

# The Politicization of Immigration in Switzerland

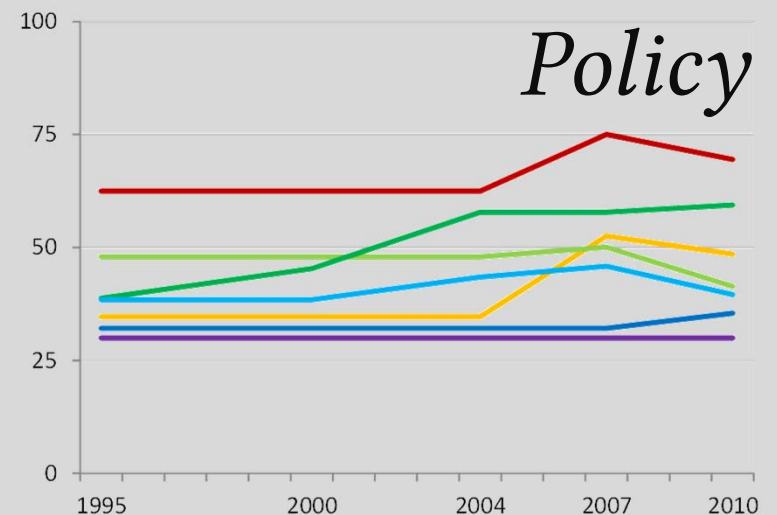
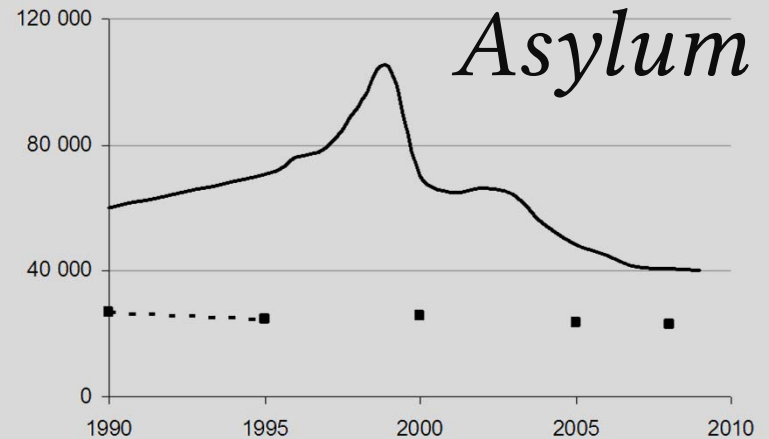
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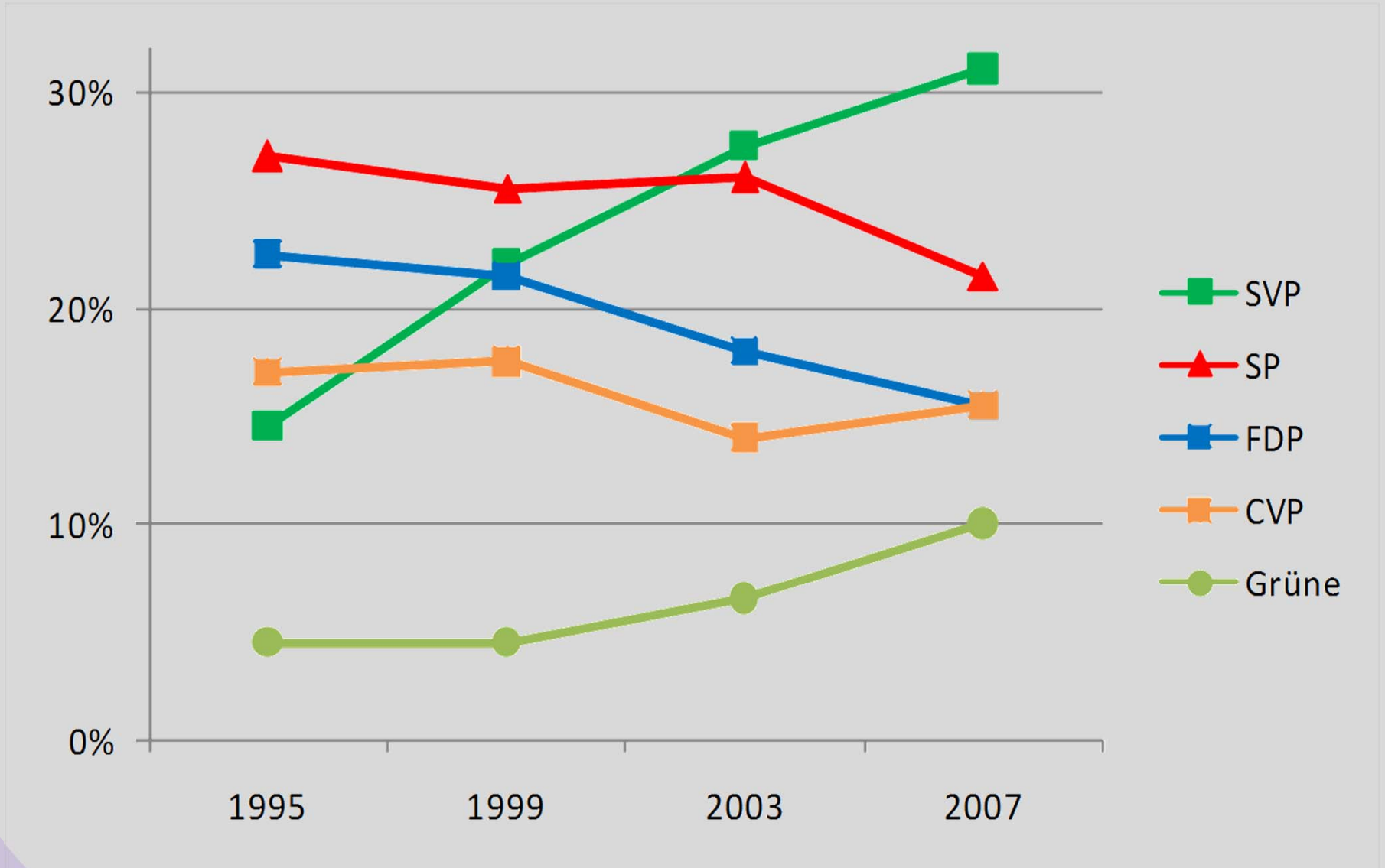
*IMISCOE Annual Conference, Amsterdam,  
29<sup>th</sup> August 2012,*

# Background

- *Überfremdung*
- Guest-workers
- Large foreign population
- Political stability
- Direct democracy



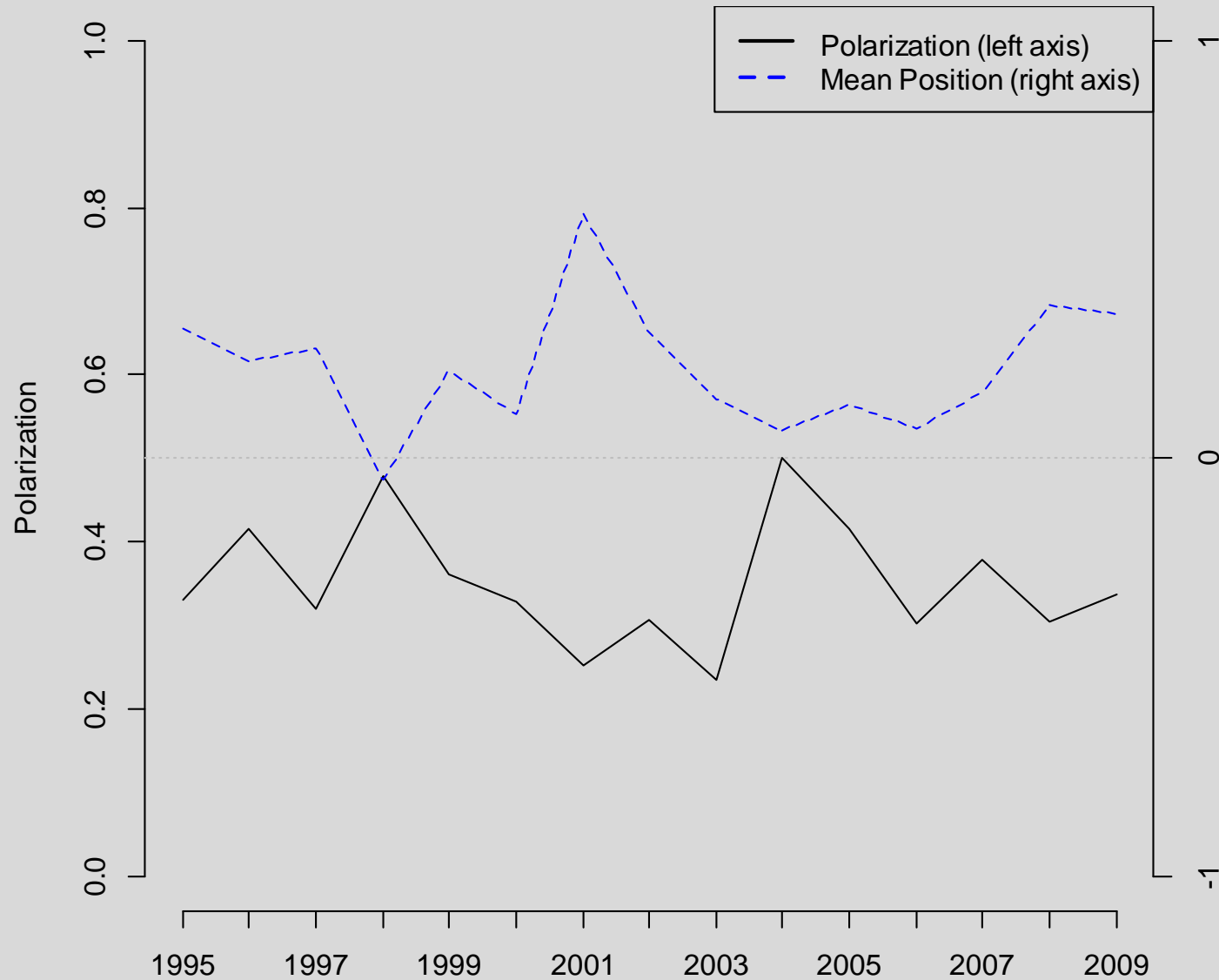
# Background: SVP



# Salience



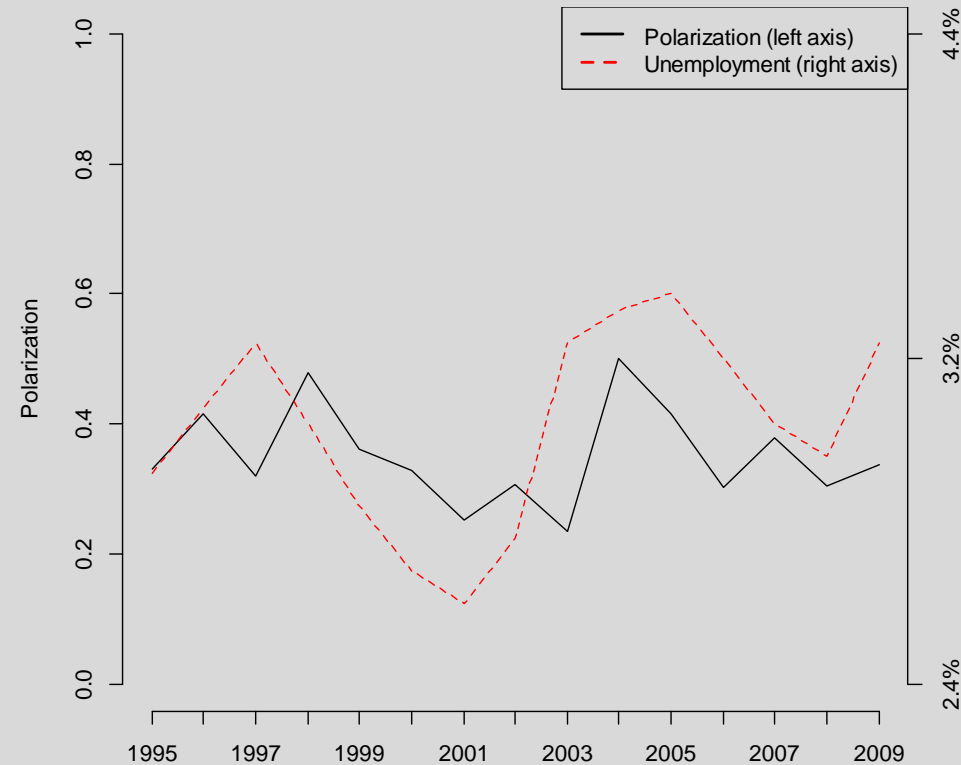
# Polarization



# Societal Developments

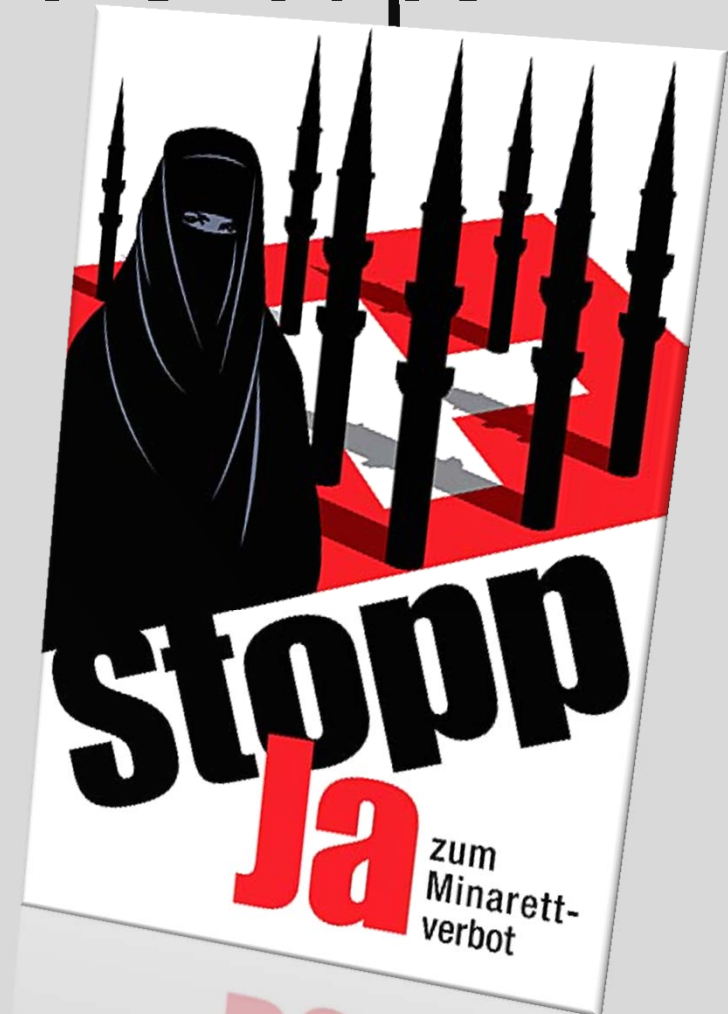
- Immigrant numbers
- Muslims
  - Steady, stopped
- Asylum seekers
  - Rapid increase

## • Unemployment

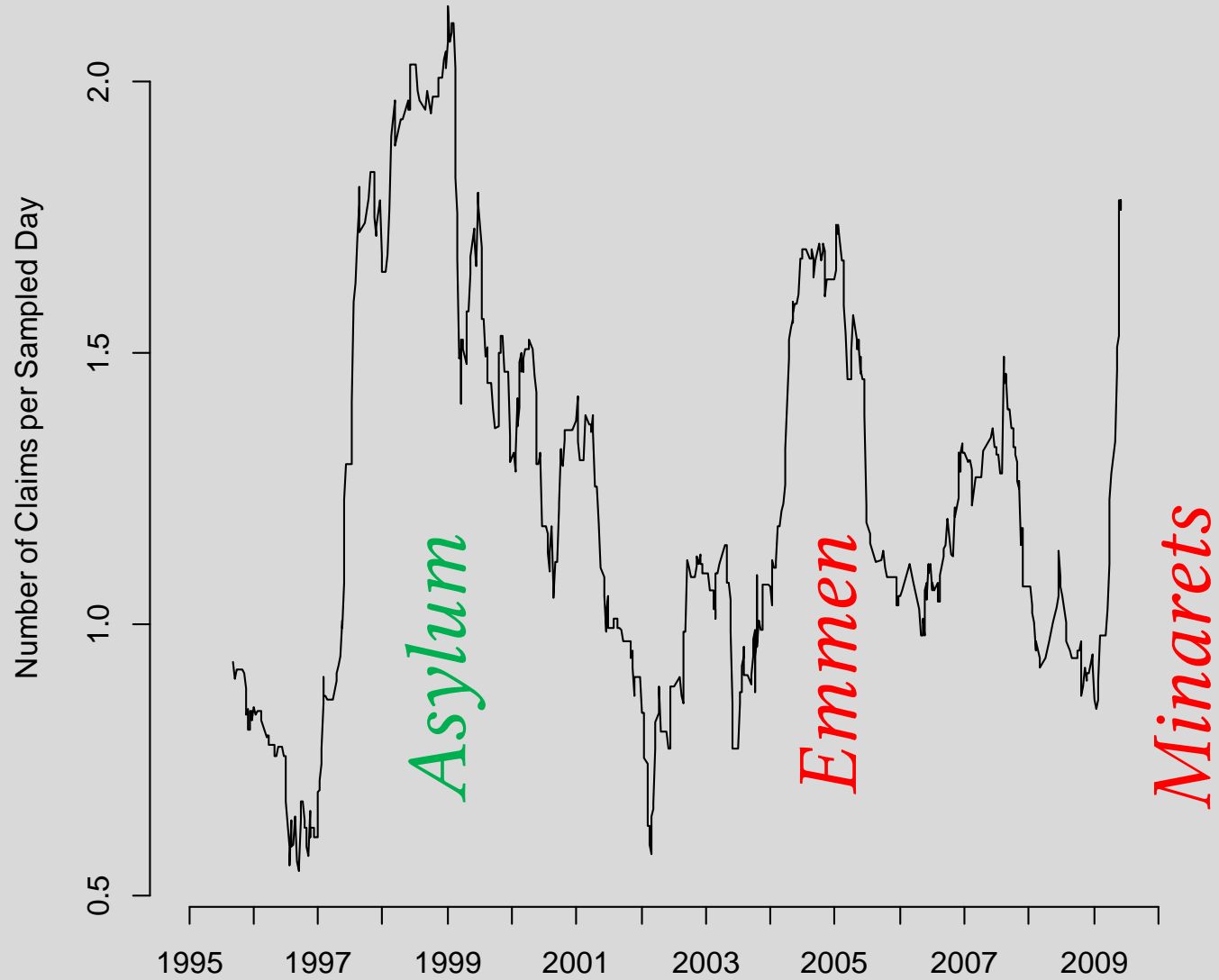


# Actions of Specific Groups

- Civil society
- Direct democracy
- Emmen 2003
- Minarets 2009
- Free movement of persons (EU)
- Limit immigration



# Saliency





# (Political) Opportunity Structure

- **Stability**
  - Government
  - Cross-cutting issues
- Openness
  - Neither side favoured

# Conclusion

- Salience: specific actors
  - Civil society: reaction to asylum seekers
  - Direct democracy
  - Not policy changes directly
- Polarization: unemployment
- Slow demographic changes: not politicized