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Politicising immigration in times of crisis: empirical evidence from Switzerland

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ABSTRACT

This article investigates the politicisation of immigration in Switzerland during two major socioeconomic crises: the oil crisis of the 1970s and the financial crisis of the late 2000s. Based on 2,853 newspaper claims from 1970 to 1976 and 1995 to 2018, we measure and compare differences in salience, polarisation, actor diversity and frame use between crisis and noncrisis periods. We find that while claims-making on immigration was indeed more salient, polarised, and diversified during the oil crisis, the empirical data for the financial crisis are inconclusive or show a slight decrease. Nonetheless, we still find a noteworthy increase in the use of identity frames during both periods. We conclude that while crises may influence claims-making about immigration and thus affect the politicisation of the matter, their contextual links to particular immigrant groups appear to be of importance as well. Crises do not increase politicisation automatically but may provide important opportunity structures that foster it.

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Politicisation; immigration; integration; claims-making; crisis; Switzerland

Introduction

We live in a world of massive social and economic transformations (Beck, Giddens, and Lash 1994; Crouch 1999; Beck 2016), the rhythm and pace of which are largely dictated by the repeated occurrence of sudden events of disruption – crises. While these crises may vary in form and scope, they have in common their substantial impact on both public opinion and institutional agency. From a systemic perspective, they pose challenges that a society has to overcome; from a discursive perspective, however, they constitute valuable opportunity structures that render some issues more pressing than they were before the crisis onset (Wieviorka 2012). As a result, these issues draw more attention (i.e. they become more salient) and are discussed more controversially (i.e. they become more polarised). Both are aspects of a phenomenon commonly referred to as politicisation (e.g. Hutter and Grande 2014; Hutter, Grande, and Kriesi 2016; Van der Brug et al. 2015; Green-Pedersen 2012).¹

All issues can become politicised if the circumstances are right, but some issues are more prone to politicisation than others. Immigration is such an issue. Finding itself at

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the heart of public debate in Western Europe (Fumarola 2020; Green-Pedersen and Otjes 2019; for Switzerland see Skenderovic and D'Amato 2008) and having galvanised support for right-wing politics across the continent (Campani 2019; Inglehart and Norris 2019; Vieten and Poynting 2016), it has become a popular object of contestation whose susceptibility to politicisation is reinforced by the fact that immigrants, border crossers, and related out-groups have a long history of being scapegoated for all kinds of social ills. History books are full of such cases, crossing countries and centuries and constituting a troubling legacy (Castles, de Haas, and Miller 2020; Kleinschmidt 2003).

However, there are surprisingly few empirical data on the politicisation of immigration (notable recent exceptions include Grande, Schwarzbözl, and Fatke 2019 and Van der Brug et al. 2015),² whether in times of normalcy or of crisis. We want to help fill this research gap by examining the politicisation of immigration during two distinct crisis periods: the oil price shock of 1973 (the 'oil crisis') and the crash of the U.S. sub-prime mortgage market in the late 2000s (the 'financial crisis'). Although both crises were principally economic in nature, they soon turned into watershed moments that went on to define much of their respective decades and permanently change the social, political, and cultural climate in Europe and beyond. In fact, few – if any – other crises over the last fifty years were as devastating and strongly felt as those two.³

Our analysis of claims appearing in major Swiss newspapers reveals an increase in the salience and polarisation of immigration during the oil crisis but not the financial crisis. Because of greater actor diversity and a higher share of identity frames during both crises, we nonetheless suggest a more general pattern of politicisation or at least a relevant change in the discursive treatment of the issue. In short, we find systematic evidence that crises affect claims-making on immigration and, therefore, the politicisation of the matter. While these findings are significant, the scope of the crisis effect appears to be context dependent, thus limiting their generalisability and necessitating a closer look at individual cases. It is of crucial importance that the conditions are right, but if they are, crises can indeed constitute valuable opportunity structures to politicise immigration and recast the discourse about it.

Immigration and periods of crisis

Most scholarly accounts of immigration to Europe consider it both the cause and result of the deep-seated adjustments and transformations that the continent had to undergo in recent history (Castles, de Haas, and Miller 2020; Lucassen and Lucassen 2013). Its modern-day origins can be traced back to the emerging immigration regimes of the 19th and early 20th centuries: political arrangements that were anchored in narratives of nation building and international competition. In the wake of the two World Wars that followed and reshaped Europe's political map, these regimes were subjected to substantial overhauls (Messina 2007). Most initial postwar immigration policies, for instance, were tailored to ensure a constant supply of labour from Southern Europe and the postcolonial periphery – a workforce the reindustrialising cities of the North desperately craved (e.g. Akgündüz 2012; Soysal 1994). Starting in the 1960s, further policies were implemented that improved the legal status of these labour migrants and began to integrate them gradually into the expanding national welfare regimes. Viewed as indispensable to the economic interests of their host societies (Hoffmann-Nowotny 1973),

they were not only allowed to stay but also to embark on a journey that would, in numerous cases, end with the acquisition of citizenship.

A first departure from these times of steady growth and progress, the *trente glorieuses*, as the French economist Jean Fourastié called them, came with the oil crisis of 1973. Being the first major economic disruption in postwar Europe, it accelerated the disintegration of the labour-based *Fordist* consensus and ushered in an era of diversified immigration policies that would unfold against the backdrop of large-scale societal transformations, such as globalisation, securitisation, and human rights institutionalisation (Castles, de Haas, and Miller 2020). Concomitantly, the dominant view on immigration also changed, with questions of border control or worker quotas becoming first supplemented and then replaced by those of long-term immigrant integration. It did not take too long before these integration matters, cherished by some as emancipatory and progressive but scorned by others as strategies to legitimise repressive policies, began to cause controversy in their own right (for the Swiss case, see e.g. D'Amato and Ruedin 2019; Ruedin, Alberti, and D'Amato 2015). In fact, from the 1990s onwards, the epicentre of most immigration-related debates in Europe had incrementally shifted towards issues such as language acquisition and the display of religious (i.e. Islamic) symbols in the public sphere (Van der Brug et al. 2015).

The analytical lens through which we approach this trajectory is the concept of crisis. We define crisis in rather broad terms, namely, as a collective awareness that the inner mechanics of the complex economic and social machineries that structure our everyday lives and provide us with meaning have suddenly stopped working the way they are supposed to. In so doing, they cause a moment of disruption that is usually characterised 'by three general attributes: surprise, high uncertainty, and threat' (Seeger and Sellnow 2016, 10; see also Seeger, Sellnow, and Ulmer 2003). According to Habermas (1988), one may further distinguish between system crises and identity crises, two different but closely interlinked concepts based on a 'broader distinction between system and lifeworld' (Thompson 2012, 61). A system crisis is material in character and arises when the integrative capacity of a system has reached its limits, thus causing it to falter and eventually collapse. In contrast, an identity crisis is mainly concerned with the collective identity that people have symbolically appropriated and now perceive as being threatened by the looming demise of the existing order. Despite this apparent dichotomy, crises are not static entities; they may evolve, seep into other areas, or change their shape over time. For example, a system crisis may develop into an identity crisis once governing institutions cannot mount enough support to sustain their legitimacy anymore.

What is characteristic of crises is that they are usually accompanied by a contestation of norms and values that were consented to by society before. As trust in established institutions erodes and the inability of the system to placate discontent becomes more apparent (Siegenthaler 1993; Tanner 2014), the twin principles of exclusion and inclusion grow in significance. Clear-cut boundaries between their own in-group and visible out-groups allow people to make sense of the crisis and regain control (Tajfel and Turner 1986; see also Bukowski et al. 2017; Fritsche et al. 2013; 2017) after their life-worlds have crumbled under its immense pressure. Authors such as Mair (1998) and Kriesi et al. (2008) have long pointed to the immanent link between larger societal developments and the politicisation of certain issues – crises, in this sense, can be regarded as moments in which this intricate process is squeezed into a very narrow

time interval. As the immigration debate is primarily organised around the opposition of a (native) in-group and (immigrant) out-groups, one could assume that it becomes both more salient and more polarised under crisis conditions (see also Triandafyllidou 1998, 601–603).⁴

Salience expectation: There are more claims on immigration in crisis periods than in noncrisis periods (greater salience).

Polarisation expectation: Claims differ from each other more strongly in crisis periods than in noncrisis periods (greater polarisation).

Since they cast doubt on previously uncontested beliefs and values, crises provide marginalised voices with opportunities to popularise their message and take part in shaping the public debate. Historically, this has enabled social movements and issue-driven civil society organisations to establish themselves on the political stage (Kerbo 1982; McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald 1996). We consider it possible that new actors emerge during the two crises examined but do not necessarily expect it. Rather, we expect existing actors to exploit these crises by making claims that they would perhaps not make otherwise. Because crises structurally advantage nonestablished actors who are given a nontrivial chance to push for change successfully, getting involved may appear as a strategically prudent move. After all, there is a ‘multivalence of crises’ that ‘opens up the opportunity for rallying people behind visions of a new order’ (t’Hart 1993, 40).

Actor diversity expectation: A more diverse range of actors makes claims in crisis periods than in noncrisis periods (greater actor diversity).

When actors engage in discourse and make claims about an issue, they usually give a rationale or justification for their arguments. In other words, they use *frames*, i.e. communicative tools that highlight particular aspects of reality as a means to enhance their salience (Entman 1993). Making claims about immigration, actors can decide if they want to foreground frames that relate to instrumental considerations (e.g. cost–benefit ratios), collective identity, or moral principles.⁵ Due to the link between crisis and identity (Habermas 1988; see also Tanner 2014), one could assume that claims with identity-related framing appear more frequently during crises.⁶ Because the contrast between in-group and out-groups is at their core, immigration issues seem particularly susceptible to such frames. To give but a few of many possibilities, anti-immigrant activists may perceive the presence of foreigners not only as an economic burden which their crisis-stricken nation should not have to shoulder any longer but also, in more populist terms, as a policy failure of irresponsible elites who have failed in reuniting the people behind an identitarian top-down crisis narrative (Imhof 1993). Progressive voices, on the other hand, may view the crisis as a critical juncture that entails the opportunity to develop and popularise inclusive narratives of belonging. With matters of identity presumably surging during the crisis, one would expect instrumental frames to become, in turn, less relevant. A society so occupied with renegotiating categories of inclusion and exclusion may tend to disregard these more rational arguments until the crisis is over and new norms have been established (or old norms revitalised).

Identity expectation: There is a higher share of identity frames in crisis periods than in noncrisis periods.

Instrumentality expectation: There is a lower share of instrumental frames in crisis periods than in noncrisis periods.

Data and methods

We employ the methodological approach of Van der Brug et al. (2015) with inconsequential modifications to increase our research efficiency. Rather than identifying articles by manually searching through printed newspapers, we work with an extensively tested set of keywords (see Appendix 1) to preselect potentially relevant articles in a digital repository. This does not affect the selection of articles or the coding process, however, which are both performed in the same way and by applying the same criteria. For the original dataset of Van der Brug et al. is limited to the period from 1995 to 2009, we extend it with data from two additional periods (1970 to 1976 and 2010 to 2018), encompassing both crises and yielding a total of 2,853 claims. As in Van der Brug et al., we use a fully randomised list of dates and include broadsheets and tabloids from Switzerland's two most important language regions: *Le Matin* and *Le Temps* (with its predecessors *Journal de Genève* and *Gazette de Lausanne*) from the French-speaking region and *Blick* and the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* from the German-speaking region. Not only does this make our study more consistent, but the exclusive focus on newspapers also allows for greater comparability across time and helps to avoid the rather limited substance of most social media data (e.g. Edwards et al. 2013).⁷

We use our two crises, namely, the oil crisis of the early 1970s and the financial crisis of the late 2000s, as predictor variables. As there is a lack of agreement about their duration, we work with a set of plausible dates derived from the literature and use model averaging while making the boundaries of all definitions and the corresponding uncertainty transparent. This set consists of 18 definitions of the oil crisis and 25 definitions of the financial crisis. In addition to the latter, we also select 22 starting points and 19 end points from a crisis chronology compiled by Guillén (2011), thereby deriving 418 combinations (see Appendix 2). Instead of attempting to identify the best definition, we use the aforementioned model averaging. Consequently, we work with 7,524 (18×418) combinations based on Guillén's list⁸ and 450 (18×25) more combinations based on the literature, which we employ as a robustness check to ensure that our findings do not rely on only one source but match the scholarly consensus.

We use four different aspects of politicisation, namely, the two core elements of salience and polarisation as well as actor diversity and frames, as outcome variables. Following the rather broad understanding outlined in Koopmans et al. (2005, 254), we define claims as 'purposive and public articulation of political demands, calls to action, proposals, criticism, or physical attacks, which, actually or potentially, affect the interests or integrity of the claimants and/or other collective actors.' According to this reading, a claim consists of up to four elements (but not all claims consist of all elements): an actor (claimant) who makes the claim, an issue that is addressed by the claim, an object actor who is affected by the claim, and a frame that provides justification for the claim. Claimants are divided into six types: governmental and judicial actors;

legislative and party actors;⁹ media actors and journalists; minority, pro-immigrant and religious actors; anti-immigrant actors; and civil society actors.¹⁰ Frames are divided into the three types listed above: instrumental, identity, and moral frames.

Salience is operationalised as claim frequency, and polarisation as the degree to which different claimants agree or disagree with one another. For the latter, we employ a positional variable that uses a five-point scale to classify claims as *positive* (i.e. pro-immigration; multicultural) or *negative* (i.e. anti-immigration; monocultural). We then evaluate them by adjusting Van der Eijk's (2001) measure *A* to a range from 0 to 1: a theoretical value of 0 indicates universal agreement (i.e. all actors share the same position) and a value of 1 universal disagreement (i.e. all actors hold diametrically opposed positions). To calculate actor diversity, we use the Herfindahl-Hirschman index on different actor types, where s_i stands for the share of all claims in a period made by a certain type:

$$H = \sum_{i=1}^N s_i^2$$

Our analytical strategy combines descriptive statistics¹¹ that compare claims inside and outside the two crises with multivariate regression analyses that introduce additional control variables. We employ ordinary least squares (OLS) models, with the outcome variable y_i depending on the aspect of politicisation examined (i.e. the share of claims fulfilling a certain criterion), and aggregate the claims into 119 quarters of the calendar year to obtain meaningful results. The predictor variables measure the impact of the oil crisis (X_{oil}) and financial crisis (X_{fin}). Given our many crisis definitions, we present the kernel densities of the regression coefficients β_1 and β_2 over 7,524 linear regression models. As stated, we also use different control variables, namely, the decade in which the claim was made (to account for unspecified time effects) and major events (e.g. landmark court rulings; popular initiatives) that may have affected claims on immigration independently of the crisis context (see Appendix 3):

$$y_i \sim \text{Normal}(\mu, \sigma)$$

$$\mu_i = \alpha + \beta_1 X_{oil} + \beta_2 X_{fin} + \beta X_{control}$$

Because we are interested in the distribution of the coefficients from the different regression models (reflecting multiple definitions of crisis), we do not use hierarchical models. The coefficients are *unbiased*. As suggested by Berkhout and Ruedin (2017), we also include differences at the claims level with respect to the share of actor types [not when actors are the outcome variable, e.g. governments; reference = other], share of frames [not when frames are the outcome variable, e.g. identity; reference = other], and share of claims with a focus on integration [reference = immigration].

Findings

First, we analyse the salience of immigration, with the outcome variable measuring the number of claims made per quarter of the calendar year (Figure 1). Our regression framework enables us to statistically adjust for noncrisis effects and compare the salience of immigration in crisis to that in noncrisis periods. However, the results match our *salience*

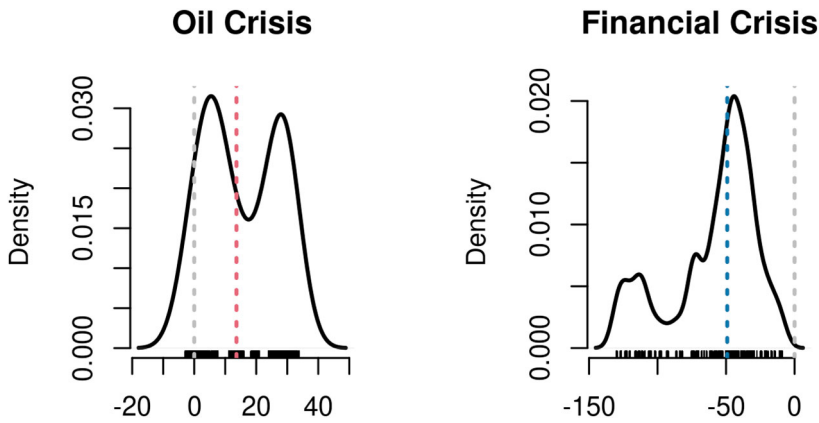


Figure 1. Saliency of immigration in Switzerland during the oil crisis and financial crisis (regression analysis). Explanation: The two panels show the distribution of the coefficients from $N=7,524$ regression models – each model relies on different dates to define the period of the two crises. Only the coefficient of the crisis indicated is shown in each panel. The rug plot at the bottom shows the distribution of the estimates, while the black line gives the kernel distribution of the statistical effect of the oil crisis (left panel) and financial crisis (right panel), with bandwidth = 5. Higher values indicate more coefficients with a given estimate. The outcome variable is the number of claims per quarter of the calendar year. The grey dashed line indicates zero, i.e. no difference in saliency for the crisis, and the red and blue dashed lines show the median coefficients as a single-number summary across the different models. Control variables (decade fixed effects, migration flows, actors, topics, and events) are not shown. With the alternative set of definitions of the financial crisis, the mean estimate changes to -38 (median: -20 ; standard error: 32).

expectation only in parts. As expected, we find greater saliency for the oil crisis but, surprisingly, lower saliency for the financial crisis. Our most common estimate for the oil crisis lies between 5 and 20 additional claims per quarter (mean: 15; median: 14; standard error: 12), with many definitions suggesting even greater saliency (as shown by the second peak in Figure 1). In contrast, the estimate for nearly all financial crisis definitions is visibly to the left of the grey zero line. The most common results indicate 50 articles fewer per quarter (mean: -59 ; median: -49 ; standard error: 32), but since there is a second negative peak at approximately -120 articles per quarter, there are quite a few definitions for which the saliency of immigration is even substantially lower.

We keep this regression framework but change our outcome variable to polarisation: a higher value implies more polarisation, while a lower value implies less polarisation (Figure 2). The results are not particularly clear, as we see regression coefficients to both the left and right of the zero line. The larger part of the oil crisis coefficients is to its right, thus possibly hinting at slightly higher levels of polarisation (mean: 0.02; median: 0.02; standard error: 0.03). However, most financial crisis coefficients fall to its left, thus suggesting less polarisation and greater actor agreement (mean: -0.05 ; median: -0.04 ; standard error: 0.05). As both effects are rather small, our findings remain too inconclusive to confirm our *polarisation expectation*.

Second, we ask if the composition of claimants is more diverse in times of crisis. Here, higher values indicate more diversity, while lower values indicate less diversity (Figure 3). We find substantially more diversity for the oil crisis, with no single crisis definition

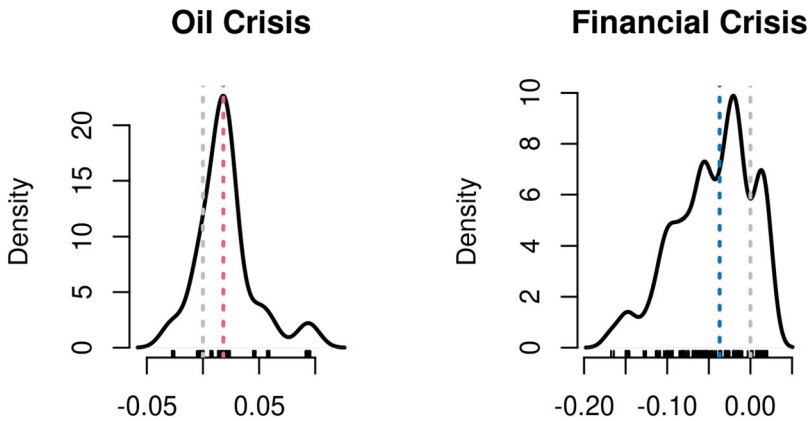


Figure 2. Polarisation over immigration in Switzerland during the oil crisis and financial crisis (regression analysis). Explanation: The two panels show the distribution of the coefficients from $N = 7,524$ regression models – each model relies on different dates to define the period of the two crises. Only the coefficient of the crisis indicated is shown in each panel. The rug plot at the bottom shows the distribution of the estimates, while the black line gives the kernel distribution of the statistical effect of the oil crisis (left panel) and financial crisis (right panel), with bandwidth = 0.01. Higher values indicate more coefficients with a given estimate. The outcome variable is the degree of polarisation per quarter of the calendar year. The grey dashed line indicates zero, i.e. no difference in salience for the crisis, and the red and blue dashed lines show the median coefficients as a single-number summary across the different models. Control variables (decade fixed effects, migration flows, actors, topics, and events) are not shown. With the alternative set of definitions of the financial crisis, the mean estimate changes to -0.05 (median: -0.04 ; standard error: 0.04).

yielding a negative estimate (mean: 0.18; median: 0.17; standard error: 0.04). In contrast, there is no clear statistical effect for the financial crisis, as the coefficients on both sides of the zero line are roughly equal, and the peak is only barely to its left (mean: 0.00; median: 0.01; standard error: 0.04). Because of these conflicting findings, our *actor diversity expectation* is only confirmed for the oil crisis.

To further enhance our understanding of the claimants, we run regression models where the share of claims made by an actor type is the outcome variable (Figures 4 and 5).¹² We find that the share of government actors (often members of the Federal Council or executive agencies) is around 10 percentage points higher during both the oil crisis (mean: 0.10; median: 0.10; standard error: 0.05) and the financial crisis (mean: 0.09; median: 0.10; standard error: 0.07) than during noncrisis periods. This is still true when we use the financial crisis dates from the literature in lieu of those derived from Gullién's list. Furthermore, the share of party actors is lower in crisis periods than in noncrisis periods, although more so during the financial crisis than during the oil crisis. Similar models for media and civil society actors are more ambiguous and point to fewer claims during the financial crisis but more claims during the oil crisis. Lastly, anti-immigrant actors seem to play a major role in neither crisis. We assume that this is mostly a byproduct of the coding operationalisation we inherited from Van der Brug et al. (2015, for a discussion, see Meyer and Rosenberger 2015).

Third, we want to know whether there are more identity frames and less instrumental frames in times of crisis. As mentioned before, identity frames refer to symbolic aspects

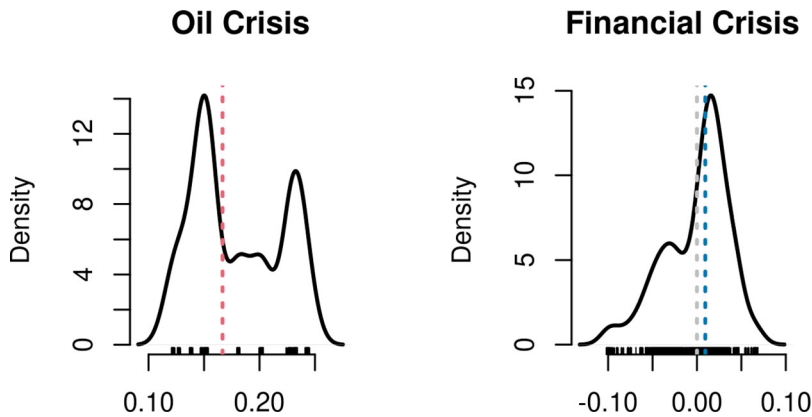


Figure 3. Actor diversity of immigration in Switzerland during the oil crisis and financial crisis (regression analysis). Explanation: The two panels show the distribution of the coefficients from $N = 7,524$ regression models – each model relies on different dates to define the period of the two crises. Only the coefficient of the crisis indicated is shown in each panel. The rug plot at the bottom shows the distribution of the estimates, while the black line gives the kernel distribution of the statistical effect of the oil crisis (left panel) and financial crisis (right panel), with bandwidth = 0.01. Higher values indicate more coefficients with a given estimate. The outcome variable is actor diversity in claims per quarter of the calendar year. The grey dashed line indicates zero, i.e. no difference in salience for the crisis, and the red and blue dashed lines show the median coefficients as a single-number summary across the different models. Control variables (decade fixed effects, migration flows, actors, topics, and events) are not shown. With the alternative set of definitions of the financial crisis, the mean estimate changes to -0.01 (median: -0.01 ; standard error: 0.05).

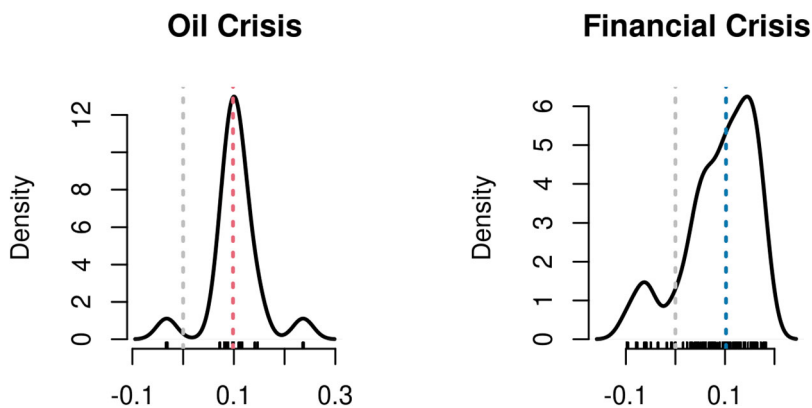


Figure 4. Claims by government actors on immigration in Switzerland during the oil and financial crisis (regression analysis). Explanation: The two panels show the distribution of the coefficients from $N = 7,524$ regression models – each model relies on different dates to define the period of the two crises. Only the coefficient of the crisis indicated is shown in each panel. The rug plot at the bottom shows the distribution of the estimates, while the black line gives the kernel distribution of the statistical effect of the oil crisis (left panel) and financial crisis (right panel), with bandwidth = 0.02. Higher values indicate more coefficients with a given estimate. The outcome variable is the share of claims by government actors per quarter of the calendar year. The grey dashed line indicates zero, i.e. no difference in salience for the crisis, and the red and blue dashed lines show the median coefficients as a single-number summary across the different models. Control variables (decade fixed effects, migration flows, actors, topics, and events) are not shown. With the alternative set of definitions of the financial crisis, the mean estimate changes to 0.06 (median: 0.06; standard error: 0.08).

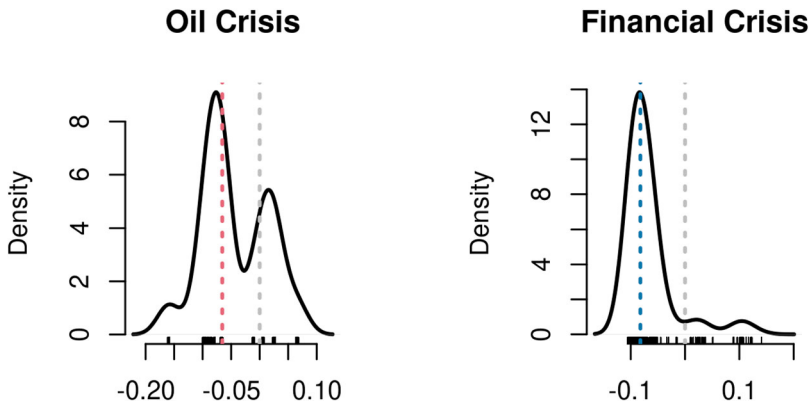


Figure 5. Claims by party actors on immigration in Switzerland during the oil crisis and financial crisis (regression analysis). Explanation: The two panels show the distribution of the coefficients from $N = 7,524$ regression models – each model relies on different dates to define the period of the two crises. Only the coefficient of the crisis indicated is shown in each panel. The rug plot at the bottom shows the distribution of the estimates, while the black line gives the kernel distribution of the statistical effect of the oil crisis (left panel) and financial crisis (right panel), with bandwidth = 0.02. Higher values indicate more coefficients with a given estimate. The outcome variable is the share of claims by party actors per quarter of the calendar year. The grey dashed line indicates zero, i.e. no difference in salience for the crisis, and the red and blue dashed lines show the median coefficients as a single-number summary across the different models. Control variables (decade fixed effects, migration flows, actors, topics, and events) are not shown. With the alternative set of definitions of the financial crisis, the mean estimate changes to -0.01 (median: -0.03 ; standard error: 0.08).

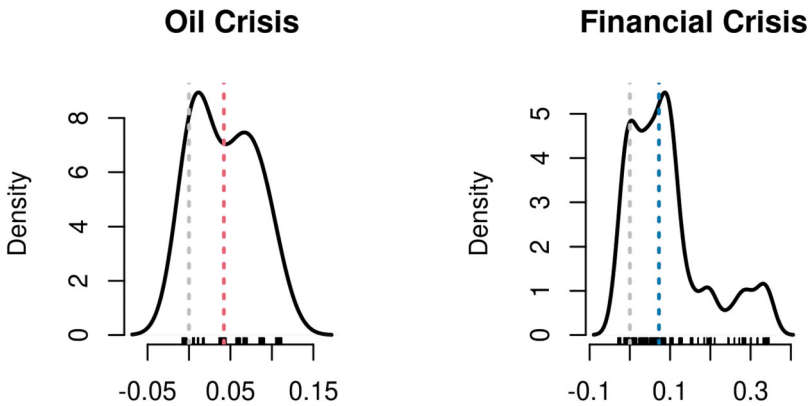


Figure 6. Identity frames in claims on immigration in Switzerland during the oil crisis and financial crisis (regression analysis). Explanation: The two panels show the distribution of the coefficients from $N = 7,524$ regression models – each model relies on different dates to define the period of the two crises. Only the coefficient of the crisis indicated is shown in each panel. The rug plot at the bottom shows the distribution of the estimates, while the black line gives the kernel distribution of the statistical effect of the oil crisis (left panel) and financial crisis (right panel), with bandwidth = 0.02. Higher values indicate more coefficients with a given estimate. The outcome variable is the share of claims with an identity frame per quarter of the calendar year. The grey dashed line indicates zero, i.e. no difference in salience for the crisis, and the red and blue dashed lines show the median coefficients as a single-number summary across the different models. Control variables (decade fixed effects, migration flows, actors, topics, and events) are not shown. With the alternative set of definitions of the financial crisis, the mean estimate changes to 0.10 (median: 0.06; standard error: 0.10).

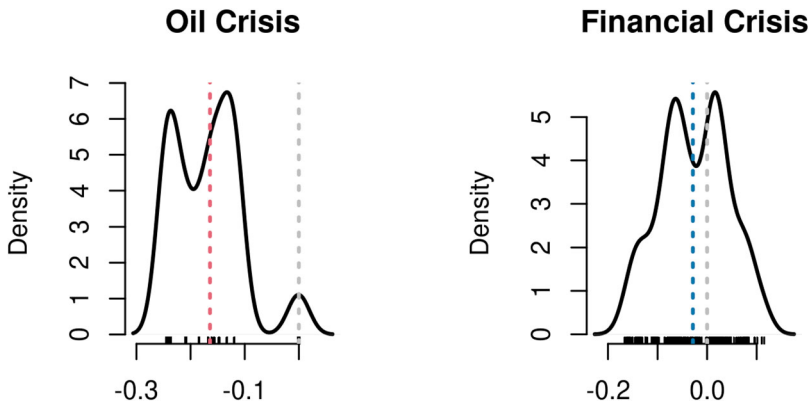


Figure 7. Instrumental frames in claims on immigration in Switzerland during the oil crisis and financial crisis (regression analysis). Explanation: The two panels show the distribution of the coefficients from $N=7,524$ regression models – each model relies on different dates to define the period of the two crises. Only the coefficient of the crisis indicated is shown in each panel. The rug plot at the bottom shows the distribution of the estimates, while the black line gives the kernel distribution of the statistical effect of the oil crisis (left panel) and financial crisis (right panel), with bandwidth = 0.02. Higher values indicate more coefficients with a given estimate. The outcome variable is the share of claims with an instrumental frame per quarter of the calendar year. The grey dashed line indicates zero, i.e. no difference in salience for the crisis, and the red and blue dashed lines show the median coefficients as a single-number summary across the different models. Control variables (decade fixed effects, migration flows, actors, topics, and events) are not shown. With the alternative set of definitions of the financial crisis, the mean estimate changes to 0.01 (median: 0.04; standard error: 0.08).

of collective identity, such as traditions, mores, values, or beliefs held by the in-group. Instrumental frames follow pragmatic or utilitarian arguments instead. They either appeal to the public interest or emphasise issue-oriented policies (e.g. to reduce crime, propel growth, or enhance government efficiency).¹³ In our first regression model, the outcome variable is the share of identity frames, which is higher in crisis periods than in noncrisis periods (Figure 6). The effect is a little stronger for the financial crisis (mean: 0.09; median: 0.07; standard error: 0.10) than for the oil crisis (mean: 0.04; median: 0.04; standard error: 0.04) but statistically sound in either case, thus validating our *identity expectation*. In our second regression model, we measure instrumental frames and find a reverse pattern: their share is consistently lower in crisis periods than in noncrisis periods (Figure 7). Once again, there are differences between the oil crisis (mean: -0.17 ; median: -0.16 ; standard error: 0.06) and the financial crisis (mean: -0.03 ; median: -0.03 ; standard error: 0.07), but we still find enough evidence in both crises to confirm our *instrumentality expectation*.

Discussion and conclusion

Examining the politicisation of immigration during two major crises in Switzerland, this article investigated (i) the salience and polarisation of the issue, (ii) the diversity of the claimants, and (iii) the nature of the frames used. Contrary to our initial expectation concerning (i), we found increased salience for the oil crisis but not for the financial crisis. In

retrospect, we consider this divergence to be based largely on the degree to which immigrants were affected by both crises. Many of the claims from the oil crisis relate to the fate of seasonal workers, who were deemed useful in times of prosperity but considered expendable once the economy began to contract. Even though Switzerland lost 330,000 jobs because of the oil crisis, the number of unemployed increased by only a meagre 25,000 persons (Flückiger 1998) – the rest consisted of immigrants whose permits were simply not renewed and who were therefore forced to leave the country at a moment's notice.¹⁴ In both discourse and practice, their fate was inextricably linked to the parameters of the oil crisis, how long it would last, and how much damage it would cause.

By the time of the financial crisis, however, the Swiss labour market had become more liberal, and immigrants from the European Economic Area found themselves in a rather secure position (e.g. Steiner and Wanner 2019). They enjoyed residence rights and social security benefits that their predecessors did not, shielding them from the fallout of the crisis and disincentivising political attacks – which may also explain the inconclusiveness of our *polarisation expectation*. Of course, one might ask why these privileges did not become a source of backlash from those eager to use the crisis as an opportunity structure. The answer is that they were (and still are) an essential part of Switzerland's bilateral treaties with the European Union and thus protected by the so-called *guillotine clause* (if one agreement is terminated, all others are invalidated as well). In the face of substantial uncertainty, even adamant critics of the status quo showed limited appetite for triggering this 'nuclear option' and refrained from bringing up the issue of EU immigration. As Hutter and Kriesi remarked, Switzerland saw its 'most politicised struggle about Europe in campaigns before 2008' (Hutter and Kriesi 2019, 1007; see also Taggart and Szczerbiak 2018 for the comparatively low crisis impact on Swiss Euroscepticism).

This interpretation is consistent with the different impact of both crises. Being the first moment of significant disruption after almost thirty years of steady growth shocked the Swiss economy to the core, whereas the same economy proved more resilient during the financial crisis. While it did not escape unscathed from the turmoil that followed the bankruptcy of Lehman Brothers,¹⁵ the labour market remained relatively robust and initial discrepancies were 'quickly compensated by solid real GDP growth' (Afonso and Visser 2014, 241). In this situation, the opportunity to denounce foreigners as 'job takers' whose deportation would provide an instant economic remedy was rather limited.¹⁶ Not that this is the only explanation – McMahon (2018) found no traces of negative politicisation even in countries where the crisis coincided with high unemployment (i.e. Spain and Italy), thus suggesting that further contextual factors, such as the stability of the political system or discursive entry barriers for new actors, do matter as well. The financial crisis may have provided an important opportunity structure, but not every opportunity can be taken advantage of easily.

Similarly, our expectation on (ii) was largely borne out for the oil crisis but not for the financial crisis. Again, it makes sense to highlight the link between the crises and the immigrant context. Because the labour migrants of the 1970s were in a quite vulnerable situation, their traditional champions (civil society organisations and centre-left parties, see Carvalho and Ruedin 2018; Katzenstein 1987) saw themselves forced to speak out in their favour. With the future of several hundreds of thousands at stake, public action

became a necessity and previously hesitant actors were pushed to take a clear position. Notable among them were churches and trade unions, but also journalists themselves: media actors made many more claims during the oil crisis than during the financial crisis, often in the form of opinion pieces or brief commentaries. More consistent but not less conspicuous is the considerably higher share of claims by government actors and lower share of claims by party actors across both crises. We believe that this reflects a typical feature of crises, namely, the attempt of the executive to calm the aroused populace by publicly conveying the impression of control. Doing so can help to contain the disruptive potential of the crisis, prevent other actors from giving critical accounts, and confine the crisis impact to the material (systemic) level. Once a material crisis has evolved into a legitimation (identity) crisis, the situation is usually much harder to control.¹⁷

The clearest link is between crises and frames. In accord with our *identity* and *instrumentality expectations*, we found a higher share of identity frames but a lower share of instrumental frames in both crises. This bolsters the argument that crises undermine the stability of the social edifice and raise issues of belonging. With different groups fighting for their place in the postcrisis order, the question of *who is in* and *who is out* becomes central to the discursive process – and as members of a prominent out-group, immigrants are common reference objects in this battle for identity.¹⁸ That the increase in identity frames was more marked during the financial crisis than during the oil crisis (a counterintuitive result in light of our other findings) could correlate with the heightened presence of identity entrepreneurs who racialise immigrants to raise the spectre of an inescapable outside threat. In this sense, it would also mirror the important role of identity for the securitisation of immigration (e.g. Bourbeau 2011; Toğral 2016).

In sum, our findings support the assumption that crises affect the politicisation of immigration, but the various empirical differences between the oil crisis and the financial crisis suggest that contextual factors beyond the crisis/noncrisis dichotomy must be considered as well. Most importantly, it seems that the more directly a crisis is linked to a certain immigrant group, the better the chances that this group (and immigration as such) becomes politicised. Given the rather early emergence of right-wing populist actors in Switzerland and the country's distinctive direct democratic features, the Swiss case may have provided us with slightly different results for the 1970s than other European countries would have. To enhance our understanding of the role of social change and country context, more research is required still. Such research may also reassess the objects of comparison and include more recent crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic – an event that entails severe mobility restrictions around the globe (e.g. Piccoli, Dzankic, and Ruedin 2021) and promises to alter our perspective on human movement for many years to come.

Notes

1. Some conceptualisations of politicisation add further dimensions, such as actor expansion (e.g., Grande and Hutter 2016; Hutter and Grande 2014), while others define it merely 'as a matter of saliency' (Green-Pedersen 2012, 117). We conceptualise politicisation rather narrowly as a combination of salience and polarisation and cover actor diversity separately.

2. An earlier piece on politicisation processes in the European Union (with a focus on Italy and the United Kingdom) has been provided by Buonfino (2004), whereas the work of Carvalho and Carmo Duarte (2020) is a good example of a more current single-country study.
3. One could think of major political events, such as 9/11, but our understanding of crisis is more holistic and implies institutional failure and a lasting socioeconomic impact. Other possible crises (e.g., the second oil crisis in 1979, the Asian financial crisis in 1997, and the dot-com bubble crash in 2000) were considerably less powerful and limited to only one region or sector – they did not engender the same degree of socioeconomic disruption. This may not hold for the COVID-19 pandemic whose economic impact is, however, still too early to evaluate.
4. It is also imaginable that the salience of immigration declines rather than grows, thus becoming superseded by the material consequences of the crisis (e.g., unemployment; poverty; chaos) and generating less support for actors seeking to politicise the issue (Knigge 1998). However, since the two crises examined in this article go beyond the material dimension, we still regard an increase as the more likely scenario.
5. Distinguishing between these three kinds of frames goes back to Habermas (1993, 3–8) and has been used, for instance, in European Union policy studies (e.g., Lerch and Schweltnus 2006; Sjørusen 2002).
6. Hierro and Rico (2019) have experimentally shown that a sense of economic crisis can trigger feelings of national pride, especially among lower-class individuals (who are usually among those most affected by the crisis fallout). In such cases, the economic difficulties caused by the crisis are compensated for through an increased feeling of national attachment.
7. While actors can make claims in different contexts, most empirical studies rely on newspapers to document politically relevant claims (for a discussion, see Van der Brug et al. 2015). Here, selection bias is a rather limited problem (Earl et al. 2004; Mügge 2012).
8. The dates from this list receive preference by virtue of their depth and internal consistency.
9. Claims by representatives of political parties are coded as belonging to the second category, regardless of the party's position on immigration (see Van der Brug et al. 2015).
10. Each claimant was assigned to only one group. Therefore, we categorised a member of the Swiss *Nationalrat* (National Council) with anti-immigrant positions as a legislator (2) and not an anti-immigrant actor (5). The same principle applies, e.g., to a journalist (3) leading a civil society organisation (6) or a government actor (1) simultaneously holding a party office (2).
11. For details, see Appendix 6.
12. Figure 4 shows the share of government actors and Figure 5 shows the share of party actors. Further regression models for both media actors and civil society organisations can be found in Appendix 4.
13. The third type – moral frames, for which we had no clear theoretical expectation – pivots on the concept of human rights and moral principles that exist (or should exist) independently of one's national or cultural background. A regression model can be found in Appendix 5. However, the results are less conclusive and depend, at least in the case of the financial crisis, quite heavily on the crisis definition employed.
14. In general, the oil crisis forced most European governments to reformulate at least parts of their immigration policy from scratch. Castles (2011, 321) is thus right when he describes this crisis as an event of 'enormous consequences' that effectively ended the era of guest worker migration and rang in a turn towards long-term settlement. The financial crisis had a more limited, and certainly less transformative impact.
15. According to the World Bank, Swiss GDP shrunk by 2.2% in 2009 (compared to +2.1% in 2008), the largest decrease since 1975.
16. This argument aligns with *ethnic competition theory*, which stipulates an innate connection between the perception of increased labor market competition and the development of anti-immigrant attitudes (e.g., Scheve and Slaughter 2001; Lancee and Pardos-Prado 2013). However, even though Billiet, Meuleman, and De Witte (2014) have suggested that there

is a more holistic relationship between economic crises and ethnic threat, we should be careful not to confuse threat perception with issue politicisation. They are separate variables, and while there may be a directional effect, politicisation is driven mainly by those steering the debate in established media outlets.

17. Despite government actors making more claims during the oil crisis, this strategy worked better during the financial crisis. Responsibility for this crisis was effectively transferred to financial market actors, allowing governments to maintain and even strengthen their own legitimacy.
18. A corollary might be that identity-based discrimination against immigrants is also higher in times of crisis (see Baert et al. 2015; Zschirnt and Ruedin 2016).

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Author contributions

MB, LA, DR, and GD designed and conceptualised the study; MB, LA, and DR collected the data; DR performed the statistical analysis; MB, LA, DR, and GD wrote the article.

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Appendix 1. Keywords

For the articles in French (1970 to 1976): migrant*, migration*, xénophob*, xénophobie*, travailleur étranger*, réfugié*, saisonnier*, droits sociaux

For the articles in German (1970 to 1976): migrant*, zuwander*, auslând*, fremdenfeind*, ausländerfeind*, überfremd*, flüchtling*, saisonarbeit*, gastarbeit*, soziale rechte

For the articles in French (2010 to 2018): migrant*, migration*, xénophob*, mosquée*, minaret*, burqa*, réfugié*, asile*

For the articles in German (2010 to 2018): migrant*, migration*, fremdenfeind*, moschee*, minarett*, burka*, flüchtling*, asyl*

Depending on the language area and the decade, we used slightly different keywords to identify relevant newspaper articles. For example, religion-based keywords, such as minaret* or mosquée* (German: minarett* and moschee*), reflect a discursive continuum between immigration and Islam. Given that there were no mosques in Switzerland until 1963 and most immigrants during the oil crisis period came from Southern Europe rather than the Middle East, using the same keywords would have been inefficient.

Appendix 2. Crisis periods

Whenever a date was not clearly defined in the literature, we included the entire month (i.e. the start date 'Jan 1973' was interpreted as 1973-01-01 and the same end date as 1973-01-31) or the entire year (i.e. the start date '1973' was interpreted as 1973-01-01 and the same end date as 1973-12-31). For start dates referring to 'mid' (e.g. 'mid-January'), we used day 15 of the calendar month. Quarters of the calendar year were set to be inclusive ('Q1/1973' begins on 1973-01-01), and *End* 1973 (Venn I) or *End* 2009 (Necker and Zieglmeyer) were assumed to indicate the last day of the calendar year (1973-12-31 and 2009-12-31).

Dates of the oil crisis

Based on extensive literature research.

Table A2.1. Definitions of the oil crisis.

Beginning	End	Source	Remarks
Oct 1973	1974	Lieber	Additionally, calls it <i>the 1973–74 oil crisis</i> .
Oct 1973	Mar 1974	Licklider	End date: embargo temporarily lifted.
Oct 1973	Jan 1974	Corbett (I)	January 1974 as end date in the headline.
Oct 1973	Mar 1974	Corbett (II)	March 1974 as end date in the text.
Oct 1973	Dec 1973	Issawi (I)	Relates to the core of the crisis, the period during which ‘a highly dramatic and momentous event occurred’ (3).
Oct 1973	Mar 1974	Issawi (II)	End date: embargo temporarily lifted.
Oct 1973	Jul 1974	Issawi (III)	End date: embargo fully lifted.
1973-10-17	1974	Mitchell	Additionally, calls it the <i>1973–74 oil crisis</i> .
1973-10-17	1974	Painter	Additionally, calls it the <i>1973–74 oil shock</i> .
1973-10-17	1974	Hamilton	Additionally, calls it the <i>events of 1973-74</i> .
1973-10-17	End 1973	Venn (I)	‘By the end of 1973, the main part of the crisis was over’ (21); also refers to the political crisis.
1973-10-17	Mar 1974	Venn (II)	End date: embargo temporarily lifted.
1973-10-17	Jun 1974	Venn (III)	End date: embargo fully lifted (‘June/July’).
1973-10-17	Jul 1974	Venn (IV)	End date: embargo fully lifted (‘June/July’).
Oct 1973	1974	Alpanda and Peralta-Alva	Focus on major drops in the stock market ‘throughout 1974’ (824). Additionally, calls it the <i>energy crisis of 1973-74</i> .
Oct 1973	Mar 1974	Willner	End date: embargo temporarily lifted.
1974	Q4/1974	Davis (I)	Interprets crisis as recession; Q4/1974 as trough.
1974	Q1/1975	Davis (II)	Interprets crisis as recession; Q1/1975 as trough.

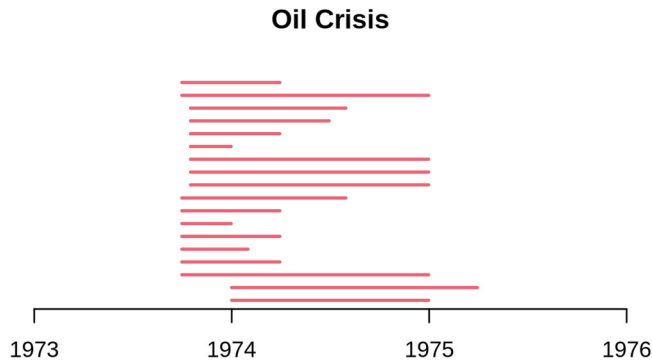


Figure A2.1. Distribution of definitions of the oil crisis. Explanation: Definitions of the oil crisis as listed in Table A2.1.

Dates of the financial crisis I

Based on Guillén (2011).

Table A2.2. Definitions of the start of the financial crisis (Guillén).

Beginning	Event
2007-02-07	The earliest date mentioned in the list; HSBC announces losses linked to U.S. subprime mortgages.
2007-06-20	First hedge funds run into large losses; trouble spreads to major Wall Street firms.
2007-08-09	BNP Paribas announces valuation problems; the European Central Bank begins to pump money into the market.
2007-09-14	Largest run on a British bank (Northern Rock) in more than a century.
2007-09-18	The U.S. Federal Reserve cuts its main interest rate in half.
2007-10-01	UBS and Citibank report massive losses from subprime related investments.
2007-12-06	The U.S. government announces a plan to help homeowners facing foreclosure.
2007-12-13	Concerted action by five leading central banks to improve market liquidity.
2008-01-09	The World Bank predicts that global economic growth will slow down in 2008.
2008-01-21	Global stock markets suffer their greatest fall since 9/11.
2008-01-22	The U.S. Federal Reserve cuts interest rates by three quarters of a percentage point – the largest cut in more than 25 years.
2008-02-10	Reports that worldwide crisis losses could reach USD 400bn.
2008-03-07	The largest single intervention of the U.S. Federal Reserve in history takes place (USD 200bn).
2008-04-08	The IMF warns that global losses could cross the symbolic USD 1trn threshold.
2008-07-11	U.S. federal regulators seize IndyMac Bank; new oil price record.
2008-07-14	U.S. authorities step in to save Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac.
2008-08-30	Alistair Darling claims in the 'Guardian' that <i>this is the worst crisis in 60 years</i> .
2008-09-07	The U.S. government rescues Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac.
2008-09-10	The U.S. government seizes Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac.
2008-09-11	Lehman Brothers (LB) announces huge financial losses.
2008-09-15	Lehman Brothers files for bankruptcy; stock market crashes.
2008-09-25	The first Eurozone state, Ireland, falls into a recession.

Table A2.3. Definitions of the end of the financial crisis (Guillén).

End	Event
2009-03-01	The earliest end date mentioned in the literature.
2009-03-25	Barack Obama sees the first <i>signs of economic recovery</i> but asks for more patience.
2009-05-29	The U.S. economy shrinks at a slower pace than expected, thereby calming investors. Other economies grow again.
2009-06-16	The U.S. economy shows continued signs of improvement.
2009-06-24	According to the OECD, the <i>world economy is near the bottom of the recession</i> .
2009-06-26	Consumer confidence in June rises to its highest level since February 2008, thus suggesting that the worst may be over.
2009-06-29	A CBI survey shows further signs of recovery coming from the financial sector.
2009-08-12	The U.S. Federal Reserve is confident that the worst is over and that the economy will recover soon.
2009-08-13	France and Germany are no longer in a recession.
2009-08-21	Ben Bernanke: <i>The global economy is starting to recover</i> .
2009-09-14	Forecasts of the European Commission confirm that the Eurozone is recovering.
2009-09-23	The U.S. Federal Reserve: <i>Economic activity is picking up</i> .
2009-10-01	According to the IMF, the world economy is growing again.
2009-10-14	Chinese export figures show significant improvement in economic growth around the world.
2009-10-28	Norway becomes the first European/Western country to raise its interest rates again.
2009-11-13	The Eurozone has officially emerged from recession.
2009-11-23	Economic activity in the Eurozone rises at its fastest pace in more than two years.
2009-11-30	Further signs of economic recovery in the Eurozone; rising consumer prices and more exports.
2009-12-11	The U.S. House of Representatives approves major new regulations for the financial sector.

Financial Crisis (Guillén)

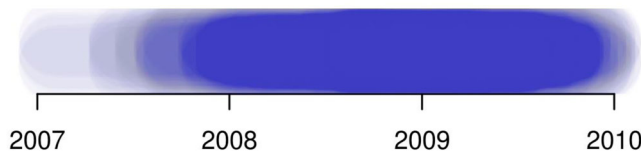


Figure A2.2. Distribution of definitions of the financial crisis. Explanation: Definitions of the financial crisis as listed in Table A2.2 and A2.3. Here, we use transparency and have overlaid the many lines of the different combinations so that the most common dates become visible as darker patches.

Dates of the financial crisis II

Alternative dates based on extensive literature research.

Table A2.4. Alternative definitions of the financial crisis (literature).

Beginning	End	Source	Remarks
2008-09-15	2010-12-31	Own attempt, based on GDP	End date denotes the quarter of the calendar year during which the global GDP reached precrisis levels.
2007-08-07	May 2009	Mishkin (I)	Starting with the 'first and more limited phase' (51).
2008-09-15	May 2009	Mishkin (II)	Starting with the 'far more virulent phase' (Abstract).
2008-09-01	Sep 2009	Birdsall	Starting date: September 2008; source also refers to LB.
2008-09-15	May 2009	Kazi and Salloy	End date: case study related.
2007	2008	McManus	Differentiation between precrisis (1990-2007) and postcrisis (2008-2013) periods.
2008	Q2/2010	Vis <i>et al.</i>	Reference to unemployment.
May 2007	2008	Helleiner (I)	Starting with the collapse of several hedge funds (69).
Sep 2008	2008	Helleiner (II)	Starting with a 'total collapse of market confidence' (69).
Dec 2007	End 2009	Necker and Ziegelmeyer	Case study related.
2007-07-01	2009-06-01	Adrian <i>et al.</i>	Case study related.
2007	2008	Overbeek	Refers to the financial crisis as a 'credit crisis' (31).
Dec 2007	Jun 2009	NBER	Interprets crisis as recession.
Sep 2008	Mar 2009	Frankel and Saravelos (I)	Case study related.
Jul 2008	Nov 2009	Frankel and Saravelos (II)	Case study related; refers to countries requesting IMF aid.
2007-02-27	2009	FRB St. Louis	-
Q1/2007	Q3/2009	Devos <i>et al.</i>	Case study related.
Aug 2008	Sep 2009	Teng and Liu	Case study related.
Jul 2007	2009-05-15	Dungey <i>et al.</i> (I)	Starting with the beginning of the first crisis phase.
Oct 2008	2009-05-15	Dungey <i>et al.</i> (II)	Starting with the beginning of the second crisis phase (LB).
2008-09-29	2010-04-30	Xu and Hamori	Case study related.
Aug 2007	Jan 2009	Fatum and Yamamoto	Case study related.
Jul 2007	Mar 2009	Beuselinc <i>et al.</i>	Case study related.
Q3/2007	Q1/2010	Kapan and Minoiu (I)	Case study related; starting with the 'early stage' of the crisis.
Q4/2008	Q1/2010	Kapan and Minoiu (II)	Case study related; starting with the 'global stage' of the crisis.

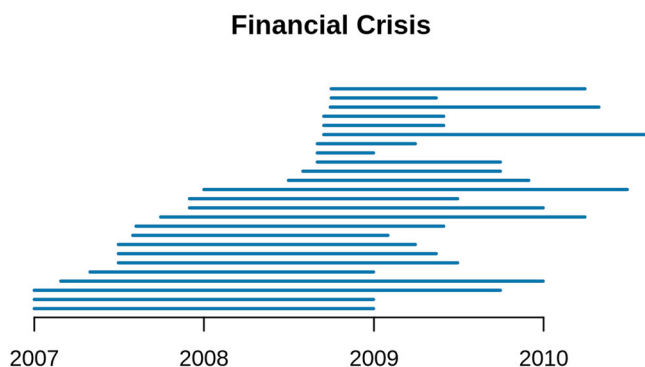


Figure A2.3. Distribution of alternative definitions of the financial crisis. Explanation: Alternative definitions of the financial crisis as listed in Table A2.4.

Appendix 3. Control variable data

Decades: 1970s, 1990s, 2000s, 2010s.

Migration flows: Bosnian refugees (1995), Kosovan refugees (1999), European ‘refugee crisis’ (2015, 2016) [reference: none].

Political events: Schwarzenbach initiatives (1970, 1974); referendum on bilateral treaties with the European Union (2000); popular initiative on limiting immigration (2000); *Emmen* court decision on naturalisation decisions at the ballot (2003); popular initiative on the prohibition of new minarets (2009); popular initiative on the automatic expulsion of ‘criminal foreigners’ (2010); popular initiative ‘against mass migration’ (2014) [reference: none].

Frame: instrumental; identity; moral [reference: other or none].

Actors: governmental and judicial; legislative and parties; media and journalists; minority, pro-immigrant, and religious; anti-immigrant; civil society organisations [reference: other or none].
Topic: integration [reference: immigration].

Appendix 4. Actor types (additional)

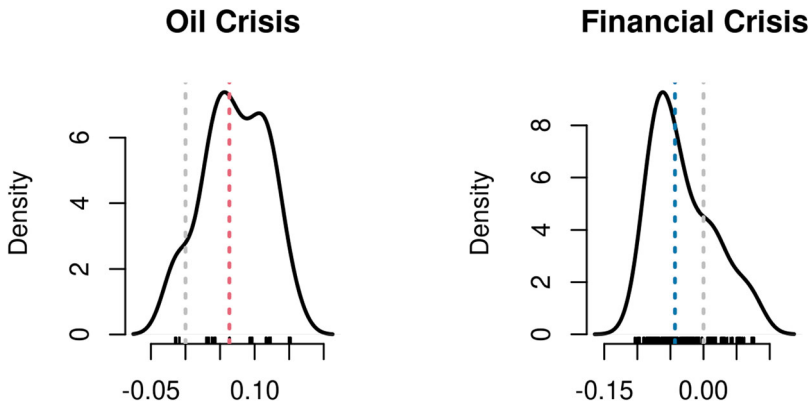


Figure A4.1. Claims by media actors on immigration in Switzerland during the oil crisis and financial crisis (regression analysis). Explanation: The two panels show the distribution of the coefficients from $N = 7,524$ regression models – each model relies on different dates to define the period of the two crises. Only the coefficient of the crisis indicated is shown in each panel. The rug plot at the bottom shows the distribution of the estimates, while the black line gives the kernel distribution of the statistical effect of the oil crisis (left panel) and financial crisis (right panel), with bandwidth = 0.02. Higher values indicate more coefficients with a given estimate. The outcome variable is the share of claims by media actors per quarter of the calendar year. The grey dashed line indicates zero, i.e. no difference in salience for the crisis, and the red and blue dashed lines show the median coefficients as a single-number summary across the different models. Control variables (decade fixed effects, migration flows, actors, topics, and events) are not shown. With the alternative set of definitions of the financial crisis, the mean estimate changes to -0.05 (median: -0.06 ; standard error: 0.05).

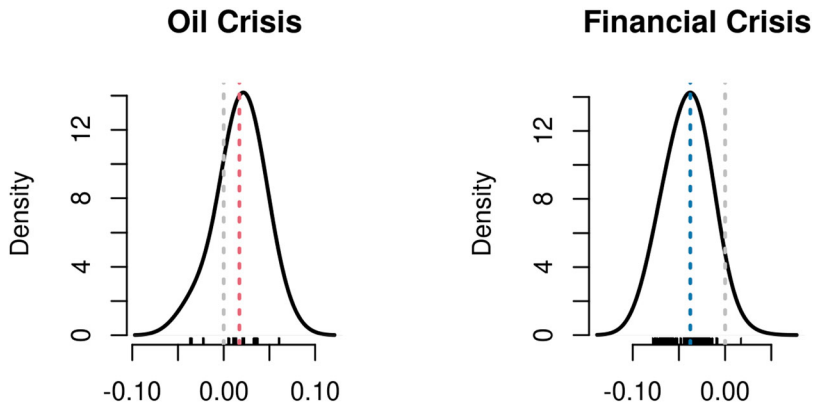


Figure A4.2. Claims by CSO actors on immigration in Switzerland during the oil crisis and financial crisis (regression analysis). Explanation: The two panels show the distribution of the coefficients from $N=7,524$ regression models – each model relies on different dates to define the period of the two crises. Only the coefficient of the crisis indicated is shown in each panel. The rug plot at the bottom shows the distribution of the estimates, while the black line gives the kernel distribution of the statistical effect of the oil crisis (left panel) and financial crisis (right panel), with bandwidth = 0.02. Higher values indicate more coefficients with a given estimate. The outcome variable is the share of claims by CSO actors per quarter of the calendar year. The grey dashed line indicates zero, i.e. no difference in salience for the crisis, and the red and blue dashed lines show the median coefficients as a single-number summary across the different models. Control variables (decade fixed effects, migration flows, actors, topics, and events) are not shown. With the alternative set of definitions of the financial crisis, the mean estimate changes to -0.04 (median: -0.04 ; standard error: 0.02).

Appendix 5. Frames (additional)

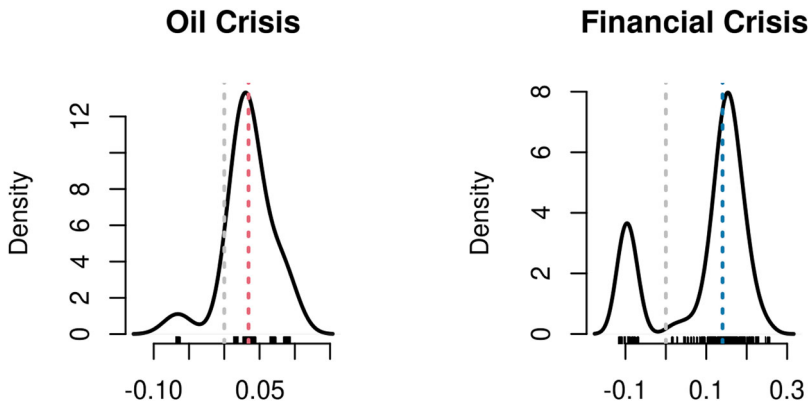


Figure A5.1. Claims with moral frames during the oil crisis and financial crisis (regression analysis). Explanation: The two panels show the distribution of the coefficients from $N=7,524$ regression models – each model relies on different dates to define the period of the two crises. Only the coefficient of the crisis indicated is shown in each panel. The rug plot at the bottom shows the distribution of the estimates, while the black line gives the kernel distribution of the statistical effect of the oil crisis (left panel) and financial crisis (right panel), with bandwidth = 0.02. Higher values indicate more coefficients with a given estimate. The outcome variable is the share of claims with a moral frame per quarter of the calendar year. The grey dashed line indicates zero, i.e. no difference in salience for the crisis, and the red and blue dashed lines show the median coefficients as a single-number summary across the different models. Control variables (decade fixed effects, migration flows, actors, topics, and events) are not shown. With the alternative set of definitions of the financial crisis, the mean estimate changes to 0.09 (median: 0.12; standard error: 0.11).

Appendix 6. Description of claims-making

		1970s		2000s/2010s	
Period		<i>noncrisis</i>	oil crisis	<i>noncrisis</i>	financial crisis
Salience (claims/day)		0.13 (0.02)	0.43 (0.09)	0.51 (0.03)	0.29 (0.19)
Polarization [0...1]		0.31	0.26	0.37	0.34
Actor diversity [0...1]		0.73	0.71	0.75	0.71
Frame (%)	None	28.9	32.5	25.6	34.1
	Instrumental	43.6	33.2	53.8	40.3
	Identity	8.6	11.4	6.2	10.6
	Moral	18.9	22.9	14.4	15.0

Figure A6.1. Description of claims-making during crisis periods compared to noncrisis periods (without control variables). Explanation: Mean values across the 18 definitions of the oil crisis and 25 definitions of the financial crisis derived from the literature. These values do not account for the control variables listed in Appendix 3.