Taking Sides: Protest Against the Deportation of Asylum Seekers

Research Interest
TAKING SIDES studies anti-deportation protests in Germany, Switzerland and Austria from a comparative angle, covering a period of 21 years (1993-2013).

We are interested in three dimensions of protest: GOALS – FORM – DEGREE

Particular focus is put on social & emotional ties between protesters and deportees as potential triggers of protest.

Theoretical Framework
Variation in protests might appear across countries, within countries over time, and between individual protest cases. We thus combine potential explanations at different levels, integrating them into a single model: Political opportunity structure (POS); dynamic in POS and protest; resources & emotions:

- **Cross-country variation**
  - Political opportunity structure in D, CH, A:
    - Restrictiveness of asylum regime
    - Inclusiveness towards challengers
    - New politics polarization

- **Over time variation within countries**
  - Dynamics in POS (left- or right-wing government coalition)
  - Dynamics from previous protests (might facilitate mobilization)

- **Variation between protest cases**
  - Characteristics of protest actors
  - Characteristics of deportees
  - Social ties & emotions as resources

Background
The forcible expulsion of asylum seekers has become a central element of immigration control. Since it can be regarded as contradicting human rights obligations for individuals in need of protection, this tension is reflected in feelings of unease and moral outrage that can lead to anti-deportation protests.

Empirical Design
**MEDIA ANALYSIS:** Two newspapers per country, covering articles on deportation between 1993 and 2013; automated plus manual coding.

**CASE STUDIES:** Five per country; selected deportation cases that triggered protest; content analysis of in-depth interviews and documents.

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Funding institutions: FWF, SNF, DFG

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