

This research investigates the convergence between feminism and radical-right populism in the field of women's representation in the European Union. Although previous research has explored how populist radical-right actors exploit feminist narratives to advance Islamophobic anti-immigration stances, little has been said about how feminist arguments contribute to radical-right populist attempts to represent women substantively. This is relevant because, through the representative process, populist radical-right parties construct specific views of women's identities, interests, and gender equality that are increasingly becoming part of the European political discourse. As the popularity of radical-right populist parties rises across Europe, so does their ability to use seemingly liberal narratives to leave the political fringes and enter the mainstream. Therefore, analysing the nature and the objectives of a potential convergence between feminism and radical-right populism is crucial to understanding which identities and interests would be advanced, marginalised, or erased if a populist radical-right form of feminism became dominant. This research aims to uncover 1) whether a populist radical-right form of feminism exists and what it may look like; 2) which goals populist radical-right parties pursue when they use feminist arguments to represent women; 3) which women are represented or excluded when populist radical-right parties adopt feminist arguments in their claims. To achieve this, the method of reflexive thematic analysis is applied to a sample of 82 representative claims for women advanced by populist radical-right members of the European Parliament during 26 plenary debates held between 2019 and 2023. This study concludes that populist radical-right feminism contributes to reinforcing an 'us' versus 'them' narrative, which depicts populist radical-right parties as the true champions of women's interests and 'real' gender equality.