

## FULL PAPER

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Perception and persuasiveness of value appeals  
in populist communication

### **Ist Konsistenz wichtig?**

Wahrnehmung und Persuasionskraft von Wertappellen  
in populistischer Kommunikation.

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**Abstract:** Although research has shown that political actors benefit from appealing to values that resonate with their audience's preferences, it remains an open question to what extent this can be exploited. How do individuals react to value appeals that are inconsistent with the communicator's value reputation? This paper examines this question in the context of right-wing populist parties, who are strongly associated with conservation values. In two experiments, the effects of consistent and inconsistent value appeals on perception (study 1) and persuasion (study 2) are investigated. It is expected that consistent values will be perceived stronger than inconsistent values, but that both kind of appeals can be persuasive when they match with the audience's value orientation. The results confirm these expectations and show that especially individuals with lower formal education can be persuaded to support right-wing populist claims when these are promoted with inconsistent but matching value appeals.

**Keywords:** Value framing, matching, right-wing, experiment, persuasion

**Zusammenfassung:** Bisherige Forschung hat gezeigt, dass politische Akteure davon profitieren, in ihrer Kommunikation Werte zu adressieren, die dem Publikum wichtig sind. Es bleibt jedoch eine offene Frage, inwiefern dies instrumentalisiert werden kann. Wie reagieren Rezipienten auf Wertappelle, die nicht zum Image des Kommunikators passen? Die vorliegende Studie widmet sich dieser Frage im Kontext rechtspopulistischer Kommunikation, welche stark mit konservativen Werten in Verbindung steht. In zwei Experimenten wird die Wirkung von zum Rechtspopulismus konsistenten und inkonsistenten Werten auf die Wahrnehmung (Studie 1) und Einstellungsbildung (Studie 2) untersucht. Dabei wird angenommen, dass konsistente Wertappelle zwar stärker wahrgenommen werden als inkonsistente, dass aber beide Arten von Wertappellen persuasiv sein können, wenn sie mit der Werthaltung der Rezipienten übereinstimmen. Die Resultate der beiden Studien stützen diese Annahmen und zeigen, dass insbesondere Personen mit niedriger formaler Bildung für rechtspopulistische Anliegen überzeugt werden können, wenn diese mit inkonsistenten aber für die Rezipienten wichtigen Werten propagiert werden.

**Schlagwörter:** Werte, Framing, Matching, Rechtspopulismus, Experiment

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## 1. Introduction

Values are of paramount importance in politics and political communication. Political parties stand for certain values, and voters base their decisions upon values they consider important. Values can be defined as enduring, trans-situational beliefs or guiding principles (Rokeach, 1973; Schwartz, 1992, 1994). They are organized in value systems, determining the priorities of different values for an individual (Rokeach, 1973). With his theory of basic human values, Schwartz (1992, 1994) defined a set of ten distinct values shared by members of most societies, but which nonetheless are valued differently by different individuals. As guiding principles, values qualify a specific mode of behaviour or end-state as desirable (Rokeach, 1973; Schwartz, 1992, 1994), implying that individuals are likely to act according to their preferred values. The consistency of value preferences and behaviour or judgement has been empirically demonstrated in several domains, including voting behaviour (Verplanken & Holland, 2002).

In Western Europe, right-wing parties have traditionally been associated with conservation values, whereas left-wing parties have been associated with self-transcendence values (Caprara, Schwartz, Capanna, Vecchione, & Barbaranelli, 2006). In certain cases, however, political actors may address values traditionally owned by their opponents to broaden their appeal. That is, for a specified timespan, such as for a campaign or even a single message, they will refer to their opponents' values *instead* of their own. Nevertheless, they continue promoting their usual policies and frame them as aligned with these values (Nelson, Lecheler, Schuck, & Vreese, 2015).

The fact that voters support actors that appeal to values they cherish has been well demonstrated. Studies have even shown that individuals change their attitudes towards issues if the latter are framed with their preferred values (Druckman, 2001; Nelson, Oxley, & Clawson, 1997). However, little is known regarding how individuals react to value appeals if these are inconsistent with the values the communicator traditionally represents. Can political actors successfully persuade voters from beyond their typical voter base by appealing to values important to these voters?

Few studies have focused on inconsistent value appeals. These studies (e.g., Barker, 2005; Nelson & Garst, 2005) have shown that inconsistency may backfire, particularly when speaker and audience do not share the same party affiliation. This finding suggests that political actors should not exploit their opponents' values. However, this research focused on the US context, and the transferability of the findings to Western Europe is questionable, given that the dominant values differ between the two political landscapes. In the United States, a conflict exists between egalitarian and individualistic values (Gordon & Miller, 2004), which are opposed to each other in the Schwartz (1992; 1994) value system. In Western Europe, the dominant conflict is between egalitarian and conser-

vation values (Caprara et al., 2006), which are adjacent in the value system. “Inconsistent” thus has different meanings; the degree of deviation from expected values may influence the persuasiveness of an appeal. The present study focuses on Western Europe and analyses if political actors can successfully exploit their opponents’ values in this context.

This research is moreover conducted in the context of right-wing populism, for three reasons. First, in recent times, right-wing populist actors have been highly successful in several Western democracies. They have not only achieved favourable results in elections but also mobilized the electorate to vote on important referenda<sup>1</sup>. They seem to have found a way to persuade voters beyond their core electorate. It is therefore of interest to understand possible persuasion mechanisms in populist communication. Second, the populist ideology proposes a Manichean or moralistic perspective on the world, claiming that pure people on the one hand are betrayed by a corrupt elite on the other hand (Albertazzi & McDonnell, 2008; Mudde, 2004; Wirth et al., 2016). The distinction between these two groups is normative (Mudde, 2004). To establish such an antagonistic relationship, the populist actors might refer to values even more than is typical in politics. Third, the populist ideology is a thin-centred ideology (Mudde 2004); it consists of a narrow set of ideas and can therefore be combined with various host ideologies. Although right-wing populist parties are clearly attached to right-wing ideologies, such as nationalism and nativism, they can nonetheless assert their major argument of the elite betraying the common people in the case of left-wing issues. Thus, although all types of political actors may strategically use inconsistent value appeals, the conditions for this usage seem to favour populist parties.

To gain a greater understanding of how inconsistent value appeals may influence voter attitudes, two complementary experimental studies were conducted. Study 1 examines voter perceptions of inconsistent value appeals. Are self-transcendence appeals recognized less in a right-wing populist than in a non-populist context, as they do not fit the schema? Study 2 focuses on the persuasive effects of inconsistent value appeals. Are right-wing populist messages generally more persuasive when they contain consistent value appeals, or does their persuasiveness depend on individual value preferences? Can individuals with a high self-transcendence orientation be persuaded by right-wing populist claims if these contain self-transcendence values?

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1 Value framing in political communication

Value appeals are considered “powerful and reliable weapons in the persuader’s arsenal” (Nelson & Garst, 2005, p. 490). The strategic use of values is also referred to as value framing (Ball-Rokeach, Power, Guthrie, & Waring, 1990; Shah,

1 E.g., Donald Trump was elected President of the USA in 2016, and Norbert Hofer and Marine Le Pen claimed spots on the final ballot in Austria (2016) and France (2017), respectively. In the UK, voters left the EU in the “Brexit” referendum in June 2016, following campaigns led by the UKIP and members of the conservative party. See Rooduijn (2017) for additional examples.

Domke, & Wackman, 1996). This term illustrates that values are employed to provide a framework for interpreting political issues to legitimize issue positions. The repeated use of value frames by political actors spurs the construction of *value reputations* (Petersen, Slothuus, & Togeby, 2010), strong associations of certain values with the corresponding political actors. Such values are activated whenever an actor adopts a position on an issue, even when no values are explicitly communicated. Values, therefore, are omnipresent in political discourse.

The most frequent or important values within political discourse vary across countries. In the United States, Democrats favour egalitarian values, while Republicans promote individualistic values (Barker, 2005; Gordon & Miller, 2004, Nelson & Garst 2005). According to the Schwartz (1992, 1994) value system, these values (designated self-enhancement and self-transcendence, respectively, in his terminology) are diametrically opposed. In Western Europe, by contrast, the clash is between egalitarian values promoted by left-wing actors and conservation values supported by right-wing actors (Caprara et al., 2006). These value dimensions (self-transcendence and conservation) are adjacent in the Schwartz value system. The value system has a bipolar structure, indicating opposing values represent conflicting goals, whereas adjoining values exhibit some similarities (Schwartz, 1992; Schwartz et al., 2001). Following this theory, the values shaping political discourse in Western Europe are less conflicting<sup>2</sup> than those in the United States, and the conditions for exploiting the values of political opponents seem to be more favourable in Western Europe.

**Effects of value framing.** Individuals tend to act in ways that reflect the values they consider most important. According to Shen and Edwards (2005), these values are chronically accessible. If a message addresses these values, they are, unlike values not chronically accessible, readily available for judgement. Nelson and Garst (2005) describe how this value match can trigger two persuasive processes. First, shared values may contribute directly to the formation of attitudes, functioning as persuasive cues (Chaiken, 1980; Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). Second, references to cherished values can increase the perceived relevance of a message and therefore prompt careful processing. In this case, argument quality will determine persuasion (Chaiken, 1980; Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). If cherished values are convincingly linked to an issue, they will likely construct an effective argument (Stutman & Newell, 1984).

Consistent with these considerations, various studies have shown that value appeals are (more) persuasive when they resonate with the audience's value predispositions. Effects have been demonstrated for the support of political actors (Barker, 2005; Gordon & Miller, 2004) and for attitudes towards issues (Nelson & Garst, 2005; Schemer, Wirth, & Matthes, 2012; Shen & Edwards, 2005). Druckmann (2001) and Nelson et al. (1997) even showed that value frames prompt individuals to switch positions on an issue to align their attitudes with their cherished values.

2 Although issue positions may be equally conflicting in Western Europe and the US, the values used to legitimize these positions are less conflicting in the former, based on the value system by Schwartz (1992, 1994).

**Conditions for value matching effects.** Previous research suggests that the value reputation of political actors can influence the perception of value appeals. What happens if a political actor advocates his position with values incongruent with his reputation? Rahn (1993) demonstrated that partisan stereotypes influence the perception of political candidates, even when presented with stereotypically inconsistent information. Her findings suggest that the value reputations of political actors serve as a scheme (Axelrod, 1973; Bartlett, 1932), which guides the processing of their messages. Values traditionally associated with the political actor may therefore be activated despite the use of inconsistent values.

The value reputation may further affect the processing of inconsistent value appeals. Schema theory predicts that information that does not fit the scheme will generally be overlooked (Galambos, Abelson, & Black, 1986). Inconsistent values would thus have limited impact on attitude formation. Consistent with this reasoning, Nelson and Garst (2005) found that value inconsistency did not prompt closer scrutiny of messages, albeit one might expect that the violation of expectations draws attention. Their results indicate that inconsistent value appeals nevertheless influence attitude formation; individuals who did not identify with the speaker's party affiliation reacted negatively to the inconsistent appeal. Studies show that individuals generally reject messages from political actors they oppose, even if the messages have a positive valence (Marquart & Matthes, 2016). This finding suggests that individuals who distrust a political actor will be more suspicious of inconsistent value appeals and may therefore reject the corresponding message, even though the values match their personal preferences. In some cases, individuals might also be persuaded by inconsistent values. For example, the Swiss People's Party (SVP) successfully won a referendum in 2006 after promoting a more restrictive asylum law by seizing their opponents' rhetorical frame of humanitarianism (Schemer, 2009).

A possible explanation for this contradiction is provided by Barker (2005), who argues that cognitive sophistication is an important moderator. Value framing effects can occur only when individuals can recognize abstract value cues in a message, judge whether they are appropriate, and apply them to the decision task. Barker (2005) suggests that a certain level of formal education is necessary to demonstrate this cognitive sophistication. In his experimental study, value matching effects occurred only for individuals who had some college experience. Individuals with less formal education may not have been able to recognize the value cues in the oral presentation of a political speech. Following this reasoning, individuals with high cognitive sophistication are also likely to detect value inconsistency and could be suspicious of such appeals. Consequently, they would reject messages with inconsistent value appeals. Individuals who display comparatively less cognitive sophistication, who more specifically can recognize the presented value cues but not their inconsistency, might be persuaded by matching values. For individuals who do not recognize value cues, neither value consistency nor value matching should affect the persuasiveness of a message.

## 2.2 Value framing and right-wing populism

The example of the Swiss SVP's success with the use of an incongruent value frame suggests a noteworthy relationship between populist parties and their use of values. The populist ideology is described as chameleonic (Taggart, 2000), meaning it can be combined with various host ideologies. Compared with other political parties, populist parties might thus be more easily able to integrate inconsistent values into their rhetoric, as only the host ideology, but not their populist core, is affected.

In Western Europe, populism is predominantly combined with right-wing ideologies, such as nationalism or nativism. This enrichment defines the criteria of "good" or "bad" in the populist's Manichean view. In right-wing populism, the people are defined in ethnic terms, as "our people" (Canovan, 1999, p. 5) or the true citizens of a country. They are portrayed as vertically opposed to the corrupt political elite and horizontally opposed to some "dangerous others" (Albertazzi & McDonnell 2008, p. 3). Both of these groups are furthermore depicted as threatening the people's identity and values (Albertazzi & McDonnell, 2008) or acting against their interests (Jagers & Walgrave, 2007). The people are thus not only distinguished from the elite, but the population is also divided into those who belong to the pure people and those who do not. Accordingly, right-wing populist parties reject individual and social equality, oppose the social integration of marginalized groups, and appeal to xenophobia or overt racism (Betz, 1993).

Voters of right-wing populist parties have often been characterized as 'losers of globalization' or individuals with a low socioeconomic status. However, a cross-national study by Rooduijn (2017) demonstrates that these characterizations are inaccurate. Rather than actual disadvantages, the feeling of occupying an unfair position in society, also referred to as relative deprivation, explains voting for right-wing populist parties. Van Hauwaert and Van Kessel (2017) show that strong populist attitudes and a preference for right-wing authoritarian and anti-immigrant issue positions, predict voting for right-wing populist parties. These studies indicate that the electorate of right-wing populist parties is more accurately characterized by how these people view society than by socio-economic factors.

The ideal society, from a populist perspective, is often referred to as the heartland (Taggart, 2000). It signifies a romanticized vision of the past, a place where "a virtuous and unified population resides" (Taggart, 2000, p. 95) and where the world still follows an alleged natural order (Albertazzi & McDonnell, 2008). The heartland of right-wing populists is inhabited by hard-working and law-abiding citizens, who consider their world perverted by progressives, criminals and foreigners (Mudde, 2004). These descriptions suggest that the right-wing populist heartland is characterized by conservation values. Empirically, this suggestion has been supported by Caprara et al. (2006), who found that right-wing voters in Italy score high on conservation values. Conservation values are thus congruent with the right-wing populist ideology, whereas other values can be considered incongruent.



Although research on populism in Western Europe has dramatically increased (Rooduijn, 2017), studies on the effects of populist communication remain scarce (Aalberg, Esser, Reinemann, Stromback, & Vreese, 2016). The few exceptional studies have focused mainly on demonstrating which voters are particularly susceptible to populist persuasion (Hameleers & Schmuck, 2017; Matthes & Schmuck, 2017) and on emotional characteristics of populist communication (Bos, van der Brug, & de Vreese, 2013; Hameleers, Bos, & de Vreese, 2016). The present study focuses instead on a cognitive process (i.e., value framing) that may explain the persuasiveness of populist communication and on individuals without a predisposition to support right-wing populist politics.

### 2.3 Hypotheses

As the literature review showed, although value matching effects have been demonstrated in several contexts, whether political actors can benefit from inconsistent value appeals remains unclear. Can right-wing populist claims convincingly be framed with self-transcendence values? Does this framing moreover increase the persuasiveness of these claims for individuals with a high self-transcendence orientation?

Hypothesis 1 addresses the perception of inconsistent values. It can be assumed that right-wing populist claims will activate values associated with right-wing populism, which then serve as a scheme (Bartlett, 1932) to process the corresponding message. Schema theory predicts that inconsistent information is often overlooked (Galambos, Black, & Abelson, 1986), which has also been confirmed in the context of political communication (Nelson & Garst, 2005; Rahn, 1993). One can therefore expect that in a right-wing populist context, self-transcendence value appeals will be recognized less than in a non-populist context, as they do not correspond to the schema (H1).

Hypothesis 2 predicts the persuasiveness of inconsistent value appeals. Several studies show that value appeals are generally more persuasive when they match an audience's value preferences. It can therefore be expected that right-wing populist claims framed with conservation values will be more persuasive for individuals who prefer conservation values than for individuals who prefer self-transcendence values (H2a). Following this logic, right-wing populist claims framed with self-transcendence values should be more persuasive for individuals who prefer self-transcendence values than for individuals who prefer conservation values (H2b).

However, the situation described in H2b includes a value frame inconsistent with the value reputation of right-wing populist parties. Individuals with a higher level of cognitive sophistication are expected to detect the inconsistency (Barker, 2005) and consequently to reject the message (Nelson & Garst, 2005). Therefore, a right-wing populist claim framed with self-transcendence values is expected to be more persuasive for individuals who prefer self-transcendence values and who exhibit less cognitive sophistication than for individuals who prefer self-transcendence values and display greater cognitive sophistication (H3).

### 3. Study 1

#### 3.1 Method

**Design.** Study 1 was designed to test how value appeals are recognized depending on their embedding context. More precisely, it investigated whether the recognition of self-transcendence values varies between a non-populist and a populist context (H1). Two newspaper articles were created for this purpose. Both contain conservation and self-transcendence values. One article employs a right-wing populist framework consistent with conservation values, but inconsistent with self-transcendence values. The other article adopts a non-populist framework, which is neither consistent nor inconsistent with either of the values. This latter article was thus used as a control. To ensure that the manipulation targets right-wing populism, not another characteristic that could be associated with a political actor, the context was manipulated through content rather than the presence of an actor. In addition to political actors, the media can transmit populist content (Bos & Brants, 2014; Krämer, 2014). The articles created for this experiment thus vary in right-wing populist content provided by the journalist (i.e., media populism). Within a between-subject design, the participants were randomly assigned to read one of the two articles.

**Participants and procedure.** Participants ( $n = 123$ ) were recruited by the professional market research company Respondi<sup>3</sup> in Switzerland with an online access panel through a quota procedure. They received the standard incentive that the company gives participants. The experiment was administered online over ten days in November 2015. Before starting the questionnaire, participants provided an informed consent for their participation. After reading a newspaper article manipulated according to the two conditions, participants were asked to indicate which values were promoted in the text. 138 participants completed the questionnaire, of which 15 were excluded because they interrupted their participation at some point after the presentation of the stimulus. Of the remaining 123 participants, 62 were male, and 61 were female. The ages (in years) of the participants were as follows: 28% were 18–29, 21% were 30–39, 20% were 40–49, 17% were 50–59, and the remaining 14% were older than 60. Fifty-seven percent of participants had a high educational level (university degree), while 43% had a medium educational level (high school or vocational training). No participant had only mandatory education, as Barker (2005) suggests such participants might experience difficulty recognizing value cues.

**Stimuli.** The presented newspaper article concerned some Sinti and Roma (an ethnic group that is often stigmatized in Europe) individuals residing on a campsite in a Swiss village. The article contained explicit references to the conservation values of tradition and security, as well as to the self-transcendence values of benevolence and universalism. Conservation and self-transcendence values were mentioned to the same extent in both stimuli. The Sinti and Roma were described

3 Respondi is a market research company based in Germany. Respondi is a member of ESOMAR and is certified according to ISO 26362.

as loud and chaotic (tradition) and as making the locals feel uncomfortable and threatened (security). However, the article advanced the position that not only the Sinti and Roma but also the missing infrastructure of the campsite were responsible for the bad impression. The article cited locals who said that everyone was welcome to live in their community (benevolence) and that all people should have equal rights and opportunities (universalism). The article concluded by proposing that the Sinti and Roma move to a campsite outside the village with better infrastructure and more space. Doing so would also reduce cultural clashes.

One article employed a non-populist framework to present these value appeals, whereas the other article featured right-wing populist claims. These claims were transmitted by the journalist, as the focus was on populist content, not actors. Populist communication has been characterized as consisting of anti-elitist and exclusionist statements, whereby right-wing populists exclude immigrants or ethnic minorities (Aalberg et al., 2016). Both types of statements were included in the populist version of the article. The village government was accused of permitting the Sinti and Roma to occupy the campsite without considering the will of the local people. The latter were construed as knowing the appropriate course of action, whereas the government was portrayed as not knowing. The Sinti and Roma were explicitly excluded from the classification of locals. In the non-populist version of the article, the Sinti and Roma were portrayed in a non-exclusionist way, being referred to in more neutral terms, and readers were provided some statistics about them. Furthermore, this version mentioned that the local government was collaborating with the local people to resolve the campsite problem. A pretest ( $n = 30$ ) was conducted to ensure that populist elements were perceived to be more present in the populist version of the article. On a scale from 1 (*does not apply at all*) to 7 (*applies very much*), participants indicated how present different aspects of the populist ideology were in the text (e.g. “*The article mainly blamed the government for the bad situation.*”)<sup>4</sup>. The treatment check was successful: the non-populist text was rated considerably less populist ( $M = 2.00$ ) than the right-wing populist text ( $M = 5.11$ ),  $t(28) = -12.96$ ,  $p < .01$ .

## Measures.

**Recognition of promoted values.** Participants were asked to rate how strongly the article had promoted the basic human values on a scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*very much*). Generally, one can assume that the participants are familiar with these values, as they exist in all cultures (Schwartz, 1992, 1994). However, the terminology might be unfamiliar. Therefore, the conservation values (tradition and security) and the self-transcendence values (universalism and benevolence) were briefly described based on the definition by Schwartz (1992, 1994). The values were also illustrated with examples related to the article context to facilitate understanding.

4 The full scale is provided in the supplementary material. An index of five items was computed (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .94$ ).

**Covariates.** Two covariates were considered important for perceiving values in the newspaper article. First, the *personal value orientation* of the participants was controlled. It was measured with the 21-item Portrait Value Questionnaire (PVQ), designed by Schwartz (2003) for the European Social Survey (ESS), using a 7-point Likert scale. Following the procedure described by the ESS, indices were computed to obtain individually centred mean values for the self-transcendence (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .67$ ) and conservation values (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .61$ ). Second, as the perception of values might be influenced by *cognitive sophistication*, the formal educational levels of the participants were controlled, too (see Barker (2005) for a discussion of the appropriateness of education as a proxy for cognitive sophistication). Formal education was measured with a scale provided by the Federal Statistical Office of Switzerland that specifies three categories of education: low, medium and high. As no participant in the sample belonged to the first category, the education variable served as a dummy variable for distinguishing between less and more educated participants (i.e. between medium and high educational levels).

3.2 Results

To compare the recognition of conservation and self-transcendence values between the non-populist and the right-wing populist stimulus, separate ANOVAs were conducted for all four promoted values. Personal value preference and education were included as covariates. The results of all comparisons are displayed in Table 1. Consistent with H1, the two self-transcendence values were recognized significantly less in the populist than in the neutral version of the article. Unexpectedly, differences in the recognition of the two conservation values were also observed: security was more readily recognized in the populist context, whereas tradition was better recognized in the non-populist context. Although significant, these differences have considerably smaller effect sizes than the differences in perception of the self-transcendence values<sup>5</sup>. The covariates had no significant effect on the perception of any of the values. H1 is thus supported by the data; self-transcendence values seem to be overlooked or discounted when they are presented with right-wing populist content. Furthermore, because the recognition of the conservation values also varies slightly, the results highlight the general importance of the context in which value appeals are asserted.

**Table 1. Perceived value appeals across experimental conditions (study 1)**

	Neutral Stimulus	Populist Stimulus	Difference
Tradition	$M = 3.37, SD = 1.18$	$M = 2.79, SD = 1.28$	$p < .01, \eta^2 = .06$
Security	$M = 3.68, SD = 0.98$	$M = 4.06, SD = 1.18$	$p < .05, \eta^2 = .04$
Benevolence	$M = 3.35, SD = 1.19$	$M = 2.33, SD = 1.06$	$p < .001, \eta^2 = .17$
Universalism	$M = 3.82, SD = 1.05$	$M = 2.11, SD = 1.39$	$p < .001, \eta^2 = .39$

5 The effect sizes are small to medium for the conservation values, but large for the self-transcendence values, following Cohen (1988).

### 3.3 Discussion

Study 1 aimed to investigate the perception of values in cases when they are consistent and inconsistent with a given context. Based on the assumption that a right-wing populist argument would activate schemata that guide the perception of value appeals within that argument, we created two newspaper articles. One article contained value appeals, but no populist elements and thus served as a control. The other article contained the same value appeals, but embedded them in a populist argument. As expected, the self-transcendence values were recognized considerably less in the populist than in the non-populist context. This finding is consistent with more general research on the perception of schema-incongruent information (e.g. Galambos et al., 1986). The present study is the first study to apply this research to the context of value framing and value matching. It demonstrates that the embedding context of value appeals influences their perception. Other factors, such as individual value orientation and educational level, did not, however, influence value recognition. The latter finding is particularly important considering the assumption by Barker (2005) that value matching effects can occur only when individuals demonstrate sufficient cognitive sophistication to detect value cues. All participants of the present study had at least a medium educational level, which seems to imply adequate cognitive sophistication to notice value appeals in a written text. Even for participants with high education, though, the context influenced value perception. Whether the bias towards the congruent values emerged during or after the processing of the message is unknown. Stangor and McMillan (1992) have shown that recognition measures are generally biased towards expectancy-congruent information. Thus, individuals might have corrected their perception of values in the article towards “how it should have been” only when asked to indicate which values had been promoted. Future research could investigate this possibility by using additional measures during the process of reception, such as eye-tracking.

The study also revealed an unexpected result: the recognition of the two conservation values varied slightly between the two experimental conditions. Although the differences were considerably smaller than for the self-transcendence values, they were nonetheless statistically significant. These effects might have resulted from the specific manipulation of right-wing populism in the stimulus, which may have bolstered the stereotype that the Sinti and Roma are criminals in the populist condition, whereas this stereotype was explicitly contradicted in the non-populist condition. Future research should consider testing value perceptions with a multi-stimuli approach to control for such stimuli-specific characteristics (e.g., Reeves, Yeykelis, & Cummings, 2016; Slater, Peter, & Valkenburg, 2015).

The results of study 1 confirm the important influence of context on value perception. However, the finding that inconsistent values are recognized less does not imply that they bear no persuasive impact on value perception. Such effects could not be tested within this study, as the value appeals were held constant between the conditions to form a complete understanding of how consistency affects value perception. Therefore, a second experiment focusing on the persuasiveness of consistent and inconsistent value appeals was conducted.

## 4. Study 2

### 4.1 Method

**Design.** Study 2 is dedicated to the persuasive effects of value appeals in interaction with individual value orientation. It tests whether value matching is also persuasive when a political actor uses incongruent value appeals (H2a and H2b) or, conversely, this effect is moderated by cognitive sophistication (H3a and H3b). Two newspaper articles were designed accordingly. In both articles, a fictitious politician comments on the “asylum crisis” in Western Europe and claims that Switzerland requires a stricter asylum law. This comment represents a typical right-wing populist claim. In one version of the article, he supports his argument with conservation values, whereas in the other version, he appeals to self-transcendence values. Participants were randomly assigned to one of the articles in a between-subjects design. They were then divided into quasi-experimental groups according to their value orientation and cognitive sophistication.

**Participants and procedure.** Participants ( $n = 197$ ) were recruited by the market research company Respondi from their Swiss online access panel through a quota procedure. They received the standard incentive that the company gives participants. The experiment was administered online over three weeks in March 2016. Before starting the questionnaire, participants provided an informed consent for their participation. They were then presented a newspaper article in which an alleged politician commented on the need for a stricter asylum law in Switzerland. According to the experimental conditions, his claim was supported with either conservation or self-transcendence values. After reading the article, participants completed a questionnaire in which they first reported their attitude towards asylum seekers and the asylum legislation, then indicated their perception of values and populist content in the stimulus. Finally, they completed a scale to assess their personal value orientation. The latter was measured after the experiment, as we did not want to prime values before exposure to the stimulus. 235 individuals completed the questionnaire; 38 participants were excluded because of their response times, which were either too rapid for serious participation<sup>6</sup> or involved an interruption at some point after the stimulus presentation. Of the remaining 197 participants, 48% were male, and 52% were female. The ages (in years) of the participants were as follows: 20% were 18–29, 20% were 30–39, 21% were 40–49, 22% were 50–59, and 16% were older than 60. Soft quotas regarding education were employed to ensure the sample consisted of individuals with mainly medium or high educational levels, as the comparison of these two groups is of particular interest for this study. Fifty-four percent of participants had a medium educational level (high school or vocational training), 40% had a high educational level (university degree), and 5% had a low educational level (mandatory school).

**Stimuli and manipulation.** The two newspaper articles used for this experiment were designed to promote a right-wing populist claim, namely, a restrictive asylum

6 < 10 minutes (duration for the entire sample:  $M=29\text{min}$ ,  $SD=19\text{min}$ )

law, in a populist manner. Both contain a photograph of a middle-aged man, the alleged author of the text, who is introduced as a politician. He accuses the elite of ignoring the needs of the people and undermining their sovereignty and depicts himself as a member of the people rather than the political elite. Both articles end with a call to fight for a stricter asylum law to protect the values of the people.

The two articles only differ in the final paragraph, in which these values are elaborated. In one version of the article, the politician refers to conservation values and argues that asylum seekers threaten national identity, freedom and security. This argument corresponds to the typical style of argumentation used by right-wing politicians across Western Europe for issues of asylum and immigration and reflects the conservation values of tradition and security, as described by Schwartz (1992, 1994). In the other version of the article, the politician invokes self-transcendence values. He argues that everyone in the country, be they natives or immigrants, have the right to decent economic conditions. He asserts that everyone should be able to live a life of security and prosperity, but that this standard can only be guaranteed if the population does not grow too quickly, thus, only if “the real refugees” are allowed to stay. He claims that people should be tolerant and willing to help, but that they should carefully select those who are permitted to live amongst them, thereby ensuring everyone’s welfare. These arguments reflect the values of benevolence and universalism, as described by Schwartz (1992, 1994), but nevertheless support the typical right-wing argument to reduce the number of asylum seekers in the country. Such a link between inconsistent values and a political position has been referred to as “value poaching” (Nelson et al., 2015).

## Measures.

**Attitude towards asylum seekers.** The attitude of participants towards asylum seekers and how one should proceed with them were measured with eight items (Cronbach’s  $\alpha = .91$ ) on a scale from 1 (*do not agree at all*) to 7 (*fully agree*). High values on the scale indicate a negative attitude towards asylum seekers (“*Switzerland should have stricter laws for the acceptance of Asylum seekers*” or “*Asylum seekers are a burden on the Swiss state.*”), which agrees with the claims of the politician in the article.

**Personal value orientation.** The value orientation of participants was measured as described in study 1. The variables were then split in terciles to group the participants according to their support (*low* vs. *medium* vs. *high*) of the respective values.

**Cognitive sophistication.** Cognitive sophistication was operationalized and measured as in study 1. As 95% of the sample had at least a medium educational level, a dummy variable was constructed to distinguish between participants with lower and higher educational levels (i.e., the few participants with low education were combined with the participants with medium education to form a group of relatively less educated participants).

**Recognition of values.** As the articles were designed to promote different values, recognition of promoted values was measured as a treatment check. The



same recognition measure described in study 1 was used; however, the wording was adjusted to fit the stimuli.

**Perception of populist elements.** As both newspaper articles were designed to simulate a right-wing populist context, the perception of populist elements, as described in study 1, was included as a treatment check. An index of six items was computed (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .67$ ).

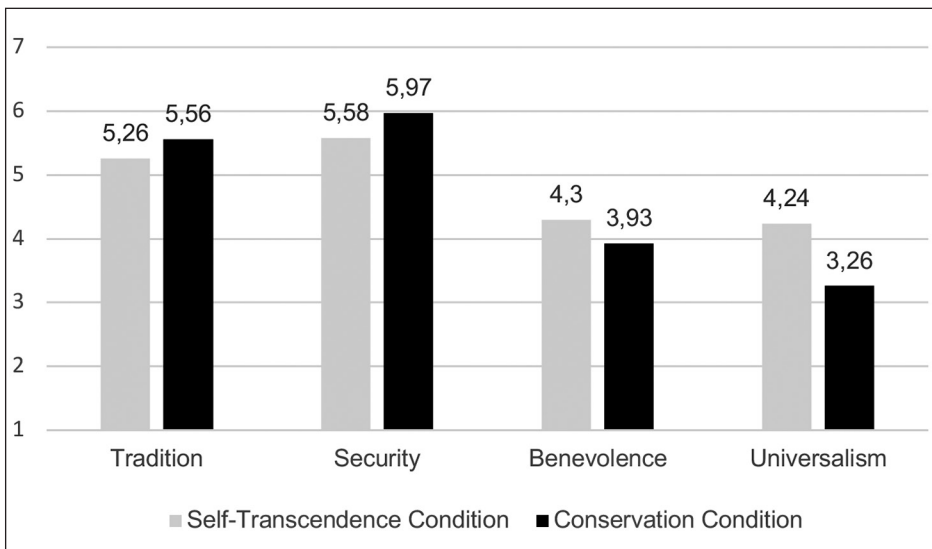
**Credibility.** To ensure that the text with the inconsistent value appeals was perceived as an authentic newspaper article, the credibility of the article was measured with two items ("*One can often read such kinds of statements from politicians in newspapers*") and ("*The newspaper article made a professional impression*") on a scale from 1 (*do not agree at all*) to 7 (*fully agree*). The index showed sufficient reliability (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .69$ ).

## 4.2 Results

**Treatment checks.** One stimulus promoted the conservation values of security and tradition, whereas the other stimulus promoted the self-transcendence values of benevolence and universalism. If value perception was unbiased, participants would recognize the respective values more strongly than they would other values. However, the results of study 1 show that the embedding context of value appeals influences recognition; the presence of right-wing populist argumentation decreases the recognition of self-transcendence values. Furthermore, based on a pretest<sup>7</sup>, we expect that despite the fact that conservation values were not promoted in the self-transcendence stimulus, these values will be activated by the right-wing populist context. Figure 1 displays the mean recognition of the four values in the two conditions. The pattern reflects the expected biases; conservation values were also recognized when not explicitly promoted, and self-transcendence values were recognized at a lower level. Nevertheless, the manipulated values were recognized better in the respective conditions; the conservation values were recognized better in the conservation condition than in the self-transcendence condition, and vice versa. Statistically significant differences were found for security,  $F(1, 195) = 5.00$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $\eta^2 = .03$ , and universalism,  $F(1, 195) = 14.76$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .07$ . Although perception was biased, the manipulation can be considered successful to the extent that the value matching hypotheses (H2 and H3) can be tested.

7 A pretest with a student sample ( $n = 41$ ) was conducted to assess which values are activated by the context of the article. Participants were presented the newspaper article *without* the paragraph containing the explicit value appeals. The results indicate that the context of the article activates conservation values, which will thus also be recognized in the version with the stimulus containing only explicit self-transcendence value appeals.



**Figure 1. Perceived values across experimental conditions (study 2)**

Furthermore, both stimuli were designed to simulate a right-wing populist context. T-tests against the scale's midpoint show that participants perceived this manipulation. In both articles, manifestations of the populist ideology were perceived to be present, as the mean value of the index ( $M_{cons} = 4.57$ ,  $SD_{cons} = 1.03$  and  $M_{st} = 4.45$ ,  $SD_{st} = 0.85$ ) lies above the scale's midpoint. Further, a t-test of the independent samples shows that the perception of populist content is equally strong in both articles,  $t(195) = -0.92$ , *n.s.* The treatment check was thus successful.

Finally, ensuring that both stimuli were perceived as authentic newspaper articles was essential. Despite the use of inconsistent value appeals, the self-transcendence version was perceived as equally credible to the conservation version,  $t(195) = -1.09$ , *n.s.* Both articles also received positive evaluations with means above the scale's midpoint ( $M_{cons} = 4.74$ ,  $SD_{cons} = 1.09$ ,  $M_{st} = 4.57$ ,  $SD_{st} = 1.07$ ), indicating a high external validity of the stimuli.

**Hypotheses.** Hypotheses 2a and 2b suggest that the right-wing populist claim for a stricter asylum law will be more persuasive when the value appeal matches participants' value orientation. To test this assumption, ANOVAs and simple effect analyses were conducted for each manipulated value. The attitude towards asylum seekers was used as the dependent variable, and the (quasi-)experimental factors value appeal (*self-transcendence values* vs. *conservation values*) and personal value orientation (*low* vs. *medium* vs. *high* support for security/tradition/benevolence/universalism) were used as the independent variables. Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics for all (quasi-)experimental groups. A significant main effect of participants' value orientation on their attitudes towards asylum seekers was found in all four analyses. Support for security,  $F(2,191) = 35.37$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .27$ , or tradition,  $F(2,191) = 14.72$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .13$ , results in more nega-

tive attitudes, whereas support for benevolence,  $F(2,191) = 19.27, p < 0.001, \eta^2 = .17$ , or universalism,  $F(2,191) = 32.95, p < 0.001, \eta^2 = .26$ , results in more positive attitudes. A value matching effect occurred only for individuals with a high orientation towards security,  $F(1,191) = 11.44, p < 0.001, \eta^2 = .06$ , and tradition,  $F(1,191) = 6.21, p < 0.05, \eta^2 = .03$ , but not for individuals with a high orientation towards benevolence,  $F(1,191) = 0.10, n.s.$ , or universalism  $F(1,191) = 1.88, n.s.$  H2a is thus supported; conservation value appeals were more persuasive for individuals with a high security orientation or a high tradition orientation. H2b was rejected; the persuasiveness of the self-transcendence value appeals was not influenced by participants' support for universalism or benevolence. This result is unsurprising, however, as the self-transcendence value appeal is inconsistent with the right-wing populist context. Overall, right-wing populist claims were more persuasive when promoted with consistent value appeals than when promoted with inconsistent value appeals.

**Table 2. Attitudes towards asylum seekers as a function of value appeals and personal value orientation**

Personal Value Orientation	Self-Transcendence Appeal			Conservation Appeal		
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Security low	27	2.97	1.41	39	2.99	1.31
Security medium	34	4.46	1.35	34	4.46	1.56
Security high	28	4.39	1.36	35	5.58	1.36
Tradition low	25	3.27	1.39	39	3.66	1.70
Tradition medium	29	4.05	1.38	34	3.92	1.51
Tradition high	35	4.44	1.55	35	5.36	1.60
Benevolence low	27	4.53	1.33	39	4.59	1.48
Benevolence medium	33	4.30	1.48	34	5.03	1.68
Benevolence high	29	3.11	1.37	35	3.23	1.68
Universalism low	22	4.66	1.31	33	5.17	1.20
Universalism medium	34	4.34	1.42	39	4.87	1.67
Universalism high	33	3.17	1.40	36	2.86	1.41

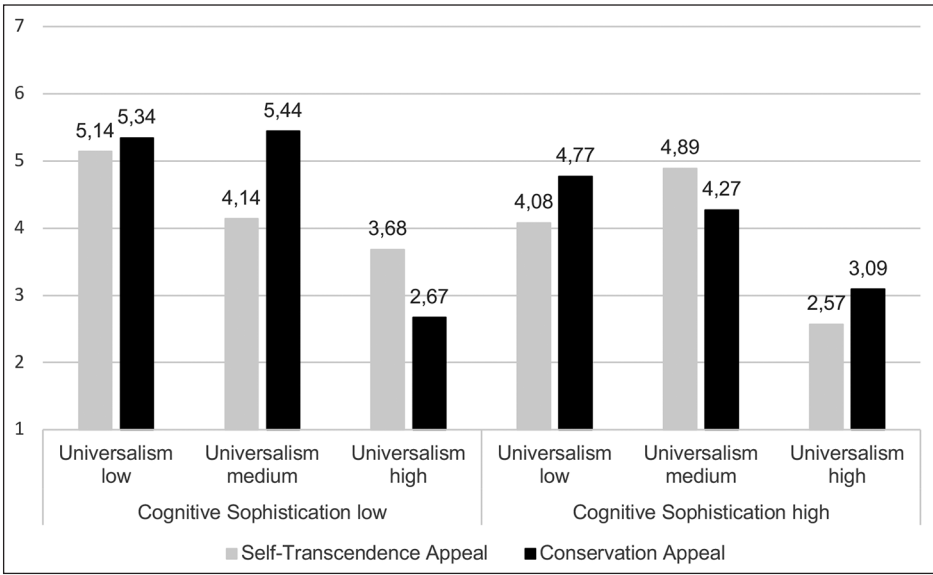
H3 more closely examines the inconsistent value appeal. Individuals with higher cognitive sophistication are assumed to be able to detect the inconsistency and are therefore predicted to reject the promoted claim, whereas individuals with less cognitive sophistication may not notice the inconsistency and therefore be persuaded by the value match. To test this hypothesis, cognitive sophistication was included in the model. Table 3 shows the descriptive statistics for the interaction of value appeal and orientation towards benevolence and universalism for low

and high levels of cognitive sophistication. As expected, a significant interaction effect was observed with universalism,  $F(2,185) = 6.65, p < 0.01, \eta^2 = .07$ . No value matching effect for individuals with high cognitive sophistication was found, however,  $F(2,74) = 1.43, n.s.$  Individuals with a low level of cognitive sophistication were persuaded more by the self-transcendence appeal than by the conservation appeal,  $F(2,111) = 7.71, p < 0.001, \eta^2 = .12$ . Figure 2 depicts this effect. In the model with benevolence, the same tendencies occur, but the interaction effect is not statistically significant. For individuals with a high orientation towards benevolence, whether the right-wing populist claim was promoted with conservation or self-transcendence values had no effect, regardless of educational level,  $F(2,185) = 1.67, n.s.$  The use of inconsistent values thus did not make a claim more persuasive, but it also did not result in a stronger rejection. H3 is consequently only partly supported by the data. As the treatment check already revealed that recognition of benevolence value appeals did not significantly differ between the two stimuli, no effect likely occurred.

**Table 3.** Attitudes towards asylum seekers as a function of value appeals, personal value orientation and cognitive sophistication

Cognitive Sophistication	Personal Value Orientation	Self-Transcendence Appeal			Conservation Appeal		
		<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
low	Benevolence low	17	4.52	1.37	21	5.10	1.46
	Benevolence medium	26	4.21	1.24	20	5.22	1.70
	Benevolence high	12	3.75	1.36	21	3.38	1.90
	Universalism low	12	5.14	0.70	23	5.34	1.23
	Universalism medium	25	4.14	1.45	20	5.44	1.71
	Universalism high	18	3.68	1.13	19	2.67	1.24
high	Benevolence low	10	4.55	1.35	18	4.01	1.32
	Benevolence medium	7	4.64	1.48	14	4.77	1.66
	Benevolence high	17	2.67	1.37	14	3.02	1.30
	Universalism low	10	4.08	1.66	10	4.77	1.08
	Universalism medium	9	4.89	1.27	19	4.27	1.44
	Universalism high	15	2.57	1.49	17	3.09	1.58

**Figure 2.** Attitudes towards asylum seekers as a function of value appeal and personal value orientation (benevolence and universalism) for lower and higher cognitive sophistication



4.3 Discussion

Study 2 aimed to test whether inconsistent value appeals can be persuasive, even though they are generally recognized less than consistent value appeals (as shown in study 1). Consistent with previous research (e.g., Barker, 2005; Gordon & Miller, 2004; Nelson & Garst, 2005), the strongest persuasion effects were found when value appeals matched the context and the audience’s value orientation. Nevertheless, the results also demonstrated a matching effect with inconsistent value appeals for individuals with less cognitive sophistication. The fact that individuals with less formal education were particularly susceptible to these appeals concurs with the finding of the persuasiveness of right-wing populist advertisements (Matthes & Marquart, 2013; Matthes & Schmuck, 2015). One can thus conclude that right-wing populist actors may, at least to an extent, attract new voters by exploiting their opponents’ values.

In generalizing these results, one should, however, be cautious. First, the present study was conducted in a Western European context, in which consistent and inconsistent values are less sharply opposed than in the U.S. context. The successful use of inconsistent value appeals might thus be a Western European phenomenon. Future research should therefore adopt a comparative approach to directly compare inconsistent value appeals in both contexts. Second, the distinction between lower and higher educated participants in the present study differs from

previous research. Given that only 15% of the Swiss population<sup>8</sup> have experienced mandatory education and that this group is particularly difficult to recruit for online surveys, the present research focused on comparing individuals with medium and high educational levels. This choice was also supported by Barker's (2005) findings, which suggest that value matching can only occur with a certain level of cognitive sophistication. The results of the present study thus only seemingly contradict Barker's results, as he compared individuals with low educational levels to individuals with medium to high education levels. Future research may nevertheless consider including participants of all educational levels to obtain a more complete understanding of how cognitive sophistication influences the persuasiveness of inconsistent value appeals.

Finally, yet importantly, the mere presence of a right-wing populist claim in a newspaper article seemed to activate conservation values, even in the condition where these values were absent. Value matching effects for individuals with a dominant self-transcendence orientation might have been more pronounced if they had perceived self-transcendence values only. However, value frames are necessarily linked to issues, and inconsistent value frames will therefore always compete with the values activated by the issue or claim itself.

## 5. General discussion

Value framing is a powerful tool in political communication, and populist actors may be particularly inclined to use value appeals when promoting their claims. This paper therefore aimed to examine the effects of value appeals in the context of right-wing populist communication. A central research interest concerned whether right-wing populist actors can broaden their appeal by using values inconsistent with their right-wing orientation. The results of the two experiments presented in this paper suggest that inconsistent value appeals are less visible than consistent appeals, but that they may nevertheless have a persuasive impact.

The present study is the first to investigate value matching with inconsistent values in a Western European context. It therefore provides merely a starting point. Future research must strive to provide a more complete understanding by, for instance, improving certain methodological aspects, which constituted limitations in the current study. First, the experiments were administered online. Although this mode of experimentation provides a more authentic setting than a laboratory, it poses disadvantages regarding data quality. The present study attempted to address the issue of data quality with a strict exclusion policy for participants who were not deemed to be participating seriously, as described in the Method section. Second, both experiments were designed to include value consistency or inconsistency within a context; however, the theory on which the study is based refers to value reputation, a concept linked to specific actors. Manipulation in terms of the presence or absence of populist communication was

8 According to the Swiss Federal Statistical Office: <https://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/de/home/statistiken/wirtschaftliche-soziale-situation-bevoelkerung/gleichstellung-frau-mann/bildung/bildungsstand.html>

tors and to avoid limiting the findings to a specific party or person. This approach might nevertheless have influenced the perception of inconsistencies, as this perception would likely be stronger when value appeals are made by a well-known political actor. In this case, whether the use of inconsistent values would generate more attention or affect the statements credibility remain unknown. Future research could address these possibilities.

Overall, the two experiments with non-student samples show that right-wing populist claims combined with appeals to conservation values are the most persuasive for voters who can be characterized as typically right-wing based on their value orientation. Voters who can be characterized as left-wing may also be persuaded when right-wing populist claims are combined with appeals to self-transcendence values. Although this finding might not be limited to populist claims, it might help explain some of the success that right-wing populist parties currently have in Western Europe.

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## Supplementary material

### 1. Item wordings

#### 1.1 Perception of values, study 1 and 2 (translated into English)

**Question:** In the newspaper article you read, there were references to values. Values can be described as beliefs, which relate to the goals of a person and serve as guiding principles. In your opinion, which of the following values were explicitly mentioned in the text?

##### Items:

- Tradition: This value relates to the preservation of the cultural tradition of a country, to respect and acceptance of customs and norms.
- Security: This value refers to the security and stability of the society in a country.
- Benevolence: This value relates to the willingness to help socially disadvantaged people.
- Universalism: This value refers to equality of all people, tolerance, and the preservation of welfare for everyone.

#### 1.2 Recognition of populist elements, study 1 (pretest) and 2 (translated into English)

**Question:** Please think about the newspaper article you read before. You will now see different statements. For each of them, please indicate how well it describes the article. Thereby, think of the central message of the article.

##### Items<sup>9</sup>:

- [Pure People 1] The article mainly depicted a uniform population that shares the same values and needs. (2)

9 (1) Items used in study 1, (2) Items used in study 2

- [Pure People 2] The article first and foremost described positive traits of the ordinary people. (2)
- [Pure People 3] The article primarily demanded more political power for the local people. (1,2)
- [Exclusion 1] The article predominantly described negative traits of [the Sinti and Roma/asylum seekers]. (1)
- [Exclusion 2] The article foremost excluded [the Sinti and Roma/asylum seekers] from the ordinary people. (1,2)
- [Anti-Elitism 1] The article mainly blamed the government for the bad situation. (1,2)
- [Anti-Elitism 2] The politicians in the article are described to not care for the ordinary people / The politician in the article described himself as part of the ordinary people. (1,2)

### 1.3 Attitude towards asylum seekers, study 2 (translated into English)

**Question.** Following, we will present you a couple of statements. Please indicate for every statement, how much you agree with it.

**Items:**

- Switzerland should have stricter laws for the acceptance of refugees.
- Switzerland should close its borders in face of the rush of refugees.
- Refugees only become a burden for the state.
- Personally, I would not take in refugees at my home.
- I would have objections if a refugee camp was opened in my neighbourhood.
- We should have the possibility to deport refugees faster from our country.
- Criminality has increased in Switzerland due to the presence of refugees.
- It would be better for Switzerland if all residents would share the same values and traditions

## 2. Stimuli study 1

Figure 3. Stimulus 1, non populist

Chaos auf dem Zeltplatz:

### Sinti und Roma fehlt es an sanitären Anlagen



Auf dem Zeltplatz der Gemeinde Nidergau (SG) haben sich seit kurzem osteuropäische Roma-Familien angesiedelt. Einige Anwohner sind über den überfüllten und verdreckten Zeltplatz, auf dem die Zigeuner campieren, empört.

– Anita Brunner

30 Wohnwagengespanne von Sinti und Roma parken seit letztem April auf dem Dorfzeltplatz in Nidergau. Wie bereits berichtet, hat sich der zuständige Gemeinderat für den permanenten Standplatz im Zentrum der Gemeinde entschieden. Seit der Ankunft der Familien klagen einige Einwohner Nidergaus über Chaos, herumliegenden Müll, und eine höhere Lärmbelastung. Vorurteile, wie den Sinti und Roma mangle es an Ordnungssinn, Rücksicht und Disziplin, sind weitverbreitet, entsprechen aber nur äusserst selten der Wahrheit. In den Medien wird zwar vereinzelt über Fälle von verwehrten Roma-Unterkünften oder von kriminellen Handlungen der Volksgruppe berichtet, der Grossteil der Sinti und Roma aber ist bestens integriert, respektvoll

gegenüber Schweizer Kulturgütern und geht sorgfältig mit den ihnen zur Verfügung gestellten Ressourcen um. Die meisten Konflikte entstehen, da es an vielen Zeltplätzen keine Sanitäranlagen und Mülltonnen gibt. Deshalb werden die Plätze meist schmutzig hinterlassen, ohne dass eine böse Absicht dahinter steckt.

Das ist auch in der Gemeinde Nidergau der Fall. Der Zeltplatz verfügt nicht über eine ausreichende Infrastruktur für so viele Camper. Es fehlen sanitäre Anlagen, Strom und Mülltonnen. Die Einwohner sind sich einig, dass es nicht verantwortbar sei, die Sinti und Roma unter solchen menschenunwürdigen Bedingungen leben zu lassen und setzen sich für ihr Wohlerleben ein. Der Gemeindepräsident aus Nidergau bringt es auf den Punkt: „Es besteht dringender Handlungsbedarf – für beide Seiten. Wir Nidergauer sind tolerant – bei uns ist jeder Mensch willkommen.“ Die wenigen kritischen Stimmen aus Nidergau, die meinen, die Lebensweise der Sinti und Roma stelle eine Gefahr für ein friedliches Miteinander dar, liegen klar falsch. Laut dem Bun-

desamt für Statistik lassen sich von allen im Jahr 2014 begangenen Einbrüchen lediglich 0.4% auf Sinti und Roma zurückzuführen. Sie respektieren durchaus die in der Schweiz geltenden Regeln, Bräuche und Normen.

Um das Problem in den Griff zu bekommen, wird nun überlegt, die Sinti und Roma auf einem Campingplatz ausserhalb der Gemeinde mit entsprechenden Sanitäranlagen und Müllentsorgungsstellen unterzubringen. So können die Romas in hygienischen Zuständen leben und ungestört ihrer Kultur nachgehen, ohne unbewusst Schweizer Traditionen zu missachten.

Zudem wird damit auch der Angst einiger Einwohner vor Kriminalität durch die Fahrenden Rechnung getragen. Eine Verlagerung des Camps in eine grössere Zeltanlage ausserhalb des Dorfes stellt somit die beste Lösung für alle Betroffenen dar. ■

«*„Wir nehmen die Anliegen unserer Anwohner sehr ernst und setzen alles daran, weiterhin ein friedliches Zusammenleben zu gewährleisten und uns als eine offene Gemeinde zu präsentieren. In Nidergau ist jeder Mensch willkommen.“*

– Gemeindepräsident Nidergau »

Figure 4. Stimulus 2, populist

Chaos, Müll, Gestank:

## Zigeuner belagern Dorfcampingplatz



In der Gemeinde Nidergau (SG) belagern seit kurzem osteuropäische Roma-Clans den hiesigen Zeltplatz. Die Anwohner fürchten sich um ihre Sicherheit und beklagen sich über Müll und Gestank. – Anita Brunner

30 Wohnwagengespanne von Sinti und Roma parken seit letztem April auf dem Dorfcampplatz in Nidergau. Wie bereits berichtet, hat sich der zuständige Gemeinderat für den permanenten Standplatz im Herzen der Gemeinde entschieden, ohne die Sorgen der Anwohner ernst zu nehmen. Seit der Ankunft der Zigeuner-Clans klagen die Einwohner Nidergaus über Chaos, herumliegenden Müll, bestialischen Gestank und permanenten Lärm. Grund dafür ist unter anderem, dass der Zeltplatz nicht über eine ausreichende Infrastruktur für so viele Camper verfügt. Es fehlen sanitäre Anlagen, Strom und Mülltonnen.

Ausserdem hat die Angst vor Diebstählen und Einbrüchen bei den Nidergauern zugenommen. Mit ihrer kritischen Haltung gegenüber den Zigeunern sind die Dorfbewohner nicht allein, wie die Ergebnisse einer kürzlich durchgeführten repräsentativen Volksumfrage zeigen:

Jeder dritte Schweizer findet Sinti und Roma als Nachbarn "sehr oder eher unangenehm". Denn Sittenlosigkeit und Unordnung vertragen sich nun einmal nicht mit der Schweizer Lebensweise. Ausserdem sind viele der Befragten der Meinung, es mangle den Zigeunern an Respekt und Dankbarkeit.

Obwohl sie von vielen Nidergauern als unliebsame Gäste angesehen werden, sind einige der Meinung, dass negative Einstellungen über Zigeuner, wie den Roma-Sippen mangle es an Ordnungssinn oder Disziplin, zwar weit verbreitet seien, aber nicht immer der Wahrheit entsprächen. Denn auch Zigeuner würden mehrheitlich die in der Schweiz geltenden Regeln und Normen respektieren. Man müsse dafür sorgen, dass sich die Dorfbewohner für das Wohlergehen der Zigeuner verantwortlich fühlen und ihnen mit Toleranz begegnen. Es sei nicht verantwortlich, sie unter solch menschenunwürdigen Bedingungen leben zu lassen.

In erster Linie aber fühlen sich die Anwohner vom Gemeinderat hintergangen. Dieser hat mit seinem Entschluss, die Zigeuner auf dem Zeltplatz im Herzen Nider-

gau campieren zu lassen, über die Köpfe der Bürger hinweg entschieden. Damit hat er ihre berechtigten Einwände, der Zeltplatz sei nicht der geeignete Ort, ignoriert – ein klarer Verstoß gegen den Gedanken der direkten Demokratie. Dies macht einmal mehr deutlich, dass es der Politik in unserem Lande an gesundem Menschenverstand und Bürgernähe mangelt.

Um das Problem in den Griff zu bekommen und auch, um der Sorge der Bürger endlich Rechnung zu tragen, sind ausserstatische gesonderte Camps mit entsprechenden Sanitäreinrichtungen zur vorübergehenden Unterbringung der Sinti und Roma gefordert. Auf diese Weise können die Zigeuner in hygienischen Zuständen leben und ungestört ihrer Kultur nachgehen, ohne die Einwohner beispielsweise durch ihre lauten Festgelage zu stören.

Neben der geforderten separaten Unterbringung sollten ausserdem verschärfte Polizeikontrollen durchgeführt werden. Für die Anwohner Nidergaus zählt jedoch an erster Stelle, dass der Gemeinderat seine Fehlentscheidung endlich einsieht und ihren Forderungen zur Verlegung der Sinti und Roma nachkommt. Einmal mehr zeigt sich, dass das Volk am besten weiss, was richtig und falsch ist.

«Die Zigeuner neigen zu Unordnung und Kriminalität, besonders zu Diebstählen und zu Betrügereien. Es fehlen ihnen vielfach die sittlichen Antriebe zur Achtung vor fremdem Eigentum» – Alfred P. (Campingplatzbetreiber) »

## 3. Stimuli Study 2

Figure 5. Stimulus 1, self-transcendence values

Kommentar

## Asylproblematik in der Schweiz



Volk und Kantone – also die Gesetzgeber der Schweiz – haben beschlossen, dass die kriminellen Asylanten des Landes zu verweisen sind. Doch obwohl das schon vor bald fünf Jahren geschah, versuchen Bundesrat und Parlament nun das Gegenteil zu tun. Die Politiker ignorieren damit den Willen der Bürger und untergraben die Souveränität des Schweizer Volks. Der Volkswille der Schweizer muss beachtet werden!

Die Asylanter, die hier arbeiten, Steuern zahlen und sich integrieren, sind eine Bereicherung für unser Land. Sozialschmarotzer oder Kriminaltouristen jedoch sind eine Plage: Sie haben kein Interesse daran, sich zu integrieren, lernen die Sprache nicht, bleiben unter sich und liegen uns Schweizern auf der Tasche. Sie begehen überdurchschnittlich viele Straftaten und verursachen dadurch enorme Kosten für den Staat.

Mit heute über 20% hat der Ausländeranteil in der Schweiz die kritische Grenze überschritten. Das heutige Asylanterproblem ist im Wesentlichen die Folge einer Masseneinwanderung, wie sie die Schweiz seit den letzten Jahrzehnten erlebt.

Das Chaos im Asylwesen und die hohe Attraktivität der Schweiz haben dazu geführt, dass die Asylgesuche in den letzten Jahren massiv zugenommen haben. In der Schweiz leben Familien und Kinder, die nicht jeden Tag ausreichend zu essen haben, alte Leute, die schlecht behandelt werden, Patienten ohne ausreichende Versorgung. Wir geben Millionen von Franken für Asylsuchende aus, ohne zuerst dem eigenen Volk zu helfen.

Politiker tragen die Schuld dafür, dass sich in unserem Land eine Zweiklassengesellschaft bildet, die zu unwürdigen Lebensumständen führt. Wir Schweizerinnen und Schweizer müssen die staatlichen Ressourcen mit immer mehr Asylsuchenden teilen. Gerechtigkeit und das Leben in Würde ist ein Grundrecht aller Menschen. Diesem Anspruch können wir so in der Schweiz zurzeit aber nicht mehr nachkommen. Die soziale Gerechtigkeit und der Wohlstand aller ist uns ein wichtiges Anliegen. Jeder Asylanter soll weiterhin unsere Hilfe und Unterstützung in Anspruch nehmen können. Wer sich jedoch unseren Gesetzen widersetzt und seine Identität und seinen wirklichen Grund für das Stellen eines Asylgesuches nicht preisgeben will, gehört nicht in unser Land.

Um diesen Missbräuchen entgegenzuwirken, braucht es dringend ein schärferes Asylgesetz: Dafür müssen wir kämpfen und zusammenstehen. Wir müssen unserer Schweiz Sorge tragen! Denn nur so können Gerechtigkeit und das Wohl aller gesichert werden. •

Figure 6. Stimulus 2, conservation values

Kommentar

## Asylproblematik in der Schweiz



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Politiker tragen die Schuld dafür, dass unsere nationale Identität gefährdet und die Wirtschaft geschwächt wird. Es ist daher umso wichtiger, dass Schweizer Werte wie Freiheit, Selbstbestimmung und Selbstverantwortung behalten werden. Mit der Verinnerlichung dieser Schweizer Grundwerte können wir gemeinsam dazu Sorge tragen, dass die Sicherheit, Stabilität und Harmonie in unserem Land bewahrt wird. Die Schweiz hat eine humanitäre Tradition und wird diese auch künftig beibehalten. Leider wird diese Hilfsbereitschaft durch kriminelle Asylanten untergraben. So kommen Personen, die keine wirklichen Flüchtlinge sind, unberechtigt in unser Land.

Um diesen Missbräuchen entgegenzuwirken, braucht es dringend ein schärferes Asylgesetz: Dafür müssen wir kämpfen und zusammenstehen. Wir müssen unserer Schweiz Sorge tragen! Nur so können die Sicherheit und Wahrung der Schweizer Tradition gesichert werden. •