst people facing economic hardship but direct that frustration towards the establishment to further expand the division between the people and their enemy.

While the arguments provided in this post are short and concise, we see the typical outline of an FrP post appearing giving it the same strong logos based on its simplicity as some of the prior posts. By stating that politicians should make sure that people can afford their bills, FrP once again connects to the common-sense arguments. By then providing an alternative solution to the cost-of-living crisis, FrP make themselves seem capable of doing what the government cannot. Here the discursive strategy of anti-intellectualism once again becomes visible. From FrP’s history, we know that they often argue for increased use of the Oil Fund, and through their articulation here it would be safe to assume that the expenses from cutting cost-of-living expenses, would be financed from this fund. While this is completely

achievable due to the size of the Oil Fund¹⁰, the proposition offers a short-term solution to a series of highly complex societal issues.

Again, the prejudiced ethos of FrP has been covered before this, and in this post their ethos is again strengthened through their rhetoric. By again emphasising the lack of concern the government is showing the Norwegian people, the credibility of FrP who take the role of a saviour is strengthened. Likewise, the credibility of the government is weakened through the portrayal of being unconcerned with the worries of normal people. The division between “us” and “them”, or the people and the elites, portrays FrP as the sole trusted actor. By conclusively providing a seemingly easily available solution for a pressing problem end the post on a note specifically strengthening their credibility as a political actor.

Since the cost-of-living issues were, and still are, a pressing contemporary issue the message comes at the appropriate time. This provides for clear and strong kairos. When looking at aptum we see that FrP want to hold the government accountable as well as further its own cause. Through the medium of both the debate and the post, one can note that this message is coming across clearly to the recipient within an appropriate context.

¹⁰At the time of writing, 26.05.23, the oil fund held approximately 15 trillion NOK, but its real value is continuously fluctuating (NBIM, n.d.)

Post 6 “FrP Propose 0.50 NOK Price Cap on Electricity”

 **Fremskrittspartiet** 
10 January 2022 ·  

I morgen foreslår FrP i Stortinget at maksprisen på strøm skal være 50 øre per kw/t. Vi er i en alvorlig situasjon der privatøkonomien til folk har blitt dårligere og mange gruer seg til den neste strømregningen kommer. Sånn skal vi ikke ha det i Norge. Nå må de andre partiene støtte vårt forslag som vil gi lavere strømpris for folk! Enig? 👍



FB.ST 
FrP foreslår 50 øre som makspris på strøm
Tirsdag 11.januar fremmer FrP et forslag i Stortinget om at makspris...

 5.1K  367  123

Post 6 "FrP Propose 0.50 NOK Price Cap on Electricity"

The final post is ranked 7 in the total of FrP’s posts and is the most engaged post within the genre of finance. Closely related to the topic of the previous post, here FrP is proposing to enact a price cap on electricity at 0.50 NOK per kw/h. This post comes at a time when Norwegian electricity prices had reached historical heights, reaching a price of 2.35 NOK per kw/h in 2022 after fees have been applied (Holstad, 2023). Further on in the post, FrP goes on to explain that this is a dire situation where people are dreading their next electricity bill. Ending the post, FrP state that this is not how it should be in Norway, hoping the other parties support their proposition, and again end the post with a rhetorical question, “Agree?” (FrP, 2022a).

As before we will be looking at the linked article from the Facebook post to gain further context for the analysis. Here we find FrP's energy and climate policy spokesperson Frank Sve, depicted in the post, bringing further emphasis to the irresponsible energy policy of the government. Sve appears concerned about the financial consequences most people will face if the energy prices are not reigned in. Nearing the end of the article we see a clear line being drawn between the concerns of the people and the actions of the government. Sve mentions his disappointment in the government and the other parties in parliament repeatedly voting down FrP's proposals and contrasts this to the apparent inefficacy of the government's own proposals (FrP, 2022). By avoiding mentioning any reasoning as to why the other parties in parliament vote against FrP's proposals they are further able to sell the idea of frustration and discontent, based on their seemingly common-sense arguments. The public does not need to know how these price-caps would be funded, they only need to know that FrP has a better solution, thus shifting the public discourse. This again leads to a discourse of visible discontent with both the government and other parties, as well as a grave concern for the financial worries of most of the Norwegian people.

Now we again start by looking at pathos and identify the two most prevalent emotions used in this post as frustration and discontent. Further entrenching the pattern noticed in the posts above, FrP's rhetoric often contains a visible discontent with the government and other parties in parliament, linked with the antagonistic divide between the people and the elite. The first use of pathos relates to the personal economies of people being weakened, and the consequent struggle to afford bills. This is a grave concern for many families as once the economy starts tightening, sacrifices to the standard of living and commodities must be cut. They then shift the argument towards this situation being out of place in Norway. As one of the countries with the highest GDP per capita, FrP can captivate the frustration through the stark contrast of the private economies and the state economy (IMF, 2023). Having built up this frustration using pathos, FrP then directs it towards the other parties, stating that now the other parties must support their suggestion to lower people's energy costs. Thereby framing this statement not as a demand, but through an anti-intellectual discursive strategy, as a self-evident solution. Additionally, FrP once again take use of a rhetorical question making their proposal seem like the common-sense alternative based on the frustration they have created through the post. Here, we therefore see an example of pathos being used to strengthen logos. Other than this, the use of logos in this post is rather contained. Mostly playing off of

common-sense arguments, fitting within the discursive strategy, that refers to the need for action in dire times which are strengthened by the use of pathos.

With ethos we again see the FrP approach to building up credibility throughout a post. Through logos, FrP presents itself, by the common-sense line of articulation, as the only party with a solution to price-cap energy costs to help the Norwegian people. Here, they strengthen their rhetorical ethos through logos. Based on the lack of action from the other parties, FrP can clearly distinguish itself as the party on the side of the people. This notion is further sold to the recipient using the ending rhetorical question where they invite engagement to their post.

5.0 Discussion

In the following chapter, we will be discussing our findings from the analysis chapters in two parts. First, we will present our case for which degree FrP can be labelled as a populist party through the use of populist discursive strategies and logic of articulation. Secondly, we will discuss how this discourse is being used on social media. Here we will start with a comparison between Listhaug and FrP's usage of social media, looking at both discursive strategies as well as how the rhetorical forms of appeal, visualised in Figure 3, are used to strengthen their discourse. Finally, we take a broader approach to the topic to discuss social media as a political platform enabling populist rhetoric.

5.1 FrP – A Populist Party?

Here we will discuss to which degree FrP can be considered a populist party. As mentioned earlier in the theory chapter we will combine Laclau's ontological approach with Wodak's ontic approach to populism, to achieve a broader perspective on populism in the discussion. While the populist logic of articulation holds great influence as to the degree a movement is populist, the empirical examples of discursive strategies allow us to specifically characterize the nature of FrP's equivalential chain. As Laclau's theory does away with notions of ideology and other concerns, this allows us to leave the left-right divide aside during the discussion of the use of discursive strategies. At the same time, drawing on Wodak we will still be able to see whether the strategies employed by FrP are characteristic of those of right-wing populist parties. Additionally, we include references to Mudde & Kaltwasser's research as examples, through the lens of Laclau, to better highlight some of the populist logic of articulation employed by FrP. The following discussion will then cover the posts presented in the analysis, and make references to Appendix A and B, arriving at a conclusion as to the degree of FrP's populist logic of articulation at the end of this subchapter.

Starting the discussion we will be looking at how FrP constructs its definition of the people. Here we can look towards the sentiment provided in Post 2, where Listhaug mentions a phrase often seen through FrP's rhetoric "for most people¹¹" (translated from Norwegian). While this in itself is a rather broad description of the people, giving no clear indication as to who "most people" are, this offers the vagueness and lack of particularity the definition of the

¹¹ "for folk flest"

people needs to become an empty signifier. To homogenise an inherently differential chain of equivalences the people need to be a fluid and dynamic definition, capable of fitting in any given context as to unite an increasingly heterogenous movement as it grows. However, we can still find some limitations to the definition of the people if look for additional context from other posts. If we look at a broader selection of posts, we see that within the three most common genres, when Listhaug's preference for personal posts is taken aside, the people are regularly portrayed in the same manner, alluding to the core popular subjects making up FrP's equivalential chain. The people are portrayed as those suffering from the whims and lack of action of the establishment with FrP portrayed as their sole saviour (see Posts 2, 5 and 6). This relates to the creation of the antagonistic divide of society, but also characterises FrP's definition of the people as those in the lower socio-economic backgrounds who lack the agency to act on their own behalf. While these examples relate mostly to a socioeconomic definition of the people, we can go further by looking to Post 4 where FrP call for banning prayer calls. Here we find what is closely linked to an exclusionary and nativist construction of the people. We see a clear call to preserve Norwegian traditions and calling for a ban on a practice which does not conform to the culture of the majority to protect and preserve Norwegian traditions. Through this discursive strategy, FrP portrays society as split into three parts, the people, the elite, and the "others". This can be joined together to form a divide between "us" and "them". While this is a characteristic of right-wing populism, it also conforms to Laclau's theory of the need for an antagonistic divide in society. Despite society being split in three, we would argue that, based on perceived special treatment, the "others" are put on the same side as the "elite", both working against the interests of the people. Closely linked to this call for conformity with Norwegian traditions we want to point to a publication made by Listhaug to FrP's party website in (2021) before being elected party leader. Here Listhaug explains that FrP has a place for anyone who agrees with their foundational views, despite how they choose to characterize themselves. Here we therefore see a definition of the people which is on one side vague and inclusive as an empty signifier, yet on the other hand a more exclusive approach related to the expected conformity of the "others". The core of FrP's definition of the people can therefore be said to be populist as we see a large societal group with comparable backgrounds and issues being united through FrP's rhetoric posing them as a guardian or protector (Laclau, 2005).

Following this, it seems natural to explore FrP's definition of the establishment, and thereafter their antagonistic relationship with the people. As seen in both Figure 5 and Figure

6, as well as in the analysis, the anti-establishment genre which relates to the antagonistic relationship between FrP, and most if not all other parties in parliament, pervades many of their posts. If we look at the attached posts from the analysis, all except for Listhaug's personal post in Post 1 criticize the lack of action, lack of responsibility and lack of concern from both the current government as well as the other parties in parliament. Again, as with the people, the definition of specifically the establishment is quite ambiguous and can represent a broad range of FrP's political opponents. Different actors within FrP in different contexts will therefore apply a different interpretation of the establishment related to their own specific context. This presents the establishment as a floating signifier, not devoid of particularity as they are still the enemy of the people, but interpretable as different actors in different contexts. FrP's framing of the establishment often ridicules them for their recklessness and, as seen in the analysis points out the misguided actions of the other parties where FrP were right from the beginning. Here we again note the findings from the analysis regarding FrP and Listhaug's use of anti-intellectualism as a discursive strategy. On top of the criticism against the government as well as the other parties, FrP and Listhaug often make use of common-sense argumentation to convince the public that they are the one credible actor in Norwegian politics. Through FrP's rhetoric, the other parties are clearly framed in an antagonistic relationship with the people and fit the needs of a populist logic of articulation and as a floating signifier can symbolise any enemy of the people as required by the given context (Laclau, 2005).

Having played a prominent role in the analysis we now look towards FrP's party leader Listhaug and her role in the populist articulation. As we can see in Figure 5 Listhaug's posts within the genre personal make up more than one quarter of the 215 posts gathered from her Facebook page. This is closely related to what Wodak (2015) describes as the charismatic leader, a rhetorical and outward strategy that right-wing populist parties have adopted and what Mudde and Kaltwasser (2017) mention of a vox populi leadership style. While these independent works are not necessarily linked to Laclau's definition of populism, as seen through his theory this definition of a well-spoken, publicly appealing, voice of the people leader works well with the idea of the populist leader taking the role of an empty signifier (Laclau, 2005). As briefly mentioned in the analysis Listhaug uses her Facebook page to create a blend of the core issues we see discussed on FrP's main page, while also inviting the readers into her home on holidays and in everyday life, which Wodak (2015) relates to the personalisation and commodification of politics. Post 1, which is covered in the analysis, is a

perfect example of exactly this personal touch which Listhaug brings to her supporters, where we also see the use of gender stereotypes. Drawing from some of the posts in Appendix A, we can see her third most engaged post (Listhaug, 2021) is merely a Christmas greeting from Listhaug's home, with no mention of policy. The same can be seen from her fifth most engaged post (Listhaug, 2021b) where Listhaug again makes no mention of policy in favour of wishing her followers a happy new year. This also bears a likeness to what Wodak (2015) describes as a front-stage showmanship and the ability to adapt to different contexts. Through these posts, despite their seeming simplicity, Listhaug shows a great understanding of social media usage and knows how to better connect with her constituents. By combining her political posts with her personal posts Listhaug becomes a unifying force as a leader, making away with her particularity, but gaining broader appeal. Based on the works of Laclau (2005) we would therefore suggest that through Listhaug's articulation and usage of social media, she becomes an empty signifier functioning as a homogenizing factor capable of maintaining the chains of equivalence which make up FrP's core policy.

Now for a broader approach where we will discuss how FrP's modes of articulation fit with the populist definition. First, we will again look at the construction of the people vs. the establishment and their antagonistic relationship, specifically linked to xenophobia and fear of the foreign (Wodak, 2015). From Post 2 in the analysis, Listhaug states, "The other parties always have enough money to save the world. But not to solve the problems here at home in Norway¹²" (translated from Norwegian). As discussed, in the analysis of this post, Listhaug here labels foreign aid and immigration as money wasted. When looking at this through a populist perspective we can not only see that this is one of the chains of equivalence most important to FrP, supported by the findings in both Figure 5 and Figure 6, but also functions to emphasise the relation between people and the establishment. While immigrants and refugees do not necessarily hold power over the establishment, they are portrayed as the "others" being given special funding at the cost of the Norwegians, or "us", back at home. Here Listhaug uses the discursive strategy of a scapegoat, portraying these groups, the "others", as one of the reasons that the Norwegian government cannot fix problems at home. Blaming these problems on a scapegoat then provides FrP with a much simpler solution to a complex financial issue, as funding could simply be diverted from foreign aid to domestic issues, closely linked to anti-intellectualism and common-sense argumentation. While not a

¹² "De andre partiene har alltid penger til å redde verden. Men ikke til å løse problemene her hjemme i Norge"

part of the establishment, these groups are then still portrayed as antagonistic towards the people through the special treatment they receive (Laclau, 2005). Here we therefore would claim that we see a populist articulation of one of FrP's primary chains of equivalence.

Briefly stepping aside from this line of discussion we would also like to mention our interpretation of xenophobia as a floating signifier. As seen in the discussion above, xenophobic posts from Listhaug and FrP can frame different areas of immigration, asylum seekers, integration, etc. as the cause for any given number of societal issues. This reflects the ambiguity of a floating signifier as it is open for interpretation according to its given context and can relate to several topics if needed. Despite the differential nature of the message in the posts labelled "Xenophobia", they all work to homogenise the differential views of FrP's electorate regarding xenophobic views, and all characterise the "others" negatively (Laclau, 2005).

Secondly, we explore the notion of right-wing populist parties utilizing the discursive strategy of anti-intellectualism (Wodak, 2015). As mentioned earlier this type of discourse responds well as it can be portrayed as a common-sense style of argumentation and ties in with Mudde and Kaltwasser's (2017) vox-populi style of leadership. While not inherently populist in its nature, as populist groups can hold any number of views if their articulation fits the definition, FrP uses anti-intellectualism to efficiently reach voters sick with political apathy and the inaction of the establishment with their common-sense solutions to complex issues (Laclau, 2005). The primary function of anti-intellectualism as observed in Post 2 through 6 is therefore, as mentioned in the analysis, to sow further discontent towards the establishment. Here it again seems apt to quote Bernays to emphasise how, "The political apathy of the average voter, of which we hear so much, is undoubtedly due to the fact that the politician does not know how to meet the conditions of the public mind" (1928, p. 110). Through their populist articulation of a strong antagonistic relationship between people and the establishment, FrP can propose simple solutions without the same burden of proof as their established counterparts due to the mistrust the antagonistic relationship creates (Laclau, 2005).

Thirdly, we discuss the crossing of typical left-right divides which Wodak (2015) presents as a trait of right-wing populism. Compared to the previous characteristic strategies, this one is less linked to the establishment of a divided society, but much more closely linked to the independence of ideology which a populist movement achieves through a Laclauian

perspective. As presented in chapter 4.1 where a brief history of FrP is provided, we see that FrP holds its roots to a fiscally liberalist policy. Favouring lower taxes and fees, but then making a policy change still arguing for less taxes while advocating for increased spending from the Oil Fund (Bjerkem, 2016; Jupskås, 2015). For further examples of this we can start with Post 2, where we see the focus on government spending on social issues like securing medicine, providing good pensions, and reducing people's expenses. While this could still be categorized as a right-wing issue due to its nationalist prioritisation of domestic concerns, FrP is still calling for increased spending on social benefits and coming to the defence of the welfare state. Moving on to Post 5 we again see calls for government intervention in financial issues, primarily limiting energy exports, price-caps on electricity and a lowering of fees. Once again FrP break with established norms in liberalist tradition by suggesting limitations to the free market, once more in defence of the people. Lastly, in Post 6, we once again see FrP calling for a price-cap on electricity to help people's private economies. When connecting this to Laclau's theory we would therefore argue that while these deviations from the traditional left-right ideological divide are apparent, they do not alter FrP's articulation of their chains of equivalence. Instead, issues regarding cost-of-living, labelled under the "finance" genre, can be seen as a floating signifier. While some of FrP's voters may not be concerned about certain aspects of cost-of-living expenses such as electricity in the northern parts of Norway, due to the structure of the Norwegian electricity grid (Øie, 2022). The otherwise vague description of these issues enables different actors to interpret them in different ways. This vagueness and lack of particularity are, as with the empty signifier, the source of the homogenising effect of this floating signifier (Laclau, 2005). Additionally, the left-right divide once again goes back to the core idea of the antagonistic split between the people and the establishment. FrP retains its position as the people's guardian when advocating for ideology traditionally supported by left-wing movements, while the establishment is once again portrayed as the enemy of the people. As discussed earlier, FrP's definition of the people often bears mention of the common man, especially affected by these economic issues. Through arguing for increased spending on financial aid, FrP can be able to unite the heterogenous groups that make up their electorate (Laclau, 2005).

To then conclude this subchapter, we will present our findings based on the discussion above. Starting with some of the core issues, we have seen that FrP emphasises a distinctly antagonistic relationship between the people and the establishment, fitting the mode of articulation of a populist movement. As for the people specifically, we have seen that while

FrP provides a vague definition, this is done to construct the people as an empty signifier. Additionally, we see that through their discourse, this definition does have some exclusionary limitations regarding an antagonistic view of the “others”. Considering Listhaug’s position as party leader it becomes clear that through her discursive strategies and usage of social media, she has taken the role of an empty signifier, functioning to create a broader appeal and homogenise the equivalential chain. Finally looking towards the articulation in the strategies analysed above, we see that the core values of FrP function to further the antagonistic relationship and create dissent towards the establishment. This is also seen in the left-right divide where FrP’s chains of equivalence once again function to portray them as the saviours of the people. We also find the use of a floating signifier, related to the definition of the establishment as well as both the “finance” and “xenophobia” genres, used to further homogenise FrP’s equivalential chain. Based on this discussion we would therefore propose that, based on Laclau’s (2005) definition, FrP can be regarded as a party with a clear populist mode of articulation and through Wodak (2015) is characterised by their use of right-wing populist discursive strategies.

5.2 How Is Populist Rhetoric Being Used in Social Media

Having established that FrP’s mode of articulation fits the theory of Laclau (2005) and features discursive strategies of characteristic right-wing populism (Wodak, 2015), we now want to further discuss how populist rhetoric is being used in social media, to answer our research question: Is social media enabling populist rhetoric in Norway? Therefore, we have separated this chapter into two parts. In the first part, we want to compare Listhaug and FrP’s main party account usage of social media. Here we will explore similarities and differences between how the two accounts, despite representing the same party, articulate themselves based on the information presented in Figures 5 and 6, as well as Appendix 1 and 2. Here we also want to further highlight how the use of forms of appeal from rhetoric strengthens their discursive strategies. In the second part, we will discuss whether it can be said that social media is enabling populist rhetoric in Norway. Here we will discuss factors such as the low bar of entry for social media usage, the ability to post more frequently, the reusing of popular content, and more to clarify what the medium of social media can provide for contemporary populists.

5.2.1 Comparing Listhaug and FrP's Usage of Social Media

Starting this discussion, we would like to once again point to the similarities brought forth in the analysis by bringing attention to the findings from Figures 5 and 6. As briefly mentioned earlier, here we see that despite differences between the posted genres increasing once out of the top three there are significant similarities between Listhaug and FrP. Here we find that other than the top genres being different, Listhaug favouring personal posts and FrP favouring finance posts, the two next genres anti-establishment and xenophobia are ranked second and third in actors. Other than this, some of the notable differences found between Listhaug and FrP relate to the "polling numbers" and "recruitment" genres. Listhaug is here seen with a much higher frequency of posting "polling numbers", ranked fourth among her posts, while FrP sees this genre ranked sixteenth in frequency. The opposite applies to the recruitment genre where Listhaug has this genre ranked at a shared fourteenth, while FrP has this genre ranked eighth according to frequency. This raises the question of why this difference in the most frequently posted genres occurs, which we will discuss in the following pages. While many of the other genres could be interesting to include here, we wanted to highlight these specifically due to their display of some of the more noticeable differences in content from Listhaug and FrP.

Next, we want to bring attention to one of the biggest differences between Listhaug and FrP which is the rate of engagement on their Facebook posts. If we look at Appendix A and B, we find a great disparity not only between the number of reactions but in overall engagement. In Appendix A, Listhaug's most engaged post has received 38k likes, 10k comments and 146 shares. In fact, none of Listhaug's posts fall below 10k reactions before the post ranked 52nd out of the 215 posts collected from her personal page as well as a large majority of her posts before this point reaching well above 1k comments per post. Comparing this to FrP's rates of engagement we see in Appendix B that none of the posts collected through the timeframe of the dataset reach above 10k reactions. Their most engaged post only reached 7.8k reactions compared to Listhaug's ranked 98th post sharing the same amount of engagement measured by reactions. If we further compared the number of reactions reached at FrP's ranked 52nd post, we see that the rate of engagement has reached 2.8k reactions. This presents us with an enormous gap between Listhaug's personal following compared to FrP's main account. We believe that this disparity is caused by Listhaug's position as an empty signifier. While FrP's main party account handles a broader range of issues, or democratic subjects, making up the

equivalential chain, Listhaug's lack of particularity makes her not only a homogenising symbol, but also explains her much larger outreach (Laclau, 2005). Listhaug is supposed to be the uniting figure of FrP which, we believe, makes it only natural that her rate of engagement compared to FrP reflects this.

Next, we will discuss possible reasons that can explain this contrast in rates of engagement by looking at our findings from the analysis. At this point we are again drawn back to Listhaug's clear favouring of personal content as compared to FrP's main account. In Post 1, Listhaug's most engaged post overall, one should note that no mention of policy is included in this post. This also occurs in almost all of Listhaug's posts from Appendix A which are labelled with the personal genre. Instead, these posts favour a rhetoric where Listhaug is portrayed as more of a normal person than an out-of-touch political elite. Listhaug regularly invites her audience into situations spanning from close family celebrations to everyday activities like enjoying an ice cream in the sun, or a morning spent outside shovelling snow by her front door. This also reflects her excellent use of the pathos form of appeal, as she can play on the emotions and sentimentality of her audience. What is especially interesting to note here is that out of Listhaug's top ten most engaged posts, six of them are in the personal genre and have all attracted more than 16k reactions. Here it could be noted that Listhaug's ability to attract such amounts of engagement to her posts regularly shows a deep understanding of how a politician should reach out to their audience (Bernays, 1928). By gaining a closer and more personal relationship with her voters, Listhaug can attract much more attention to her posts than she otherwise would have been able to. Earlier research has also found that people are much more inclined to believe and be influenced in their political attitudes when political content is shared on Facebook by a friend, as these are perceived as a trusted source of information (Theocharis, et al., 2021, p. 6). Through her close relationship with her followers, Listhaug tells a narrative of a Norway lost to the corrupt elite. Norway's rising cost-of-living issues become a tale of good vs. evil, FrP vs. the enemies of the Norwegian people. Earlier research on the use of narratives also tells us that this way of explaining complex issues is a central tool for humans to make sense of a complicated world (Nordensvard & Ketola, 2022, p. 864-865). From the populist perspective, the noticeably high rate of engagement Listhaug receives on her personal posts could also indicate the efficiency of her positions as an empty signifier within FrP (Laclau, 2005). While FrP's main party account handles a broader range of issues, or democratic subjects, making up the equivalential chain, Listhaug's lack of particularity makes her not only a homogenising

symbol but also explains her much larger outreach. Again, related to the idea of a charismatic leader or a vox populi leader which Listhaug is clearly able to portray herself through the content of her posts and receive a broader reach with the public (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017; Wodak, 2015).

Furthermore, Listhaug's posts, even when not within the personal genre, still hold shared factors as can be gathered from Posts 2 and 3. While these two posts cover two different genres, anti-establishment and xenophobia, there is an underlying usage of Listhaug's established role as an empty signifier through her personal posts. In Post 2 where Listhaug argues against all other parties while promoting FrP she is arguing out of a position of concern with the people, once more strengthening her discursive strategies with the use of pathos, as well as logos. The same applies to Post 3 where despite its xenophobic nature, Listhaug appears as concerned for the safety of the people when inviting a terrorist organisation to Norway. Using harsh language, and labelling the Taliban delegation as terrorists, she is also able to play on the fear of the foreign through her use of pathos. This use of pathos is also related to feelings of disdain towards the regime for its increasing levels of social control over Muslim women. While wanting to avoid speculation, it again becomes interesting to see Listhaug's portrayal as a charismatic and approachable leader combined with theories on discourse (Wodak, 2015). While most people are usually less receptive to new ideas from an unfamiliar actor, Listhaug has established herself through her usage of social media as a close friend to the people. This could therefore enable her to utilize her position of trust to sway the opinion of her followers and influence the discourse with her posts more efficiently (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Burr, 2015). When Listhaug posts content related to anti-establishment and xenophobia, it could be more closely compared to a close friend coming to the defence of their friend rather than a disconnected politician making a statement of concern.

Shifting the focus back towards FrP's posts there is a closer notion of maintaining the chains of equivalence and keeping them present in the societal discourse. As covered previously, FrP's top posts fit within the genres of "finance", "anti-establishment" and "xenophobia" in that order. As mentioned in the earlier section of the discussion, all these genres fit within our interpretation of FrP's populist logic of articulation as floating signifiers, and it, therefore, makes sense that these are the most frequently posted genres on FrP's main party account. If we first look to Post 4, FrP's most engaged post, which covers the banning of prayer calls,

specifically within the context of a mosque in Drammen wanting to introduce the practice. As covered in the analysis, one of the core issues FrP has with this practice is that it does not belong in Norwegian culture. Here FrP uses its social media posts to not only bring attention to one of their homogenising floating signifiers, immigration issues, but also establish that they do not support practices that do not belong in Norwegian culture. This could therefore imply, as mentioned in Chapter 5.1, a limitation put on their definition of the people through their rhetoric of what does and does not belong in Norway (Laclau, 2005). As mentioned in the analysis, this discourse is further strengthened using both pathos and logos. Especially visible in FrP's pathos is the fear of the foreign and the construction of prayer calls as a threat to Norwegian tradition and culture. By looking at Appendix B, one can find further examples of this usage of their platform. Ranked third is yet another post in the genre of xenophobia calling for a ban on full-coverage clothing, such as religious garbs as seen practised within the religion of Islam. This relates closely to the discursive strategy of pseudo-emancipatory gender policy and the criticism of specifically Islam's oppression of women. As an example, this sentiment can be seen further displayed in the posts ranked 14th, 19th, 32nd, 35th, 43rd, and 47th where a clearly xenophobic sentiment is expressed. Covering similar, yet different areas related to xenophobia, this only strengthens the interpretation of this genre as a floating signifier. By keeping this sentiment ever present within the societal discourse, FrP not only bring attention to one of their homogenising issues but can force an analysis of societal issues through a xenophobic lens as they can steer the discourse within this frame of reference (Burr, 2015). Throughout these xenophobic posts one can also observe a portrayal of the establishment as a reckless actor, not concerned about the danger immigration poses to the public and Norwegian culture. With this rhetoric, FrP, therefore furthers the divide between the people and the establishment through this genre as well (Laclau, 2005).

Continuing to take a closer discussion of the "finance" genre, as it is the most frequent genre amongst FrP's posts as well as a floating signifier. If we refer to Appendix B, one can observe that despite of this the first post within the finance genre is ranked seventh. The importance here however is not necessarily the amount of engagement FrP has received to these posts, as matters of financial concerns are occasionally covered in anti-establishment posts, but the frequency at which they are posted. Here we again see a similarity with the xenophobia genre where FrP can steer the discourse within a desired framework based on the sheer number of posts related to financial issues, as well as both of their homogenising effect on the differential equivalential chain. Looking to Post 6 regarding a price cap on electricity

one finds a simple rhetoric using common-sense arguments as mentioned in the analysis. Through this rhetoric and the frequency of posting FrP can steer the discourse through their followers sharing and engaging in public debate, furthering FrP's claims. Additionally, FrP's simple solutions to cost-of-living issues can shift the societal discourse in their favour, when the established parties have to argue against these seemingly logical solutions with complicated counter-explanations (Bernays, 1928; Burr, 2015). This line of argumentations is strengthened by pathos to invoke feelings of anger, frustration, and dissent. Here it could also be argued that based on the antagonistic divide of society, the establishment's refusal to enact FrP's simple solutions can be seen through a socially constructed reality. In this case, the establishment's lack of action does not need to be based on factual arguments but can be portrayed as an intentional decision, furthering the populist narrative (Berger & Luckmann, 1966).

5.2.2 Social Media as a Political Platform

To come closer to an understanding of our research question, "Is social media enabling populist rhetoric in Norway," this chapter aims to present a discussion of the merits of social media as a political platform. When Bernays wrote his work on propaganda in 1928 mass media was still in its infant stage, but even then, he saw the benefits a propagandist could reap if they were fluent in the use of the most updated forms of communication. With the case analysed in this thesis drawing its posts specifically from Facebook, the reach of this platform extended to the daily usage of 67% of the Norwegian population (Ipsos, 2023). Theoretically capable of reaching more than a third of Norway's population with a post to Facebook, we would therefore argue that while realistic constraints to this reach apply, social media holds vast potential as a political platform. Whether or not this potential can truly be harnessed by politicians is therefore a highly relevant question before going into this discussion.

Potentially one of the biggest advantages social media currently holds over conventional media is its low bar of entry compared to traditional media. This is displayed on Facebook's Help Centre page where users are given a four-step guide on how to create an account, simplifying the process even further. Other than an email address and an internet connection not much is needed for anyone to create their own account (Facebook, 2023) Not only is this process simple, but it is also free. Compared to traditional media this removes both the need

for connections to get one's message onto one of the traditional platforms and the need for funding, particularly beneficial to smaller movements. From the side of the recipient, this also enables access to a form of mass media without the need to purchase a newspaper, radio, or subscription to access the medium. With the political campaigning costs of the 2021 general election reaching more than 100 million NOK, and the two dominant parties Ap and Høyre spending 60 million NOK between them, one can see the benefits of a platform that offers no entry fees (Svendsen, 2021). In the highly digitized Norwegian society, this means that social media platforms can provide a free-to-use and easily accessible platform where both small and established parties can partake with the same low bar of entry.

The next aspect which social media provides is the opportunity to publish posts with a high frequency without financial concerns. For populist actors, both as established parties, as with our case FrP, or smaller movements with less funding, this provides the tools to maintain the chains of equivalence. As discussed in the prior subchapter, one can see through Listhaug and FrP's use of social media, that the main message of their posts can consistently be found to fit within their floating signifiers, continually maintain the homogeneity of the differential equivalential chain (Laclau, 2005). With the frequency of these posts often reaching several times per day, as can be seen in both Appendix A and Appendix B, FrP can use the frequency of these posts to continuously maintain these issues within their discourse. Due to this constant barrage of similar opinions being provided by both Listhaug and FrP to their respective recipients, combined with the denouncement of the establishment, an objective reality could be shaped through this discourse. While many of the recipients may be too critical of FrP due to prejudiced ethos, some may still be swayed due to the reaffirmation of prior opinions and their ideological ambiguity appealing to a broader audience (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). Lastly, it should be noted that an approach where the frequency of posts exceeds and oversaturates its need may be perceived by its recipients, no longer as a reaffirmation of their beliefs, but as an overly aggressive form of argumentation.

While utilising the high frequency at which one can post to social media is one advantage, being able to engage with one's recipients is irreplaceable. Unlike traditional media where a broadcast is a one-way street, the format of social media lets its users engage instantaneously with its recipients through comments. As seen in Posts 4, 5, and 6, FrP often includes a rhetorical question at the end of their posts to encourage such engagement. Asking the reader if they agree with their message, or simply asking for their opinion on the presented topic.

While we cannot include extracts from the comments, this practice lets the recipients of a post actively engage themselves in the issue instead of simply being given a statement to believe. From the perspective of the politician, this can help with voter apathy as they become a part of the discussion instead of a politician's lecture on the best course of action (Bernays, 1928, p. 110-112). Another important aspect of engagement, specifically on Facebook as in this case, is that posts in a person's Facebook feed, or homepage, are ranked on four conditions. How often one interacts with posts from specific actors, if one engages often with a type of post, the amount of engagement it receives as well as how recently the post was published (Facebook, 2023a). This means that posts like Listhaug's and FrP's, which regularly receive a large amount of engagement, will be preferred when posts are ordered in an individual's feed upon logging into the platform. On a surface level, this leads to more relevant content appearing for the average user, while from a social constructionist perspective this can imply that subjective views of reality can be continually reinforced as the platform suggests what it believes to be the most suitable content for the user (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). This is closely linked to the notion of echo chambers which will be further discussed in a paragraph below.

The numbers that the political actor receives from the engagement can then further be used in the selection of what content to reuse. While Listhaug typically never posts the exact same content repeatedly it should be noted in Appendix B that FrP frequently makes use of this strategy. This is typically seen in the posts marked: "Stop the waste. Reprioritise" and "Remove taxes on fuel". These posts are often strikingly similar if not an exact reproduction of the original post could potentially function to keep these topics within the discourse and emphasises the genre of "finance" as a floating signifier able to be interpreted in different ways by different actors. Related here to the populist articulation other floating signifiers may also be measured in their success, showing the populist which interpretations of the signifier are most dominant. By utilising this knowledge, the populist can therefore successfully reuse content knowing that it is sure to appeal to the public time and time again.

This then leads us to the topic of microtargeting, as defined in the theory chapter, and its function in digital political campaigns. According to a report from the Norwegian Data Protection Authority (Datatilsynet, 2019, p. 18), all parties reported that they use Facebook's advertisement tool based on microtargeted groups. These groups are selected through metrics such as geographical location, age, gender, interests, and habits. On social media platforms

this lets a political actor reach out to the specific parts of the constituency they want to advertise providing them with a far more precise form of advertising. Populists can therefore far more efficiently reach out in accordance with their chain of equivalence and their signifiers as those affected by the unmet demands in one specific geographic area can be targeted based on their specific demands. As an example, FrP's voters who live in a rural district with poor public transport connections, or long distances without charging stations for electric vehicles, can receive advertisement that directly relates to their unmet demands for lower petrol prices. A final point on the use of microtargeting revolves around the construction of a subjective reality. As microtargeted ads reach specific groups of voters, these voters are susceptible to seeing content mirroring their own opinions due to the metrics above flagging them as recipients of this messaging. The more these users engage with the provided content, the more certain the microtargeting becomes as the user is showing further interest in the posts they are receiving. While this is based on the theoretical possibilities of microtargeting and the real gains are unknown due to secret ballots, it is still an important aspect of digital campaigning and has gained a foothold in contemporary Norwegian politics (ibid.).

Moreover, is the discussion of echo chambers on social media which we will mention briefly but refer to further research due to the vast amounts of literature on the topic. As Facebook ranks the feeds of their users to cater to their preferences, the discourse in the comments sections and through the sharing of posts opens for a simple interpretation of the foundation of an echo-chamber. Here users can provide similar comments to that of their perceived peers and have their opinions reaffirmed. However, as users of social media do not exist only within the discourse of the platform and can be expected to face opposing views in their everyday lives the potential of echo chambers can be a limiting factor to social media (Kitchens et al., 2020, p. 1622). Therefore, we have concluded that, while this may be a limitation to social media, further research is required to truly understand how effective echo chambers are in influencing discourse both online and offline.

Finally, drawing on elements from the discussion above we want to establish whether Listhaug and FrP's use of social media can be labelled as propaganda, here strictly in the terms of Bernays as a means to manipulate the masses. As we have already established the rhetorical quality and the use of discursive strategies from both FrP, but especially, Listhaug, we know that the use of rhetorical appeals and persuasive arguments is exemplary in

achieving its desired effect. Through the ambiguous nature of the equivalential chain, and empty and floating signifiers which can be contextualised and left open to interpretation for its recipients we also know that their message fits the public mind through both real and perceived grievances (Bernays, 1928, p. 77-78). The main difference between Listhaug and FrP regarding how close they come to achieving the label of propaganda, is then related to Listhaug's stronger connection to her recipients as an empty signifier. By adding into this equation the modern tool of microtargeting and ranked content, which can be found in social media, Listhaug not only knows the desires of her audience, but through these tools she can directly connect with the recipients who desire this message. Instead of selling an idea, Listhaug places the idea into the minds of her audience achieving what we believe is as close to the term propaganda as a political actor can come using social media.

6.0 Conclusion

This thesis has based itself on the two research questions, “How are populist discursive strategies being used on social media by FrP?” and “Is social media enabling populist rhetoric in Norway?” This has been covered through a rhetorical discourse analysis, based on the approach visualised in Figure 3, as well as the subsequent discussion of analytical findings. The empirical material used in the analysis was built on a total of 657 total posts gathered in Appendix A and B and categorised into genres covering the main message of each post. Through the findings from the analysis and the discussion we established that FrP follows a clear populist logic articulation through the use of empty and floating signifiers to homogenise their differential chain of equivalence and create an antagonistically divided society (Laclau, 2005). Through Wodak’s more empirical approach to populism, we found that the discursive strategies employed by both Listhaug and FrP fit the characteristics of right-wing populist discourse (Wodak, 2015). With the ever-increasing usage of social media and the past of both FrP and Listhaug as an individual politician marked by controversy, it is therefore of the utmost interest to highlight how populist discursive strategies are being used on social media, and whether social media is enabling this discourse.

To understand how populists use rhetoric on social media we have compared Listhaug and FrP and have found both similarities and differences. As we found in Figures 5 and 6, both Listhaug and FrP’s had the genres of “anti-establishment” and “xenophobia” as their ranked second and third genres. Linked to this is the most prominent similarity between them being the use of pathos to strengthen the right-wing discursive strategies through an appeal to fear of losing both Norwegian tradition and the portrayal of the “others” and the elite as the source of many societal issues. Xenophobia and a fear of the foreign become a floating signifier for Listhaug and FrP and are linked to the discursive strategies of anti-intellectualism and scapegoating. Feelings of fear and disdain for the “others” are cultivated to provide simple solutions to complex issues, and pathos strengthens this sentiment. Closely linked to this is the use of logos, underpinning their prevalent use of common-sense arguments which connect easily with the hearts and minds of the average voter. The simple arguments and the use of a narrative, us vs. them, simplify the complexity of politics, enabling Listhaug and FrP to much more closely connect with those suffering from political apathy and a lack of political understanding (Bernays, 1928). Herein lies FrP’s exclusionary construction of the people, as a largely comparable group with similar backgrounds and

issues being united with FrP, and Listhaug at the tip of the spear, as their guardian against the elite and the “others” wanting to inflict harm on the people.

As for their differences, Listhaug not only receives a much higher rate of engagement on her posts but also favours the “personal” genre, whereas FrP in contrast favours the “finance” genre. This again highlights the uniting role Listhaug holds as an empty signifier for FrP’s equivalential chain. Through the use of normal language, and intimate posts inviting her followers into her everyday life, she forms a much stronger connection with her followers and gains credibility through her distancing from the idea of a political elite. In her home, as seen in the analysis, Listhaug is portrayed through gender stereotypes of the mother as a caretaker, while in her posts regarding politics she appears as a fierce protector of the people. Listhaug shows a great understanding of how to utilise social media, as well as how to appear in specific contexts, linked to the strategies of media performance, personalisation, and front-stage showmanship. Here we also find the strategy of pseudo-emancipatory gender policy as the gender stereotypes contradict the disdain she shows for the oppression of specifically Muslim women (Wodak, 2015). Therefore, when Listhaug then posts about policy her credibility amongst her followers is stronger than that of the average politician, and her burden of proof, combined with the anti-intellectualism strategy, is lowered. FrP on the other hand post more frequently on the main floating signifiers we have identified: “finance”, “anti-establishment” and “xenophobia”. While FrP, due to the more particularistic nature of their messages cannot compete with Listhaug’s reach as an empty signifier, they work to continuously maintain the equivalential chain and sow dissent towards the elite and the “others” (Laclau, 2005).

We therefore believe that FrP’s discursive strategies on social media are being used to achieve three goals: First, to create a divided society through a populist narrative of us vs. them, pitting the people and their protector against its enemy. Second, they use fear and dissent towards the “others” and the foreigners to practice an exclusionary discourse based on xenophobia and anti-intellectualism, weakening the credibility of oppositional political actors. Third, harness a broad appeal through the crossing of the left-right ideological divide to draw in politically apathetic voters through an appeal to their perceived or real grievances with the status-quo while providing simple solutions.

As for the question of whether social media is enabling populist rhetoric in Norway, the answer is far from absolute. Through its widespread use and the low bar of entry, social

media offers populists a medium much closer to the public square than that of traditional media. Both our case FrP, and other populist movements can easily access social media at the same level as the recipients of their messages, but this also applies to their opponents who can voice their disagreements. The high frequency at which one can post to social media allows an actor to shape the public discourse more efficiently. Floating signifiers and issues closely connected to the maintenance of the equivalential chain can be posted often and at any time, doing away with the limitations of traditional media. What might be the most important factor of social media usage, engagement, allows a media-savvy charismatic leader like Listhaug to not only hear the concerns of her followers but portray their bond as one much closer to a familiar relationship than that of a distant politician (Jacobs, 2023). Instead of being lectured on politics, the recipients can be a part of the discussion, and as seen with FrP, they are often invited to do so by the use of rhetorical questions at the end of a post. Higher engagement with similar content will also strengthen a social media site's, Facebook in our case, ranking of posts presented to the user in their feed, in turn creating a self-strengthening cycle where content will gradually reflect their subjective view of reality. Numbers from engagement can also indicate which discursive strategies are the most effective at reaching an audience and can be used to reuse content, saving time and funding for the populist movement. The use of microtargeted political advertising can help populists efficiently reach those concerned about the issues within their equivalential chain without the use of canvassing or other forms of voter research (Laclau, 2005). Instead, through the integrated Facebook advertising platform, voters can be reached with political advertisements tailored to fit their real or perceived grievances. Combining these we found that Listhaug comes as close as we believe is possible through social media in regards to the use of language relative to Bernays' idea of propaganda and the manipulation of the masses (Bernays, 1928).

Despite these many enabling mechanisms of social media, there are however limitations to its use to spread populist rhetoric. First and foremost is the fact that not all people are as actively engaged on social media. In spite of its large reach many users mostly use social media platforms as a means of social activities like keeping in touch with friends, not necessarily as a source of political information. Regardless of these limitations we, do however believe that social media usage to spread populist rhetoric can to an extent help in creating a closer connection between the people and the populist leader, in creating a polarised discourse, and

further strengthening already established subjective views of reality (Berger & Luckmann, 1966).

6.1 Research Limitations

Our primary concern regarding research limitations is the collection of our two data sets. First is the categorisation of each individual post into a specific genre where our subjective understanding of the main message of the post, may be influenced by preconceived notions of both Listhaug and FrP. Second, is the scale of the two data sets. While we do believe that the posts gathered from both Listhaug and FrP's Facebook pages were the most important measured by their levels of engagement, we could have included a larger number of posts to better understand their equivalential chain. This concern is also related to the gathering of posts specifically from Facebook, instead of a broader approach where other social media platforms could have been included to see whether the discursive strategies used are the same on all platforms or if they are context specific. Third is the time frame of the collected post encapsulating the period 08.05.21-08.05.23. While Listhaug's rise to leadership marks an interesting point in FrP's history, it could have given us a better historical understanding of FrP and its populist strategies if we had gathered data sets spanning a longer period.

Another concern is the number of posts analysed. With three posts from Listhaug and three from FrP, we believe that we have covered the main signifiers of FrP's equivalential chains, as reflected in Figures 5 and 6, yet a broader analysis may have presented us with more accurate findings.

6.2 Further Research

As discussed in our findings the use of right-wing populist discourse on social media shows a discourse of anti-intellectualism and xenophobia being spread at an alarming rate. With Norway is often viewed as a strong welfare state with tolerant views, this has shown another side of Norwegian society and contemporary politics entirely. Right-wing populism has also gained much attention in the other Scandinavian countries and are currently facing electoral success on their platforms which share similarities to FrP through xenophobia and exclusionary views (Widfeldt, 2023; Wodak, 2015). This is precisely why we believe that further research not only related to Norway, but the other Scandinavian countries as well, is an interesting area for further research.

In further research and as mentioned in our research limitations we would like to include a broader collection of social media sites for data sets to better compare and understand the usage of populist discursive strategies. Here a more in-depth analysis of the inner workings of social media algorithms could be provided to better grasp how echo chambers and ranked feeds function to reflect and reaffirm the beliefs of the users. Connected to this is also the influence of social media conglomerates such as Facebook and Google. If social media can influence its users, it would be interesting to see to what extent these corporations hold direct control over the algorithms and services, and what implications this has for populist movements who often pit the people against the established powers in society.

Here it would also be interesting to include a thorough overview of the impact of echo chambers in relation to their impact online and offline. While we merely approach the subject in this thesis, we believe that there lies a great importance in the connection between online discourse in echo chambers and the polarisation of society offline.

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All sources used in this thesis have been provided.

Attachments

Post 1: "44th Birthday Celebration"



Sylvi Listhaug

25 December 2021 · 🌐



I dag er det bursdagsfeiring! 44 år 🥳 Hvor har årene blitt av?? Nå er det hjemmelaget kake. 🍰 Den smaker bedre enn den ser ut 😊 ha en fortsatt fin jul 🎄



👍❤️ 38K

10K 💬 146 ➦

Post 2: “Money for Norway, Not for Symbolic Policy”



Sylvi Listhaug

12. september 2021 · 🌐



De andre partiene har alltid penger til å redde verden. Men ikke til å løse problemene her hjemme i Norge. Nå må vi stoppe Rødt, SV og MDG. Og vi må stoppe sløsing på symbolske klimatiltak, bistand og innvandring og integrering. Vi må sikre de beste medisinene for de syke, en god pensjon og kutte avgiftene for folk flest. I morgen gjelder det. Stem FrP!



👍 19 k

2,2 k 💬 4,2 k ➦

Post 3: "Terrorists on Luxury Trip to Norway"



Sylvi Listhaug

9 May 2022



Norske politikere sin naivitet kjenner ingen grenser! Etter terroristene i Taliban sin luksustur med privatfly til Norge, støttet alle partier utenom FrP dialogen og samarbeidet med Taliban.

Generalsekretær i Flyktningehjelpen og tidligere Ap-politiker Jan Egeland uttalte etter møtet i Norge at Taliban hadde gitt klare og forpliktende løfter om at det blir undervisning for jenter på alle nivå. De skulle også respektere kvinner og jenters rettigheter.

Fasiten er selvsagt det motsatte, og det var akkurat det vi advarte mot! Nå innfører Taliban burkapåbud, nekter eldre jenter å gå på skolen, begrenser kvinners rett til å kjøre og å oppholde seg alene utenfor hjemmet.

FrP vil nå ha svar fra regjeringen hvor mye kontakt norske myndigheter har hatt med Taliban, og om Norge har gitt penger til det middelalderiske terrorregimet i Afghanistan. Jeg forventer klare svar, og at norske myndigheter kutter alle bånd til terroristene.



11K

1.4K 812

Post 4: “Ban Prayer Calls from Mosques”



Fremskrittspartiet

6 October 2021 ·



Fremskrittspartiet har flere ganger tatt til orde for å forby bønnerop fra moskeer. Vi har da blitt møtt med at bønnerop ikke eksisterer i Norge og at dette ikke er et problem. På tross av advarsler fra FrP ser vi nå at en moské i Drammen jobber for å kunne ha bønnerop. FrP mener at offentlige bønnerop og liknende innkallinger til bønn som bryter med norsk tradisjon ikke hører hjemme i landet vårt. Hva mener du?



FB.ST

FrP vil forby bønnerop fra moskeer

– Fremskrittspartiet er helt tydelige på at vi sier nei til bønnerop fra moskeen på Fjell i Dr...

7.8K

1.1K comments 163 shares

Post 5: "The Government Needs to Do Its Job"



Fremskrittspartiet 

19 August 2022 · 



Partileder Sylvi Listhaug sa tydelig til regjeringen i gårsdagens partilederdebatt at de må slutte med å se på, følge og vurdere den alvorlige priskrisen og begynne å gjøre jobben sin. Nå må politikerne sørge for at folk har råd til å betale regningene sine. FrP vil begrense strømeksporten, ha makspris på strøm og kutte i avgiftene for å få ned prisene for folk og bedrifter. Hva mener du?



 5.3K

456  143 


Post 6: "FrP Propose 0.50 NOK Price Cap on Electricity"



Fremskrittspartiet 

10 January 2022 · 



I morgen foreslår FrP i Stortinget at maksprisen på strøm skal være 50 øre per kw/t. Vi er i en alvorlig situasjon der privatøkonomien til folk har blitt dårligere og mange gruer seg til den neste strømregningen kommer. Sånn skal vi ikke ha det i Norge. Nå må de andre partiene støtte vårt forslag som vil gi lavere strømpris for folk! Enig? 



FB.ST

FrP foreslår 50 øre som makspris på strøm

Tirsdag 11.januar fremmer FrP et forslag i Stortinget om at makspris...

 5.1K

367  123 

Appendices

Appendix A: Sylvi Listhaug Public Facebook Posts Through 08.05.21 – 08.05.23

Sylvi Listhaug Public Facebook Posts Through 08.05.21 - 08.05.23						
Rank	Reactions	Comments	Shares	Date	Post Genre	Post Summary
1	38k	10k	146	25.12.21	Personal	44th Birthday celebrated with family
2	31k	3.2k	111	28.10.21	National Romanticism	Photo before dinner at the castle
3	28k	8.3k	87	24.12.21	Personal	Christmas greetings to Facebook followers
4	21k	1.6k	321	09.12.21	Pro Oil Industry	Photo refueling car. Thrilled to avoid charging
5	19k	4.4k	65	31.12.21	Personal	Happy New Years Greetings to Facebook followers
6	19k	2.2k	4.2k	12.09.21	Anti-Establishment	Call to the public to vote FrP. Day before general election
7	17k	1.4k	132	04.06.21	National Romanticism	"I love Norway" Photo in national dress, fjord backdrop
8	17k	1.3k	43	12.11.21	Personal	Photo of making tacos on a Friday. Folksy custom
9	16k	3.4k	65	31.12.22	Personal	Happy New Years Greetings to Facebook followers
10	16k	902	208	20.05.21	Personal	Showing off new Cadillac Eldorado from 1968
11	16k	825	110	17.05.21	Personal	Happy independence day. Thanks to those who work
12	15k	3.2k	65	25.12.22	Personal	45th Birthday celebrated with family
13	15k	1.9k	290	27.07.21	Climate Sceptic	Loves the smell of real fuel. Lower petrol prices
14	15k	1.7k	42	28.07.21	Personal	Celebrates marriage of 13 years
15	14k	2.4k	57	24.12.22	Personal	Christmas greetings with household cat
16	14k	1.7k	258	10.11.21	Authoritarian	Comments on knife violence episode in Oslo
17	14k	1.2k	111	09.09.21	Charismatic Leader	Telling followers where to purchase dress she wore on TV
18	14k	1.1k	39	17.06.22	Personal	Galla at castle celebrating princess Alexandra
19	14k	798	222	23.08.21	Charismatic Leader	Awarded "Norway's most folksy politician"
20	14k	717	40	24.05.21	Personal	Thank you post after receiving sweater from her mother
21	13k	2.6k	836	29.11.21	Sovereignty	No more power out of Norway, when Norway needs it
22	13k	1.4k	97	29.04.22	Personal	Thank you post after reelected as party leader

23	13k	1.3k	384	30.11.21	Anti-Establishment	Critique of gov. handling of energy crisis
24	13k	1.1k	608	12.10.21	Anti-Establishment	Critique of Høyre (Conservative) proposed national budget
25	13k	513	39	11.06.21	Personal	New profile picture on Facebook
26	12k	1.6k	925	31.08.21	Pro Oil Industry	If oil production stops: emissions up and Norway down
27	12k	1k	60	02.12.22	Personal	Decorating at home before Christmas
28	12k	993	771	31.08.21	Pro Oil Industry	Critique of Høyre. Don't let the Middle East control oil.
29	12k	965	64	26.07.21	Personal	Photo of eating. "Few things are better than beer and steak"
30	12k	923	93	21.01.22	National Romanticism	Gratulates the Princess Ingrid Alexandra on 18th birthday
31	12k	765	333	27.08.21	Polling Numbers	Photo showing FrP increase in polls. No context for increase
32	11k	1.9k	1k	09.03.22	Anti-Establishment	Photo of petrol prices. Critique of gov handling
33	11k	1.7k	29	31.03.22	Personal	Youngest child 5 years old birthday party
34	11k	1.4k	806	09.05.22	Xenophobia	Terrorists from Taliban on luxury trip to Norway
35	11k	1.3k	1.2k	19.08.22	Anti-Establishment	Confronts minister of finance
36	11k	1.2k	176	30.04.22	Vox Populi	Photo next to new muscle car. Remove petrol fees
37	11k	813	530	07.09.21	National Romanticism	Photo of windmillplant. No to wind mills, yes to hydro
38	10k	2.3k	737	23.01.22	Xenophobia	Critique of Støre and Vedum handling of radical Islam
39	10k	1.8k	95	08.05.21	Personal	Post marking Sylvi being elected as new leader of FrP
40	10k	1.6k	419	01.12.21	Anti-Establishment	Critique of gov. handling of energy crisis
41	10k	1.6k	173	13.09.21	Personal	Photo of Sylvi holding ballot before general election
42	10k	1.1k	325	20.01.22	Anti-Establishment	Critique of gov. handling of energy crisis
43	10k	1k	566	11.01.21	Anti-Establishment	Critique of gov. handling of energy crisis
44	10k	980	40	09.10.22	Personal	Household cat named Elvis
45	10k	888	46	21.05.21	Personal	Enjoying an ice cream after a long work week
46	10k	784	435	27.07.22	Anti-Establishment	Comparing Norwegian and German petrol prices
47	10k	650	37	27.10.22	Personal	Parliament dinner at the castle
48	10k	587	39	28.05.21	Personal	Making "Friday Taco" Norwegian custom
49	10k	576	44	17.05.22	Personal	Celebrating independence day in traditional clothing
50	10k	522	263	30.08.21	Pro Oil Industry	Thank you post to the Norwegian oil workers
51	10k	460	291	07.09.21	Personal	Congratulates Fpu (youth party) with school election
52	10k	433	25	14.02.23	Personal	Celebrating 17 years of marriage with husband

53	9.9k	739	62	20.01.23	Personal	Guest on morning show "God Morgen Norge"
54	9.9k	452	34	01.12.21	Personal	Photo of homemade Advent calendars
55	9.8k	1.8k	783	08.12.21	Anti-Establishment	Critique of gov. handling of energy crisis
56	9.8k	418	105	23.05.22	Pro Oil Industry	Photo shoot from visit to and oil platform
57	9.7k	2k	307	12.08.21	Climate Sceptic	Video of Sylvi in muscle car. "Will (green party) arrest me?"
58	9.7k	1.3k	592	06.01.22	Anti-Establishment	Critique of gov. handling of energy crisis
59	9.6k	947	754	13.08.21	Climate Sceptic	Critique of climate party politician. Value of good roads
60	9.6k	820	95	21.02.22	National Romanticism	Gratulates the Norwegian King with his birthday
61	9.5k	629	63	17.05.21	National Romanticism	Happy independence day. Photo of Norwegian flag
62	9.5k	371	53	19.07.21	Personal	Photo of Sylvi in a BMW. "lovely start to the day"
63	9.3k	752	608	24.08.22	Sovereignty	Norwegians shouldn't pay for German energy needs
64	9.3k	380	33	08.06.21	Personal	Photo with 4 year old. Celebrating birthday
65	9.2k	4k	252	14.05.21	Xenophobia	"We are erasing our own culture and traditions"
66	9.2k	2.2k	2k	25.08.21	Anti-Establishment	Critique of media and politicians treatment of FrP
67	9.2k	431	53	03.10.22	Personal	Traditional clothing inside Parliament building
68	9.1k	975	483	17.06.22	Finance	Norwegians car dependent, lower petrol prices
69	9.1k	694	229	14.06.22	Polling Numbers	Good polling. Lower petrol, electricity, food costs
70	9.1k	380	52	24.06.21	Personal	Photo of Sylvi and husband camping outside of RV
71	9k	1.4k	733	19.01.22	Anti-Establishment	Critique of gov. handling of energy crisis
72	8.9k	1.2k	430	01.01.22	Anti-Establishment	Critique of gov. handling of energy crisis
73	8.7k	969	166	23.08.21	Pro Oil Industry	Critique of climate activists. Get a haircut and a job
74	8.7k	867	198	12.01.22	Anti-Establishment	Critique of gov. handling of energy crisis
75	8.7k	799	267	23.06.22	Polling Numbers	Good polling. Lower petrol, electricity, food costs
76	8.6k	727	1.6k	19.09.22	Anti-Establishment	Energy crisis is made by politicians
77	8.6k	499	95	13.09.21	Personal	Thank you to the voters after loss in general elections
78	8.5k	486	49	29.04.22	Personal	Tribute to former FrP leader Siv Jensen
79	8.5k	302	25	22.06.21	Personal	Photo from pitstop during roadtrip
80	8.4k	3.9k	582	21.01.22	Xenophobia	Response to Taliban delegation coming to Norway
81	8.4k	423	34	09.07.21	National Romanticism	Photo of Sylvi walking the stairs to Fjellstua
82	8.3k	2.2k	137	31.05.21	Climate Sceptic	Critisises Greta Thunberg. Doomsday prophecies unwanted

83	8.3k	932	471	22.03.22	Anti-Establishment	Critique of minister of finance's absence from debates
84	8.3k	584	297	10.09.21	Personal	Screenshot of TV2 debate rating for Sylvi
85	8.3k	274	46	29.07.21	Personal	Photo of Sylvi and Lothepus drinking beer in the sun
86	8.2k	839	253	02.05.22	Anti-Establishment	Pre-debate on the cost of living situation
87	8.2k	642	76	18.08.22	Personal	Photo from before a party leader debate
88	8.2k	572	96	20.05.22	Xenophobia	Comment on Mullah Krekar court case in Italy
89	8.1k	865	1.5k	11.07.22	Anti-Establishment	Critique of the largest Norwegian union LO
90	8.1k	683	320	07.07.22	Polling Numbers	Good polling. Lower prices
91	8k	1.9k	212	18.05.21	Xenophobia	Norway should not let IS-terrorists return to Norway
92	8k	1k	440	06.07.22	Anti-Establishment	FrP wants to hold gov. in check regarding electricity
93	8k	414	33	12.05.22	Personal	Photo of Sylvi before going out for dinner
94	7.9k	1.2k	515	02.12.22	Anti-Establishment	Critique of gov. handling of energy crisis
95	7.9k	908	176	04.02.22	Anti-Establishment	Critique: Former PM Stoltenberg new central bank chief
96	7.9k	588	236	30.07.21	Polling Numbers	Increase in polling. No context given to new polling
97	7.8k	587	26	04.09.22	Personal	Photo of new household cat
98	7.7k	1.1k	219	29.04.22	Anti-Establishment	Answers criticism from Minister of Finance, with counter
99	7.7k	560	321	20.12.22	Polling Numbers	Advertises good polling numbers
100	7.7k	430	161	28.04.22	Polling Numbers	Advertises good polling numbers
101	7.6k	1k	505	11.11.21	Anti-Establishment	Critique of gov. handling of cost of living
102	7.6k	372	328	24.06.21	Personal	Photo before RV tour in FrP branded RV
103	7.5k	978	208	11.05.22	Anti-Establishment	Listhaug or Vedum (Minister of Finance) petrol prices?
104	7.5k	216	37	06.05.22	National Romanticism	Pictures of Sylvi with typical Norwegian nature backdrop
105	7.4k	1.6k	407	06.06.21	Authoritarian	Criticises public littering. "where is common decency"
106	7.4k	844	252	27.10.21	Anti-Establishment	Cost of living crisis. Normal people need priority
107	7.4k	664	265	22.06.21	Xenophobia	Responds to infection rates among immigrants (COVID)
108	7.4k	330	25	25.06.21	Charismatic Leader	Photo from RV. Making "Friday taco"
109	7.3k	1.2k	190	17.11.21	Anti-Establishment	Critique of politicians abusing financial aid
110	7.2k	607	1.2k	17.02.22	Anti-Establishment	Critique of gov. earning more, while cost of living rises
111	7.1k	1.5k	140	18.10.21	Xenophobia	Immigrants who left for ISIS should not be allowed return
112	7.1k	421	30	24.06.22	Personal	Vacation photo with national romantic backdrop

113	7k	687	278	18.06.22	Anti-Establishment	FrP published revised national budget proposal
114	7k	685	168	27.09.22	Polling Numbers	0.50 NOK price cap on electricity + polling numbers
115	7k	680	218	01.11.22	Finance	Fees on consumer goods need to be decreased
116	7k	528	149	26.02.22	Pro-Democracy	Photo from speech against Russian invasion of Ukraine
117	7k	478	43	05.05.22	Vox Populi	Picture at the petrol pump, critiques prices
118	7k	385	411	19.04.22	Anti-Establishment	FrP only party who wanted to vote on petrol fee removal
119	7k	361	93	04.09.21	Personal	Photo in front of American muscle cars in Moss
120	7k	239	18	21.07.21	Charismatic Leader	Photo of Sylvi in the sun making dinner on the grill
121	7k	230	49	19.06.22	Vox Populi	Attends American car meetup with own car
122	6.9k	1.3k	212	21.06.21	Xenophobia	Worried about infection rates among immigrants (COVID)
123	6.9k	548	207	15.06.22	Polling Numbers	Good polling. Lower petrol, electricity, food costs
124	6.9k	273	49	18.06.21	Personal	Thank you post after receiving gifts from supporters
125	6.9k	209	29	13.03.23	Personal	Photo of Sylvi clearing snow outside her house
126	6.8k	447	157	06.08.22	Xenophobia	Demands no special welfare treatment for immigrants
127	6.7k	581	256	21.03.22	Anti-Establishment	Critique of gov. handling of cost of living
128	6.6k	1k	373	17.12.21	Anti-Establishment	Critique of gov. handling of energy crisis
129	6.6k	496	266	24.11.21	Polling Numbers	Good polling and critique of cost of living rising
130	6.6k	450	841	27.08.22	Finance	Billions wasted on foreign aid, climate and bureaucracy
131	6.6k	364	79	06.08.21	Personal	Photo of Sylvi recreationally. Celebrates good polling
132	6.6k	167	73	20.10.22	Personal	Meets local celebrity Lothepus (controversial character)
133	6.6k	164	24	06.05.22	Personal	Visits Agder and includes photos of muscle cars
134	6.5k	805	213	08.10.21	Xenophobia	Voices opposition to Muslim prayer calls
135	6.5k	474	279	26.05.21	Xenophobia	Critises political correctness around immigrants with covid
136	6.5k	305	24	26.01.22	Personal	Photo of Sylvi making a homemade meal for the family
137	6.5k	230	128	18.05.22	Polling Numbers	Picture of poll results. No additional information
138	6.4k	757	168	10.04.22	Sovereignty	FrP with a clear no to EU membership
139	6.4k	722	146	06.10.22	Anti-Establishment	Debate with minister of finance, critiques gov.
140	6.4k	396	298	02.06.22	Anti-Establishment	Union favours allegiances over its workers
141	6.4k	208	28	05.07.21	National Romanticism	Photo of Sylvi from RV tour. Backdrop of nature
142	6.3k	839	349	07.06.22	Eldercare	Speaks at pensioners demonstration outside parliament

143	6.3k	567	157	07.06.21	Finance	Post celebrating toll road removal
144	6.3k	214	50	27.08.21	Personal	Photo of grandfather washing RV
145	6.2k	541	203	06.06.21	Finance	Celebrating cuts in ferry prices and more funds for healthcare
146	6.2k	384	185	01.09.21	Pro Oil Industry	Shutting down the oil industry would make Norway poor
147	6.2k	275	58	25.10.21	Personal	Condolences after violent tragedy in Kongsberg
148	6.2k	227	273	13.08.22	Pro Oil Industry	Be proud of Norwegians in the oil and gas industry
149	6.2k	195	113	10.12.21	Charismatic Leader	Photo from visiting people suffering from ALS
150	6.1k	1.3k	173	02.06.21	Anti-Establishment	Criticises MDG after budget scandal
151	6.1k	704	321	22.01.22	Anti-Establishment	Critique of Rødt (left-wing) and SP+AP electricity prices
152	6.1k	560	213	28.03.23	Xenophobia	No more terrorists to Norway
153	6.1k	555	192	10.03.23	Anti-Establishment	Critique of oil earnings compared to petrol prices
154	6.1k	532	35	06.12.21	Personal	Condolences after death of conservative Kåre Willoch
155	6.1k	509	185	22.08.21	Pro Oil Industry	We will always be proud of Norwegian oil workers
156	6.1k	218	65	08.05.22	Pro-Defence	German occupation ended and national veteran's day
157	6k	1.6k	103	14.07.23	Anti-Establishment	Suggests vote of no confidence in gov. over electricity
158	6k	1.4k	333	08.12.21	Charismatic Leader	Shares and responds to email received from a constituent
159	6k	1.2k	340	18.01.23	Eldercare	Critique of the state of Norwegian eldercare
160	6k	850	445	20.08.21	Xenophobia	Stop Muslim special requirements
161	6k	821	101	08.09.21	Personal	Photo of preparation before climate debate
162	6k	390	373	06.05.22	Anti-Establishment	Action against petrol prices in mandal, critiques gov
163	5.9k	996	45	14.10.21	Charismatic Leader	Condolences after tragedy in Kongsberg
164	5.9k	693	212	05.01.22	Polling Numbers	Photo of good polling numbers from Aftenposten
165	5.9k	541	377	13.10.21	Anti-Establishment	Critique of cost of living rising
166	5.9k	345	268	13.10.22	Climate Sceptic	No electrification of oil platforms. Climate symbolism
167	5.8k	822	499	30.11.22	Anti-Establishment	Critique of gov. lack of support for oil industry
168	5.8k	508	66	20.02.23	Charismatic Leader	National Gallery keeps "controversial" painting up
169	5.8k	450	19	26.12.22	Personal	Photo of household cat
170	5.8k	250	295	09.02.23	Pro Oil Industry	No to electrification of Melkøya
171	5.7k	470	198	11.10.22	Anti-Establishment	LO Union leader acting more like an AP politician
172	5.7k	414	219	01.08.21	Charismatic Leader	Video of Listhaug thanking truckers for their work

173	5.7k	373	138	21.08.22	Personal	Visit to local party chapter. Video of muscle car
174	5.7k	324	140	04.04.22	Polling Numbers	Good polling numbers in TV2 polling
175	5.7k	284	471	01.12.22	Anti-Establishment	Critique of oil policy. More oil needed to defeat Russia
176	5.6k	678	139	08.08.22	Anti-Establishment	Pre-debate on electricity rationing
177	5.6k	583	161	20.04.22	Anti-Establishment	Question PM on cost of living hurting people
178	5.6k	387	226	09.04.22	Sovereignty	Comparing the German invasion to the Rus-Ukr conflict
179	5.6k	369	261	21.05.22	Finance	FrP wants to lower the cost of living
180	5.6k	227	61	20.11.21	Personal	"Happy to be with FrP after two years of corona restrictions"
181	5.6k	227	13	25.07.21	Personal	Photo with the new family horse
182	5.5k	1.3k	326	05.01.22	Anti-Establishment	PM isn't living in the real world. Cost of living on the rise
183	5.5k	912	171	21.12.21	Polling Numbers	Photo of good polling number from Dagbladet
184	5.5k	892	56	07.11.22	Authoritarian	Yes to a general armament of the police
185	5.5k	459	223	03.06.21	Anti-Establishment	Billions sent out of the country while Norwegians are sick
186	5.5k	306	79	02.05.22	Xenophobia	Norway should copy Denmark+UK. Less immigrants
187	5.5k	79	26	25.05.21	Personal	Photo of Sylvi after taking her daughter riding
188	5.5k	76	11	14.11.22	Personal	"Happy father's day to my husband"
189	5.4k	942	162	18.11.21	Anti-Establishment	Critique of politicians abusing financial aid
190	5.4k	465	86	29.06.22	Finance	The petrol prices have become too high
191	5.4k	411	245	09.01.23	Finance	People have less, halve the VAT on food
192	5.4k	400	62	23.07.22	Anti-Establishment	The gov. has failed their voters
193	5.4k	137	24	30.06.21	National Romanticism	Photo of fjords "Norway is beautiful"
194	5.3k	633	25	26.03.23	Personal	FrP member Hoksrud 50 years. (involved in scandal)
195	5.3k	618	812	05.10.22	Anti-Establishment	Critique of PM. People have less, while the gov. has more
196	5.3k	605	192	07.12.21	Anti-Establishment	Critique of gov. handling of energy crisis
197	5.3k	463	103	10.09.22	Polling Numbers	Photo of best polling from Nationen since Feb. 2020
198	5.3k	428	115	26.08.22	Polling Numbers	Photo of best polling from Dagbladet since Jan. 2020
199	5.3k	373	73	15.06.22	Climate Sceptic	Sylvi calls for climate activists to be deported
200	5.3k	225	54	15.11.21	Personal	Photo from rally track at Vålerbanen
201	5.3k	102	60	30.10.22	Personal	Photos from Oslo Motor Show visit with family
202	5.2k	1.6k	183	19.05.21	Anti-Establishment	"Sad to see Sp and KrF in favour of watering down flag laws"

203	5.2k	930	109	31.07.21	Climate Sceptic	Stop the green party - Vote FrP
204	5.2k	694	185	24.04.22	Xenophobia	"Worried what values immigrants teach their children"
205	5.2k	623	177	28.06.22	Xenophobia	"Islam has extremist views on LGBTQ people"
206	5.2k	523	232	12.01.23	Anti-Establishment	I fear it could get ugly if the gov. doesn't wake up
207	5.2k	519	331	22.01.23	Xenophobia	One year ago the Taliban visited Norway on luxury trip
208	5.2k	390	231	24.07.22	Xenophobia	Fix Norway before wasting funds on climate and foreign aid
209	5.2k	370	228	25.10.22	Anti-Establishment	Who is silencing NRK? Debate on hijabs cancelled
210	5.1k	590	119	16.08.21	Xenophobia	Listhaug warns about a new migrant crisis
211	5.1k	170	90	29.08.22	Pro Oil Industry	Visit to oil convention in Stavanger. Proud of oil
212	5k	1.9k	802	09.12.21	Anti-Establishment	Critique of gov. handling of cost of living
213	5k	1.6k	163	18.07.21	Xenophobia	"That we have an unpolitically correct org. is not a problem"
214	5k	481	172	03.08.22	Recruitment	Invitation to join FrP if you want lower cost of living
215	5k	300	154	30.04.22	Sovereignty	"We should stand up against undemocratic regimes"

Appendix B: FrP FB Party Account Facebook Posts Through 08.05.23 – 08.05.23

FrP FB Party Account Public Facebook Posts Through 08.05.21 - 08.05.23						
Rank	Reactions	Comments	Shares	Date	Post Genre	Post Summary
1	7.8k	1.1k	163	06.09.21	Xenophobia	FrP wants to ban prayer calls from mosques
2	7.7k	535	465	20.08.22	Sovereignty	Norwegians should not pay for irresponsible European energy policy
3	5.8k	379	712	11.10.21	Xenophobia	No to full-coverage garments
4	5.3k	456	143	19.08.22	Anti-Establishment	Criticism of the government
5	5.3k	252	235	25.08.21	Sovereignty	Norwegian electricity should be used in Norway. Halt exports
6	5.1k	746	26	23.12.21	Personal	Christmas and New Years greeting from Sylvi Listhaug
7	5.1k	367	123	10.01.22	Finance	FrP suggest price cap on electricity prices
8	4.9k	183	869	15.06.21	Climate Sceptic	Yes to petrol and diesel cars after 2025
9	4.8k	731	110	24.12.22	Finance	Christmas Greetings from Sylvi. Cost of living during holidays
10	4.7k	731	461	09.09.21	Climate Sceptic	Fear that gov. will collaborate with climate fanatics if elected in general elections 2021
11	4.6k	741	202	17.07.21	Pro Car	FrP says yes to fossil fuel cars after 2025
12	4.5k	356	178	20.09.22	Anti-Establishment	The gov. says Norway is facing hard times, in reality rich off of energy prices
13	4.4k	427	300	16.06.22	Anti-Establishment	FrP's revised national budget
14	4.3k	344	159	11.12.22	Recruitment	Join FrP
15	4.2k	435	301	17.01.23	Eldercare	It is unacceptable that our elderly live below the poverty line
16	4.1k	387	93	11.10.22	Xenophobia	Foreign aid symbolic practice making corrupt leaders richer
17	4.1k	276	168	05.05.22	Anti-Establishment	Gov earning more than ever. Lower electricity costs or get out of government
18	4.1k	246	155	19.06.22	Recruitment	Join FrP
19	3.8k	753	147	27.07.21	Xenophobia	"Muslim demands for halal options at Burger King. More demands will lead to segregation"
20	3.8k	179	162	14.09.22	Pro Oil Industry	Proud of Norwegian oil workers
21	3.7k	355	272	19.04.22	Finance	Remove taxes on fuel
22	3.7k	319	119	02.08.22	Recruitment	Join FrP
23	3.7k	246	163	05.09.22	Anti-Establishment	Stop the waste. Build Norway
24	3.6k	605	159	07.09.21	Xenophobia	No prayer calls in Norwegian mosques. Does not belong with Norwegian tradition
25	3.6k	301	84	29.11.21	Finance	FrP wants to export less energy

26	3.6k	211	445	03.04.22	Finance	Remove petrol and diesel taxes now!
27	3.5k	293	132	28.08.22	Anti-Establishment	Criticism of the government
28	3.4k	312	90	09.05.22	Anti-Establishment	Critique of Taliban and Taliban visit to Norway
29	3.4k	176	190	24.07.22	Anti-Establishment	Stop the waste. Build Norway
30	3.3k	432	112	03.01.22	Anti-Establishment	Critique of gov. for giving most people a worse personal economy
31	3.3k	284	113	25.09.21	Finance	Cost of living increases. FrP wants to cut costs
32	3.3k	277	43	22.10.22	Xenophobia	Child hijabs reinforce suppression of women and sexualise small children
33	3.2k	434	75	25.02.23	Personal Freedom	Wine in grocery stores
34	3.2k	240	146	23.11.21	Anti-Establishment	FrP critique the gov. for national budget disfavouring normal people
35	3.2k	221	135	23.08.21	Xenophobia	FrP wants to cut state funding to anti-racism centre in Oslo. Spreads discontent
36	3.2k	213	139	17.06.22	Finance	Remove taxes on fuel
37	3.1k	280	127	13.06.22	Pro Car	FrP wants to remove fees on petrol
38	3.1k	276	86	08.09.21	Anti-Establishment	FrP warns of the dangers of the left-wing and climate parties
39	3.1k	274	102	15.09.22	Recruitment	Join FrP
40	3.1k	214	344	20.05.22	Anti-Establishment	Stop the waste. Reprioritise
41	3.1k	189	93	13.08.22	Finance	"The last thing we need is a new socialist death-tax" Critique of inheritance tax
42	3.1k	177	19	02.12.22	Personal	Sylvi wishes everyone a nice run-up to Christmas
43	3k	366	86	03.09.21	Xenophobia	"child poverty exclusively caused by immigration"
44	3k	202	101	21.09.22	Sovereignty	Norway should not pay the price for Germany's energy ties to Russia
45	3k	200	119	08.12.21	Finance	Energy crisis concerns
46	3k	183	289	11.11.22	Pro Car	FrP politician Carl I. Hagen speaking on increased costs for motorists
47	2.9k	272	82	10.09.21	Xenophobia	Child poverty near exclusively caused by immigration
48	2.9k	247	155	26.09.22	Anti-Establishment	Stop the waste. Reprioritise
49	2.9k	236	174	20.06.21	Eldercare	Pension shall not be shortened
50	2.9k	190	338	19.03.22	Anti-Establishment	The state gets richer while ordinary people struggle
51	2.8k	324	75	29.11.21	Finance	FrP wants to lower cost of living expenses, and lower fees on alcohol and tobacco
52	2.8k	318	70	10.12.21	Anti-Establishment	PM should apologize for handling of energy crisis
53	2.8k	253	141	02.09.22	Anti-Establishment	Citizens of the richest country in the world freeze through winter. Gov. gets rich
54	2.8k	209	71	02.11.22	Recruitment	Join FrP
55	2.8k	195	65	19.09.21	Xenophobia	"Insane to let IS terrorists immigrate to Norway"

56	2.8k	132	135	07.11.21	Anti-Establishment	The gov. wastes funds on climate tech, while nothing is left for the rest of society
57	2.7k	514	82	16.05.22	Personal Freedom	Yes to cash
58	2.7k	312	118	31.07.22	Finance	Stop the power robbery (high prices)
59	2.7k	287	125	10.10.22	Anti-Establishment	Stop the waste. Reprioritise
60	2.7k	286	25	13.08.21	Anti-Establishment	FrP promises to be a clear opposition party after general elections of 2021
61	2.7k	283	76	28.11.22	Finance	Lower prices for healthcare
62	2.7k	255	254	31.01.22	Finance	Max NOK 0.5 kWh
63	2.7k	247	82	01.06.22	Pro Car	FrP wants road owners to take responsibility if a car is damaged due to conditions
64	2.7k	244	111	09.10.22	Recruitment	Join FrP
65	2.7k	242	58	17.04.22	Pro-Defence	FrP wants to strengthen the military
66	2.7k	234	206	18.08.22	Anti-Establishment	Stop the waste. Reprioritise
67	2.7k	25	72	02.12.21	Finance	FrP wants to pay out electricity support to each household
68	2.6k	250	147	23.03.23	Finance	Max NOK 0.5 kWh
69	2.6k	249	160	17.01.22	Finance	Lower tolls on toll roads
70	2.6k	208	68	20.09.22	Anti-Establishment	FrP believe the gov should pay back taxes based on profits of energy prices
71	2.6k	205	74	17.07.21	Climate Sceptic	FrP no to climate policy on leisure boats
72	2.6k	201	81	16.12.21	Finance	FrP concerned about cost of living crisis
73	2.6k	172	66	30.07.22	Xenophobia	"If we should confront the alt-right we should also confront radical muslims"
74	2.6k	149	32	04.06.21	Xenophobia	"Asylum receptions should be situated outside of Norway. Help them where they are"
75	2.6k	142	325	05.01.23	Anti-Establishment	Solvik-Olsen criticizes Vedum's electricity subsidy scheme
76	2.5k	548	68	07.05.22	Anti-Establishment	Critique of conservatives bringing up the EU debate
77	2.5k	450	77	07.10.22	Finance	Increased taxes
78	2.5k	277	934	18.06.21	Authoritarian	Following rape committed by immigrants FrP calls for harsher sentencing and policing
79	2.5k	262	238	15.01.22	Finance	Max NOK 0.5 kWh
80	2.5k	189	76	06.07.21	Finance	FrP wants to remove the property tax
81	2.4k	454	31	10.06.22	Personal	Have a nice weekend!
82	2.4k	402	100	09.02.23	Xenophobia	Demonstration canceled based on the burning of the Koran
83	2.4k	293	55	07.01.22	Personal Freedom	"Pure communism when SV (left-wing) suggest new cottages to be rented out"
84	2.4k	275	167	26.03.23	Sovereignty	No to a new EU-debate

85	2.4k	219	59	03.08.21	Xenophobia	"The immigration system should be completely reworked"
86	2.4k	209	69	19.05.21	Authoritarian	Yes to more punishment after violence against the police
87	2.4k	197	100	30.09.21	Xenophobia	"Norway should not be naive" No terrorist immigrants to Norway
88	2.4k	196	83	27.06.22	Anti-Establishment	Critique of gov. not lowering cost of living
89	2.4k	195	90	27.11.21	Anti-Establishment	It is time for a crisis package for the people
90	2.4k	189	138	16.11.22	Anti-Establishment	Stop the waste. Reprioritise
91	2.4k	180	228	21.03.22	Finance	Remove petrol and diesel taxes now!
92	2.4k	97	150	13.08.21	Finance	FrP will never support a reinstatement of the inheritance tax "death tax"
93	2.3k	263	119	12.02.22	Finance	Stop the electricity robbery
94	2.3k	249	171	04.12.21	Finance	National budget for 2022 not good enough for pensioners who struggle financially
95	2.3k	248	70	17.11.21	Finance	FrP concerned about normal people not affording to use their cars
96	2.3k	245	29	26.09.22	Xenophobia	Children's hijab should be banned. Sexualises children
97	2.3k	244	131	01.07.22	Finance	Cut the food VAT in half
98	2.3k	244	93	27.11.22	Recruitment	Join FrP
99	2.3k	156	72	21.12.22	Finance	No to property tax
100	2.3k	151	109	24.08.21	Culture War	Preserve Norwegian values
101	2.3k	151	47	08.05.21	Personal	Sylvi Listhaug elected new party leader
102	2.3k	129	111	08.09.21	Pro Oil Industry	FrP promises to maintain the oil industry
103	2.2k	508	173	28.07.21	Xenophobia	FrP does not accept criticism of them having blame for the 22. July 2011 terror action
104	2.2k	432	71	19.02.23	Polling Numbers	FrP is making the most progress
105	2.2k	346	79	10.09.22	Personal Freedom	Yes to cash
106	2.2k	318	87	07.09.21	Pro Car	Gov wants businesses to pay fees on street parking. "This is communism"
107	2.2k	301	38	22.06.22	Xenophobia	Schools should have no part in Pride parades
108	2.2k	239	54	17.08.21	Xenophobia	"Important to avoid sending signals that the Norwegian borders are open for immigrants"
109	2.2k	215	55	13.11.21	Finance	Sylvi Listhaug warns about expensive petrol prices
110	2.2k	212	110	22.02.22	Finance	Strengthen the economy for pensioners
111	2.2k	204	187	20.01.22	Finance	Max NOK 0.5 kWh
112	2.2k	199	57	09.01.22	Finance	Reduce taxes on fuel
113	2.2k	174	104	06.02.23	Anti-Establishment	Minister of Health and disclaimer

114	2.2k	174	62	08.12.22	Anti-Establishment	Gov restricts individuals choice in everyday life services
115	2.2k	110	84	31.05.22	Pro Oil Industry	Invest in oil and gas
116	2.1k	429	53	12.12.22	Anti-Establishment	Increase minimum pension. Gov. voted down FrP proposition
117	2.1k	384	44	15.06.22	Finance	FrP proposes cost of living cuts. "How will the other parties vote on proposition?"
118	2.1k	302	103	28.07.21	Finance	FrP want to remove the fees on fuel for boats
119	2.1k	273	73	21.02.22	Finance	Reduce taxes on fuel
120	2.1k	242	341	13.08.21	Climate Sceptic	Norway does not need symbolic climate policy when China is bigger polluter
121	2.1k	225	75	05.07.21	Finance	Leaders in Norwegian (company) should pay back bonuses recieved while workers on leave
122	2.1k	223	92	12.09.21	Anti-Establishment	Vote FrP in the general election for a better Norway
123	2.1k	213	97	22.10.22	Anti-Establishment	Stop the waste. Reprioritise
124	2.1k	201	102	28.05.22	Finance	Strengthen the economy for pensioners
125	2.1k	184	143	15.05.22	Finance	Remove taxes on fuel
126	2.1k	173	113	22.09.22	Anti-Establishment	Critique of politicians lack of action during cost of living crisis
127	2.1k	163	62	21.09.21	Healthcare	Norwegians shouldn't have to travel for healthcare. Faster clearing for medicine
128	2.1k	137	64	09.09.21	Climate Sceptic	FrP regards phasing out oil as unrealistic. Loss of 200k jobs
129	2.1k	135	33	06.12.21	Anti-Establishment	Critique of politicians misuse of financial aid
130	2.1k	97	11	14.08.21	Personal	Thank you to the voters after general elections of 2021
131	2.1k	88	36	18.08.21	Xenophobia	FrP wants to completely change the current immigration policy.
132	2.1k	82	115	03.10.21	Pro Oil Industry	FrP will invest in oil and gas
133	2.1k	65	110	02.09.21	Finance	FrP will never support a reinstatement of the inheritance tax "death tax"
134	2k	557	82	21.06.22	Xenophobia	Gov labels products made in Israeli settlements. "Israel only democracy in region"
135	2k	258	86	11.06.22	Healthcare	FrP wants "right to try" medical procedures approved in Norway
136	2k	212	84	02.11.21	Anti-Establishment	FrP wants to give normal people crisis package to lower cost of living. Gov against
137	2k	205	107	01.02.23	Finance	Cut the food VAT in half
138	2k	192	94	10.02.23	Sovereignty	Cheap electricity to Europe
139	2k	188	84	31.08.22	Finance	The state earn more than ever on energy, FrP fears consequences of prices
140	2k	179	105	14.08.21	Election	Stop Rødt, SV and MDG
141	2k	176	66	08.11.21	Finance	FrP wants cuts to the cost of living expenses
142	2k	172	60	24.02.22	Personal Freedom	Let people decide their own lives

143	2k	171	57	15.12.22	Finance	Norway has enough power. Take control over export cables and lower prices
144	2k	147	144	09.08.22	Anti-Establishment	Stop the waste. Reprioritise
145	2k	97	61	07.11.21	Xenophobia	"Not a human right to receive asylum in Europe"
146	2k	72	38	07.09.21	Polling Numbers	Polling numbers from schools
147	2k	70	85	15.10.21	Finance	No to increased deductibles
148	1.9k	1.2k	18	11.07.21	Personal Freedom	FrP says yes to stores open on Sundays
149	1.9k	534	47	05.06.21	Pro Car	Approval for increased speed limits
150	1.9k	259	44	13.11.21	Authoritarian	FrP propose general armament of the police
151	1.9k	216	15	25.08.21	Personal	Sylvi Listhaug elected parliamentary leader for FrP group
152	1.9k	201	85	02.02.22	Finance	Max NOK 0.5 kWh
153	1.9k	198	130	21.05.22	Eldercare	FrP wants to keep The Elderly Ombudsman
154	1.9k	191	45	22.09.22	Authoritarian	Call for immediate action to curb violent crime in Oslo
155	1.9k	187	180	28.01.22	Finance	Max NOK 0.5 kWh
156	1.9k	186	127	04.04.22	Finance	Strengthen the economy for pensioners
157	1.9k	181	48	09.11.22	Anti-Establishment	FrP against taxation of fish industry
158	1.9k	171	97	18.01.22	Finance	Reduce taxes on fuel
159	1.9k	171	33	23.07.21	Personal	Have a nice weekend!
160	1.9k	162	115	13.10.21	Anti-Establishment	Criticism of the government
161	1.9k	125	51	18.07.21	Pro Oil Industry	Norways should not phase out oil industry, instead increase exports
162	1.9k	123	43	19.08.21	Finance	FrP wants to remove the property tax
163	1.9k	99	76	13.05.22	Anti-Establishment	Stop the waste. Reprioritise
164	1.8k	316	36	10.09.22	Xenophobia	"Do you want terrorists retrieved to our country?"
165	1.8k	298	117	07.08.21	Election	Anti-tax, stop Rødt, SV and MDG
166	1.8k	253	62	08.01.22	Recruitment	Join FrP if you want lower taxes, better eldercare, stern immigration and more roads
167	1.8k	223	87	21.08.21	Election	Stop Rødt, SV and MDG
168	1.8k	223	67	30.11.22	Anti-Establishment	The gov. not helping out with cost of living increases
169	1.8k	185	45	05.08.21	Anti-Establishment	FrP critique of left-wing parties, FrP is the guarantee that the left won't come to power
170	1.8k	185	45	15.08.22	Anti-Establishment	Gov lacks action and refuses to handle energy crisis until 2023
171	1.8k	180	92	19.12.22	Finance	FrP No to reinstating inheritance tax

172	1.8k	171	85	30.08.22	Sovereignty	No to EU
173	1.8k	171	51	05.12.22	Anti-Establishment	PM bluffing about oil industry. Restricts exploration for new deposits
174	1.8k	165	230	06.06.22	Finance	Remove taxes on fuel
175	1.8k	156	66	08.11.21	Anti-Establishment	The gov. pours money on symbolic climate policy and leaves crumbs for the public
176	1.8k	149	89	11.06.22	Anti-Establishment	Harsh criticism of the government
177	1.8k	119	76	03.06.21	Finance	It is time for a crisis package for the people
178	1.8k	94	30	21.06.21	Climate Sceptic	Critique of the green party "policy not based in reality"
179	1.8k	90	65	20.06.22	Finance	Max NOK 0.5 kWh
180	1.8k	82	56	18.11.21	Finance	Reduce taxes on fuel
181	1.8k	79	62	25.11.21	Finance	Stop wasting money on symbolic issues (immigration, climate) and spend on money
182	1.8k	53	70	31.08.21	Pro Oil Industry	"Norway should be last country to phase out oil industry"
183	1.7k	332	17	20.05.21	Xenophobia	Sylvi Listhaug says: "Israel has a right to defend its land and its people"
184	1.7k	317	42	02.08.21	Xenophobia	FrP invites Ap (Labour) to immigration debate
185	1.7k	316	50	02.12.22	Anti-Establishment	FrP believe the gov is failing Norwegian hydro plants
186	1.7k	285	34	29.03.23	Xenophobia	The terrorists should never have been brought to Norway
187	1.7k	257	51	02.11.21	Authoritarian	Oslo is not a safe city. Violent crime on the rise
188	1.7k	194	47	08.02.22	Finance	Keep more of your own money
189	1.7k	183	123	08.01.23	Anti-Establishment	Criticism of the government regarding high electricity prices
190	1.7k	165	34	28.11.21	Pro Car	FrP wants to remove toll roads nation wide
191	1.7k	156	37	23.11.21	Anti-Establishment	FrP demands answers on politicians's misuse of financial aid
192	1.7k	154	26	06.12.22	Xenophobia	Immigrants without need for protection should be sent home
193	1.7k	149	142	28.09.21	Healthcare	Norwegians shouldn't have to travel for healthcare. Faster clearing for medicine
194	1.7k	145	59	31.07.21	Pro Oil Industry	It would be a grave mistake to phase out the Norwegian oil industry
195	1.7k	141	99	28.06.22	Finance	Remove petrol and diesel taxes now!
196	1.7k	138	41	21.11.21	Anti-Establishment	FrP wants to go after the politicians who misused financial aid
197	1.7k	121	55	25.11.21	Finance	FrP focus on alternative national budget. FrP alternative would help most people
198	1.7k	113	54	11.11.21	Finance	Cheeper electricity
199	1.7k	86	33	04.12.21	Personal Freedom	Let people decide their own lives
200	1.7k	80	48	05.09.21	Personal Freedom	Let people decide their own lives

201	1.6k	487	16	19.06.22	Climate Sceptic	Sylvi comments: "Respectless climate activists interrupt questions session in parliament"
202	1.6k	477	87	09.12.21	Anti-Establishment	Sylvi Listhaug reacts to Minister of Industry not appearing for hearing
203	1.6k	321	35	09.06.22	Pro Car	FrP wants to build more roads without toll roads
204	1.6k	284	94	21.12.21	Anti-Establishment	Comparison between AP/SP's power support scheme vs FrP's
205	1.6k	259	129	01.02.22	Finance	Keep more of your own money
206	1.6k	257	64	10.11.21	Anti-Establishment	The gov. betrays the elderly and the sick while wasting funds on climate symbolism
207	1.6k	226	85	08.06.21	Finance	Cutting toll road fees
208	1.6k	218	66	04.10.22	Finance	The districts are affected by high prices
209	1.6k	217	40	12.03.23	Authoritarian	Yes to general arming of police
210	1.6k	200	57	07.04.22	Recruitment	Do you agree with us? Join us
211	1.6k	191	52	10.12.22	Anti-Establishment	Gov not capable of lowering energy prices
212	1.6k	190	93	21.11.22	Finance	Remove taxes on fuel
213	1.6k	155	53	22.09.21	Anti-Establishment	Sylvi asks for guarantee from minister of finance that petrol fees won't increase
214	1.6k	142	67	13.07.21	Eldercare	Pension shall not be shortened
215	1.6k	137	94	11.07.21	Healthcare	You should get the help you need in Norway
216	1.6k	130	57	15.08.22	Vox Populi	Politicians should not rule over people
217	1.6k	126	30	11.06.21	Xenophobia	FrP only party showing initiative to start judicial procedures against IS-terrorists
218	1.6k	113	62	12.10.22	Anti-Establishment	Gov. wants to remove investment deal for eldercare facilities
219	1.6k	100	46	04.07.21	Pro Car	Proud driver
220	1.6k	94	33	21.09.21	Finance	FrP wants to lower petrol prices
221	1.6k	92	17	16.09.21	Personal Freedom	Let people decide their own lives
222	1.6k	90	122	24.03.22	Finance	Remove petrol and diesel taxes now!
223	1.6k	89	81	01.09.21	Election	Inheritance tax, stop Rødt, SV and MDG
224	1.6k	84	36	16.09.21	Finance	FrP demands less funding for culture. Should be used on health- and eldercare, roads
225	1.6k	84	24	01.11.22	Xenophobia	Sylvi pleased with Sweden tightening immigration and asylum policy
226	1.6k	83	72	18.10.21	Finance	Reduce taxes on fuel
227	1.6k	47	50	18.10.22	Pro Car	Proud driver
228	1.5k	245	39	06.09.22	Finance	FrP wants to limit energy exports, remove electricity fees, and cap el-prices
229	1.5k	228	38	25.07.21	Climate Sceptic	Electrification of leisure boats will have no impact on climate change. Symbolic action

230	1.5k	207	83	19.07.22	Finance	Remove petrol and diesel taxes now!
231	1.5k	187	132	29.03.23	Pro Oil Industry	EU wants to ban petrol cars
232	1.5k	186	101	07.04.22	Sovereignty	No to EU
233	1.5k	182	102	11.08.22	Finance	Cut the food VAT in half
234	1.5k	179	67	13.07.22	National Romanticism	Clean ocean without plastic
235	1.5k	168	62	15.06.22	Anti-Establishment	Gov and SV (left-wing) fund climate policy, disregard eldercare
236	1.5k	158	19	19.05.21	Xenophobia	FrP clear on former IS member: "You are on your own"
237	1.5k	153	88	02.01.23	Anti-Establishment	Criticism of the government
238	1.5k	151	18	15.07.22	Personal	Have a nice weekend! What are you going to do this weekend?
239	1.5k	142	63	19.06.22	Finance	The best way to help people with cost of living crisis is to cut prices
240	1.5k	131	58	01.09.22	Sovereignty	Why should Norway save Europe's energy demands?
241	1.5k	128	53	03.02.23	Personal Freedom	The car is important in people's everyday life
242	1.5k	127	67	29.06.21	Anti-Establishment	FrP worried for new roads if the left-wing parties win 2021 general election
243	1.5k	125	47	12.09.21	Anti-Establishment	"Høyre (the conservatives) not recognisable" FrP wants to cut taxes and fees further
244	1.5k	122	206	01.09.21	Pro Oil Industry	FrP the only party who will defend Norwegian oil industry
245	1.5k	118	105	30.03.23	Healthcare	Cuts in patient treatment to build new hospitals
246	1.5k	117	72	10.07.22	Finance	Remove electricity duty and VAT on electricity
247	1.5k	115	73	20.03.23	Anti-Establishment	Criticism of SV's politics
248	1.5k	109	25	17.12.21	Anti-Establishment	Critique of gov handling of energy crisis
249	1.5k	105	60	01.08.22	Anti-Establishment	The worst government in Norwegian history
250	1.5k	105	56	15.12.22	Anti-Establishment	Minister of finance Vedum lying about gov reducing petrol fees
251	1.5k	100	70	13.12.21	Anti-Establishment	Critique of gov handling of energy crisis
252	1.5k	94	53	27.09.22	Xenophobia	Will ban full-coverage garments
253	1.5k	84	75	07.09.22	Anti-Establishment	Sola with an FrP mayor wins NHO award for best town
254	1.5k	67	58	08.05.22	Pro-Defence	Tribute to the Norwegian Defense Forces on Liberation Day (from WWII)
255	1.4k	412	135	16.06.21	Anti-Establishment	Fossil fuel cars should still be sold after 2025
256	1.4k	374	39	09.04.23	Personal Freedom	Yes to shops open on Sundays
257	1.4k	372	51	13.06.22	Anti-Establishment	Gov refuses to cut cost of living expenses
258	1.4k	345	96	06.11.22	Anti-Establishment	The gov. wants to force private eldercare out of business

259	1.4k	327	35	24.06.22	Anti-Establishment	FrP labels SP (Centre Party) the prohibition party
260	1.4k	278	31	08.09.21	Anti-Establishment	FrP asks gov why elderly should lose driver's licence without testing
261	1.4k	208	46	04.11.22	Anti-Establishment	FrP sees room to cut cost of living, gov refuses
262	1.4k	164	88	21.08.22	Anti-Establishment	Critique of gov handling of energy crisis
263	1.4k	139	70	09.01.23	Finance	Cut the food VAT in half
264	1.4k	130	16	15.08.21	Personal	FrP photo op with new parliamentary group
265	1.4k	127	38	21.06.21	Xenophobia	"It is not harder to get a job with a foreign name. The left is conjuring a race conflict"
266	1.4k	124	63	25.05.22	Finance	Max NOK 0.5 kWh
267	1.4k	120	36	27.08.21	Recruitment	Join FrP
268	1.4k	116	103	10.04.22	Finance	Remove property taxes
269	1.4k	113	153	16.01.22	Finance	Cheaper electricity. Stop the electrification of the oil and gas industry
270	1.4k	113	117	04.09.21	Climate Sceptic	Symbolic policy won't save the climate. Critique of left-wing parties
271	1.4k	110	61	11.01.23	Anti-Establishment	Criticism of the government regarding high electricity prices
272	1.4k	108	67	25.01.23	Eldercare	The quality of care for the elderly must improve
273	1.4k	107	100	10.01.22	Finance	Keep more of your own money
274	1.4k	102	50	16.10.22	Vox Populi	Politicians should not rule over people
275	1.4k	94	69	23.02.23	Anti-Establishment	Criticism of the government
276	1.4k	90	66	01.01.23	Anti-Establishment	Stop the waste. Reprioritise
277	1.4k	87	87	24.05.22	Finance	Remove taxes on fuel
278	1.4k	87	41	07.07.22	Personal Freedom	People should decide on their own property
279	1.4k	84	43	11.09.21	Culture War	FrP want to prohibit all kinds of child marriage
280	1.4k	83	85	28.04.23	Xenophobia	Refugees on holiday in the country they fled from
281	1.4k	67	123	11.09.21	Anti-Establishment	FrP electoral promises will help normal people
282	1.4k	45	49	07.09.22	Personal Freedom	People should decide on their own property
283	1.4k	45	40	16.10.21	Recruitment	Join FrP
284	1.3k	265	96	10.08.21	Authoritarian	The left is spreading dissent towards police and people are more likely to resist arrests
285	1.3k	199	51	01.11.21	Finance	FrP reacts to NHO cutting pension for married pensioners. FrP opposed
286	1.3k	199	38	14.06.22	Anti-Establishment	PM lacks action. FrP wants to cut cost of living
287	1.3k	182	33	18.12.21	Anti-Establishment	Gov. not handling the energy crisis
288	1.3k	162	48	07.07.22	Anti-Establishment	Critique of gov. handling of energy rationing

289	1.3k	144	90	12.03.23	Finance	Should not be penalized for needing a car
290	1.3k	140	128	03.12.21	Finance	Cost of living concerns
291	1.3k	135	63	22.12.22	Anti-Establishment	The state gets richer while ordinary people struggle
292	1.3k	130	41	23.09.22	Finance	Cost of living on the rise while the state earns more and more
293	1.3k	124	29	27.09.21	Finance	FrP wants crisis package to strengthen normal people's economies
294	1.3k	121	77	18.01.23	Eldercare	Eldercare is failing
295	1.3k	116	16	21.02.23	National Romanticism	Wishes happy birthday to the King
296	1.3k	113	58	21.08.21	Xenophobia	"Norway needs a strict and responsible immigration policy"
297	1.3k	112	104	16.01.23	Sovereignty	Failed European energy policy
298	1.3k	103	64	28.09.21	Finance	Strengthen the economy for pensioners
299	1.3k	99	14	30.07.21	Personal	Have a nice weekend!
300	1.3k	95	43	09.09.21	Personal Freedom	Parents should get to decide how to divide child leave
301	1.3k	94	46	25.07.22	Healthcare	The sick and elderly must have security in everyday life
302	1.3k	94	19	15.08.21	Recruitment	Join FrP
303	1.3k	91	71	29.08.22	Finance	Cut the food VAT in half
304	1.3k	86	33	15.11.22	Authoritarian	Harsher punishment for violence against police officers
305	1.3k	85	39	26.04.22	Healthcare	People can't afford medicine. FrP wants faster access to medicine in Norway
306	1.3k	71	56	29.08.22	Healthcare	No Norwegians should have to travel for their healthcare
307	1.3k	66	43	23.07.22	Finance	People are paying more than enough. Cost of living
308	1.3k	65	63	16.03.23	Xenophobia	Knowledge of Norwegian in health professions
309	1.3k	58	17	07.12.21	Anti-Establishment	Call for PM to launch investigation over politicians misuse of financial aid
310	1.3k	38	69	12.08.22	Finance	Remove taxes on fuel
311	1.2k	303	52	14.06.22	Anti-Establishment	Gov wasting money on climate policy. No cuts to cost of living
312	1.2k	263	27	29.09.22	Xenophobia	After Russian partial mobilisation, FrP calls for shutting down borders
313	1.2k	244	47	20.02.23	Culture War	Historical painting placed in the basement
314	1.2k	213	23	06.01.22	Personal Freedom	FrP suggests to allow alcohol serving during COVID restrictions
315	1.2k	211	50	22.11.22	Finance	FrP only alternative for those who want cuts to taxes and fees
316	1.2k	196	56	29.10.22	Anti-Establishment	The elderly are the biggest losers of the proposed gov. national budget
317	1.2k	183	80	15.08.21	Finance	Cheaper electricity

318	1.2k	181	64	04.12.22	Anti-Establishment	Two pensioners will save NOK 33,285 - Alternative budget
319	1.2k	177	38	29.07.21	Xenophobia	"Freedom of speech under fire if comedy shows silenced by offended viewers"
320	1.2k	169	204	23.10.22	Anti-Establishment	Sylvi criticising gov handling of eldercare
321	1.2k	165	76	09.11.21	Authoritarian	FrP concerned about violent crime in Oslo
322	1.3k	164	36	14.08.21	Finance	With FrP you save money on cost of living expenses
323	1.2k	154	26	22.05.21	Xenophobia	FrP Politician sues Palestine activists protesting during covid restrictions
324	1.2k	152	60	18.06.22	Anti-Establishment	More money for ordinary families (FrP's revised national budget)
325	1.2k	151	25	02.07.21	Finance	FrP wants to remove fees on non-alcoholic beverages
326	1.2k	149	45	15.11.22	Healthcare	FrP wants increased private healthcare capacity
327	1.2k	139	36	23.04.22	Finance	Cost of living on the rise
328	1.2k	138	36	28.03.23	Xenophobia	No to bring IS terrorists to Norway
329	1.2k	138	30	12.07.21	Pro Car	Normal people should not be punished for having to use a car to commute
330	1.2k	136	57	25.09.21	Climate Sceptic	FrP warns of the CO2 fees increasing to nearly twice as much as rest of Europe
331	1.2k	135	24	07.12.21	Finance	Cheeper electricity
332	1.2k	133	23	26.09.21	Integration	FrP works for rapid integration
333	1.2k	131	34	08.08.21	Anti-Establishment	Stop the left wing and climate parties
334	1.2k	126	41	16.08.22	Anti-Establishment	Gov. creating more bureaucrats, not educating more doctors
335	1.2k	119	30	06.08.21	Pro Car	Normal people should not be punished for having to use a car to commute
336	1.2k	118	106	20.04.22	Finance	Video from parliament: FrP critique of cost of living increase
337	1.2k	116	62	24.11.22	Finance	Reduce taxes and fees
338	1.2k	115	40	11.11.21	Finance	Keep more of your own money
339	1.2k	114	16	09.07.22	Xenophobia	Erlend Wiborg immigration spokesperson for FrP: "Current system not working"
340	1.2k	111	65	26.03.22	Finance	Keep more of your own money
341	1.2k	102	36	13.10.22	Xenophobia	"Don't cover up rape statistics due to immigration"
342	1.2k	95	134	10.12.22	Finance	Will give the people economic freedom of action
343	1.2k	93	82	22.05.21	Xenophobia	"The women who left for IS knew what they were doing. FrP won't bring them home"
344	1.2k	93	32	13.09.22	Charismatic	Company visit in Rendalen (Sylvi Listhaug)
345	1.2k	90	21	24.08.21	Authoritarian	FrP is against organised crime. Criminals should be behind bars
346	1.2k	89	38	20.09.21	Finance	FrP wants to cheaper electricity
347	1.2k	88	36	10.09.21	Election	Stop Rødt, SV and MDG

348	1.2k	86	48	21.02.22	National Romanticism	Wishes happy birthday to the King
349	1.2k	85	18	24.12.21	Personal	Christmas Greetings from Sylvi Listhaug
350	1.2k	72	59	02.10.21	Finance	Reduce taxes on fuel
351	1.2k	70	45	13.10.22	Finance	Stop electrification of the socket (cheaper electricity)
352	1.2k	68	66	03.02.22	Healthcare	You should get the treatment you need in Norway
353	1.2k	67	101	27.03.23	Pro Oil Industry	Remove petrol and diesel taxes now!
354	1.2k	67	30	23.09.21	Finance	FrP wants to stop the waste and build Norway
355	1.2k	57	107	14.08.22	Pro Car	Vintage cars are part of Norwegian culture
356	1.2k	56	37	30.06.21	Finance	Remove property taxes
357	1.2k	43	67	08.02.23	Climate Sceptic	Electrification of Melkøya
358	1.2k	43	30	30.09.21	Finance	Remove property taxes
359	1.2k	39	50	04.11.21	Finance	Reduce taxes on fuel
360	1.2k	12	19	01.12.21	Pro Car	FrP wants to lower prices on petrol
361	1.1k	581	29	05.05.22	Personal Freedom	Yes to shops open on Sundays
362	1.1k	438	25	04.06.22	Pro Car	FrP wants to increase speed limits from 110 to 120km/h
363	1.1k	220	94	30.12.22	Anti-Establishment	Lower cost of living. Majority opposed to lowering, FrP acts as spearhead
364	1.1k	207	73	04.01.23	Anti-Establishment	Criticizes the government for tax-free quota
365	1.1k	199	61	05.01.22	Anti-Establishment	Current gov. sees biggest increases in taxes and fees in last 20 years
366	1.1k	191	93	03.11.21	Authoritarian	Oslo is not a safe city. Violent crime on the rise
367	1.1k	177	97	13.02.23	Culture War	Import of halal meat
368	1.1k	169	25	16.06.21	Finance	FrP want a price cap on property tax
369	1.1k	167	40	01.12.21	Pro Oil Industry	FrP wants to further develop the oil industry. Not weaken it
370	1.1k	147	47	01.12.22	Finance	Remove taxes on fuel
371	1.1k	140	45	28.08.21	Election	More expensive and harder for those who needs the car, stop Rødt,SV and MDG
372	1.1k	131	35	31.03.23	Xenophobia	Immigrants must be able to provide for themselves
373	1.1k	129	65	12.04.23	Polling Numbers	FrP is making the most progress
374	1.1k	129	43	02.12.21	Anti-Establishment	FrP feel that the gov. is failing people who need healthcare. Costs are too high
375	1.1k	125	242	03.01.23	Sovereignty	EU's rules
376	1.1k	124	13	25.07.22	Finance	FrP wants to remove property taxes

377	1.1k	119	3	17.09.21	Personal	Have a nice weekend!
378	1.1k	118	55	07.06.21	Recruitment	Join FrP
379	1.1k	113	41	20.12.22	Sovereignty	FrP wants to change the energy system to favour Norwegian people and bis.
380	1.1k	106	135	30.11.21	Sovereignty	FrP proposes limiting energy exports in order to achieve lower costs for consumers
381	1.1k	105	16	02.07.22	Finance	FrP wants lower cost of living
382	1.1k	98	47	14.11.21	Climate Sceptic	FrP against more spending on a "dubious climate project"
383	1.1k	97	37	08.07.21	Finance	Pensioners economy is in shambles, FrP wants to fix this
384	1.1k	91	56	30.10.21	Finance	Crisis package to ordinary people
385	1.1k	89	57	01.07.21	Pro Car	FrP recieves support to remove more toll roads
386	1.1k	85	52	03.08.21	Pro Oil Industry	It would be madness to shut down the most profitable business in the country
387	1.1k	79	31	29.04.22	Sovereignty	"Our values are under attack" From opening of national party congress
388	1.1k	70	104	05.09.21	Healthcare	Norwegians should not have to leave Norway for healthcare. Faster approval practice
389	1.1k	69	53	03.08.22	Personal Freedom	Let people decide their own lives
390	1.1k	69	52	23.01.22	Xenophobia	FrP wants to recieve less immigrants, instead "help them where they are"
391	1.1k	68	50	05.07.22	Pro Car	Good roads throughout the country
392	1.1k	64	26	11.12.21	Recruitment	Join FrP
393	1.1k	61	21	20.09.21	Healthcare	More out of pocket in healthcare if the gov. gets their wishes
394	1.1k	60	53	11.05.22	Sovereignty	Critique of energy policy in Europe. Norway should not pay the price
395	1.1k	56	71	12.09.21	Election	Do you agree with us? Vote FrP
396	1.1k	51	54	21.08.22	Finance	Remove petrol and diesel taxes now!
397	1.1k	48	59	16.08.21	Sovereignty	Support Norwegian business
398	1.1k	44	48	01.04.23	Finance	No to property tax
399	1.1k	43	53	14.06.21	Pro Car	You should not be punished for needing the car
400	1.1k	42	47	01.06.21	Authoritarian	No pedophile should get away with obsolescence
401	1.1k	17	24	04.07.22	Charismatic	Wishing americans in Norway a happy Independence Day
402	1k	406	27	25.06.21	Xenophobia	"Eating dogs is a problem in cetain countries"
403	1k	319	46	06.01.22	Healthcare	FrP proposed budget, lowers economic pressure of healthcare neccecities
404	1k	311	31	22.06.22	Pro-Defence	Sweden and Finland want to join NATO. Rødt (left-wing) want to stop them
405	1k	242	122	16.02.23	Pro Car	The roads in Oslo riddled with potholes. FrP wants to fix this
406	1k	228	54	21.07.21	Finance	Streghten the economy for pensioners

407	1k	209	55	12.06.22	Anti-Establishment	FrP against cuts to hospital clowns. Gov makes it difficult for private actors
408	1k	170	76	16.11.22	Anti-Establishment	Aid to countries that support Putin
409	1k	170	22	03.09.22	Pro Car	FrP wants to remove toll roads in Oslo
410	1k	164	21	01.10.22	Eldercare	FrP marking the world elderly day.
411	1k	157	48	17.06.21	Finance	More income for pensioners
412	1k	154	35	07.07.21	Finance	FrP wants to make sure that commuter ferries are free to use
413	1k	145	31	22.08.22	Finance	A large majority agree with FrP on price cap on energy
414	1k	143	24	11.05.22	Finance	FrP wants to lower petrol prices
415	1k	120	18	30.09.22	Anti-Establishment	Minister of justice refuses to talk on violence in Oslo
416	1k	119	17	24.08.21	Integration	Working for faster integration
417	1k	113	67	17.10.22	Anti-Establishment	Criticism of the government - increased deductibles for medicine and treatment
418	1k	113	37	11.05.21	Xenophobia	Europe needs a new asylum system. Currently being exploited
419	1k	111	38	28.09.21	Eldercare	FrP concerned about elderly people going hungry
420	1k	109	95	24.10.21	Xenophobia	Against child marriage
421	1k	108	105	18.04.23	Eldercare	Pensioners in the salary settlement
422	1k	104	36	11.07.22	Finance	Cost of living. People should keep more of their money
423	1k	102	18	19.09.21	Anti-Establishment	FrP challenges gov. on electoral promises
424	1k	97	46	23.01.23	Xenophobia	Taliban visit in Norway
425	1k	94	62	28.01.23	Anti-Establishment	Shooting episodes
426	1k	93	35	12.09.22	Authoritarian	Tougher penalties for violence against the police
427	1k	85	108	23.05.22	Pro Car	Good roads throughout the country
428	1k	84	8	22.11.22	Xenophobia	FrP one step closer to asylum reception outside of Norwegian borders
429	1k	82	35	21.09.21	Finance	Reduce car fees
430	1k	81	34	28.09.21	Finance	Cheeper electricity
431	1k	76	34	04.08.22	Finance	Lower the prices of petrol
432	1k	74	23	26.11.21	Finance	FrP releases own proposal for national budget
433	1k	73	25	19.11.22	Finance	Max NOK 0.5 kWh
434	1k	72	30	17.05.22	Personal	Sylvi Listhaug wishes everyone a happy independence day
435	1k	70	43	18.05.22	Finance	No to implementation of air passenger tax
436	1k	69	51	23.06.22	Finance	The population should be allowed to keep more of their own money

437	1k	66	87	27.01.23	Anti-Establishment	Criticism of the government
438	1k	60	9	31.12.21	Personal	Happy New Year
439	1k	50	80	09.10.21	Finance	Keep more of your own money
440	1k	48	47	31.08.21	Finance	Reduce taxes on fuel
441	1k	44	47	11.09.21	Election	Stop Rødt, SV and MDG
442	1k	36	41	26.09.21	Anti-Establishment	Gov shutting down FrP eldercare test program one year before plan