

# Xenophobia as Symbolic Politics



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**“XENOPHOBIA as the most pressing protection challenge of the 21st Century...”**

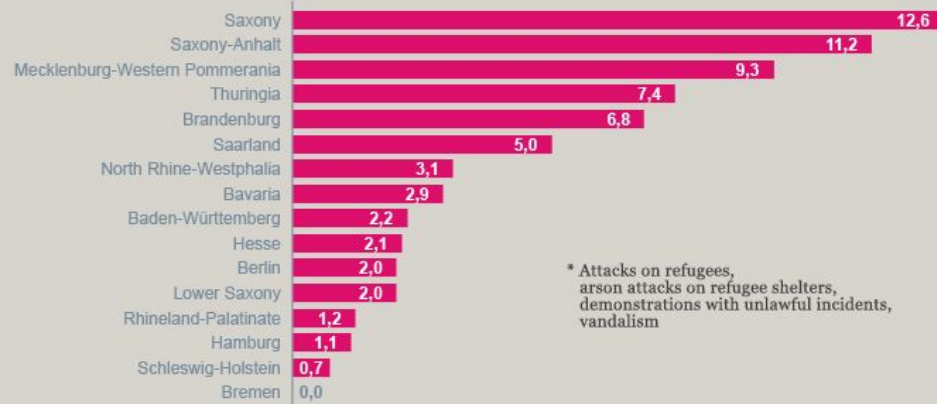


# Xenophobic incidents\* targeting refugees 2016

Total

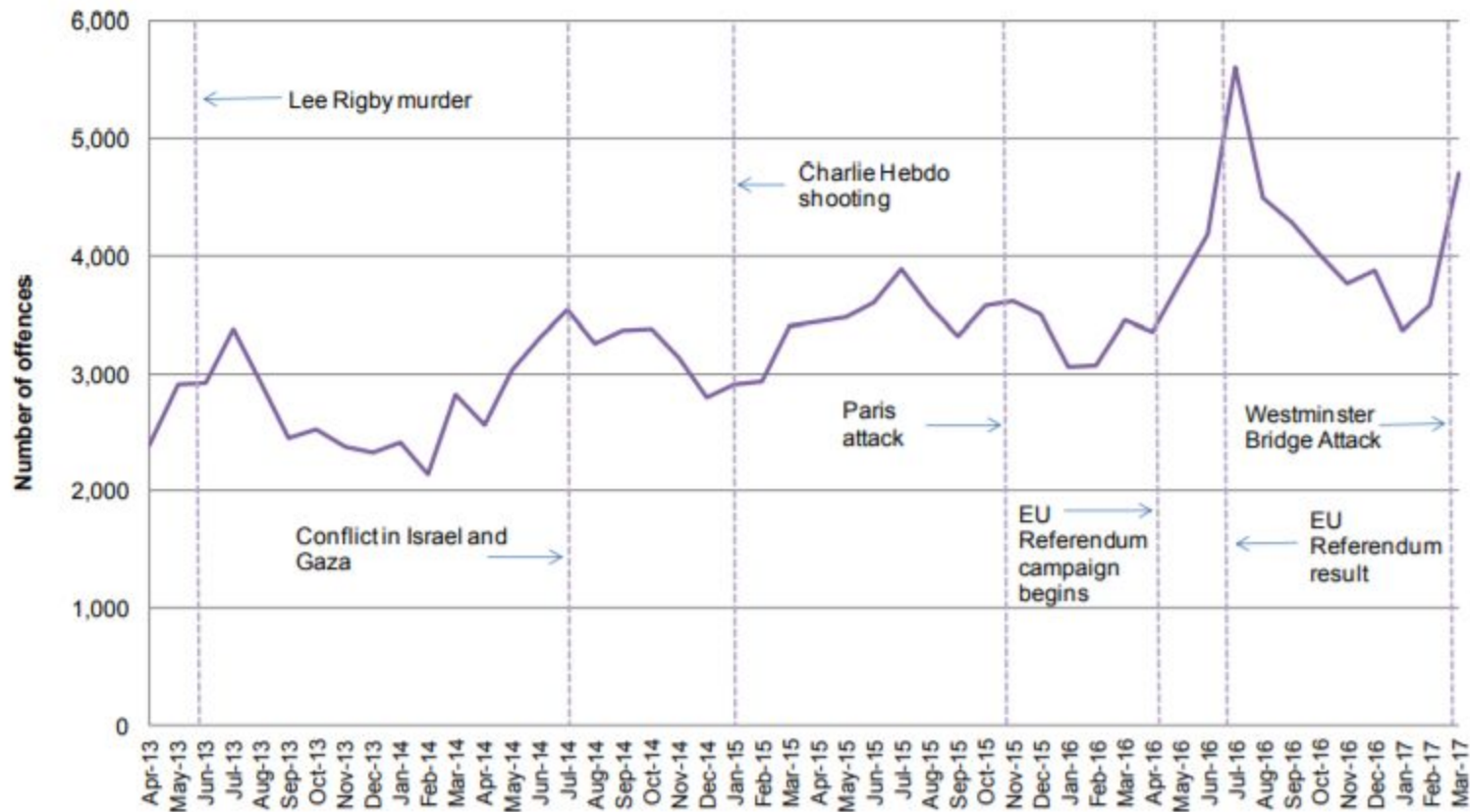


Per 1,000,000 inhabitants



\* Attacks on refugees, arson attacks on refugee shelters, demonstrations with unlawful incidents, vandalism

Figure 2.2: Number of racially or religiously aggravated offences recorded by the police by month, April 2013 to March 2017



*What about xenophobia in the rest of the world?? Can we talk about it or conceptualize it in the same way? Can we measure it the same way? Is it more or less similar? Are there common causes and experiences?*

*AND, perhaps, common solutions?*





IMAGERY / GRAFFITI

INTIMIDATION

PROTESTS / RIOTS

KIDNAPPING

TAUNTING / GESTURING

VERBAL THREATS

VANDALISM / ROBBERY

PHYSICAL ASSAULT

BROADCASTING / CANVASSING

STALKING / HARASSMENT

ASSAULT w/out INJURY

DEADLY FORCE



# ETHNIC THREAT PERCEPTIONS

## Threat (1)

Perceived competition over jobs/resources.

ECONOMIC

## Threat (2)

Perceived loss of status/identity or position.

CULTURAL /  
SOCIAL

## Threat (3)

Fear of domination, subversion or violence.

SECURITY /  
EXISTENTIAL



# THEORY [XENOPHOBIC ACTIVITY]

**CONSTRUCTIVIST**

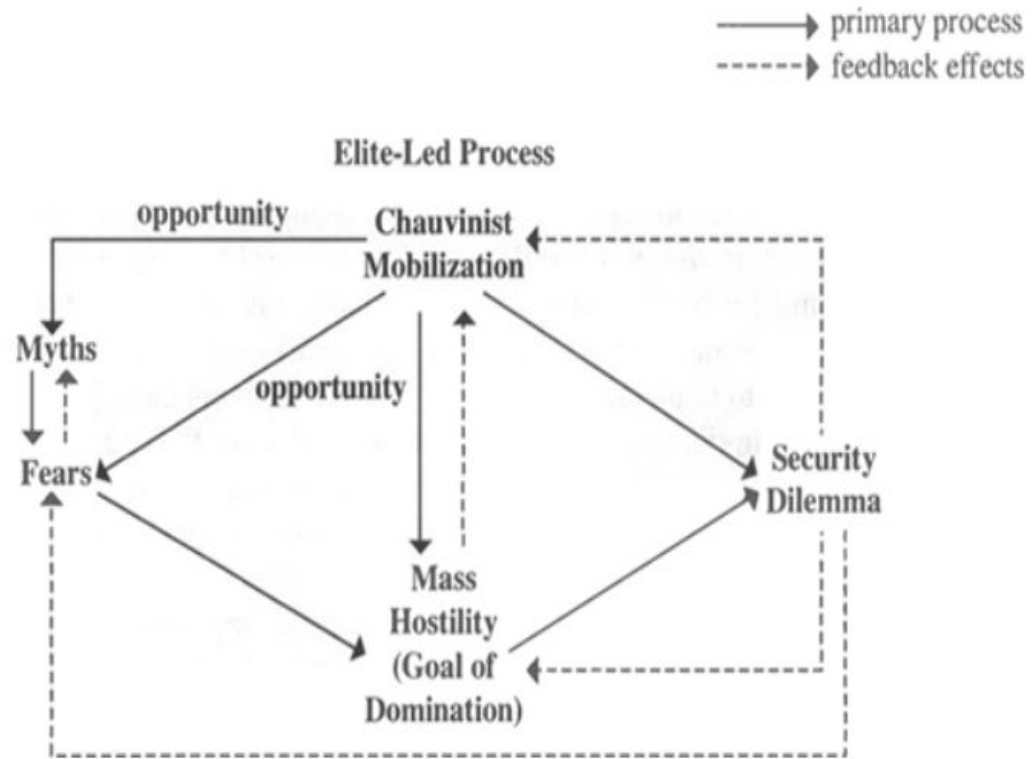
(H1)

**STRUCTURALIST**

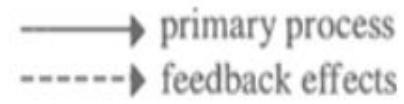
(H2)



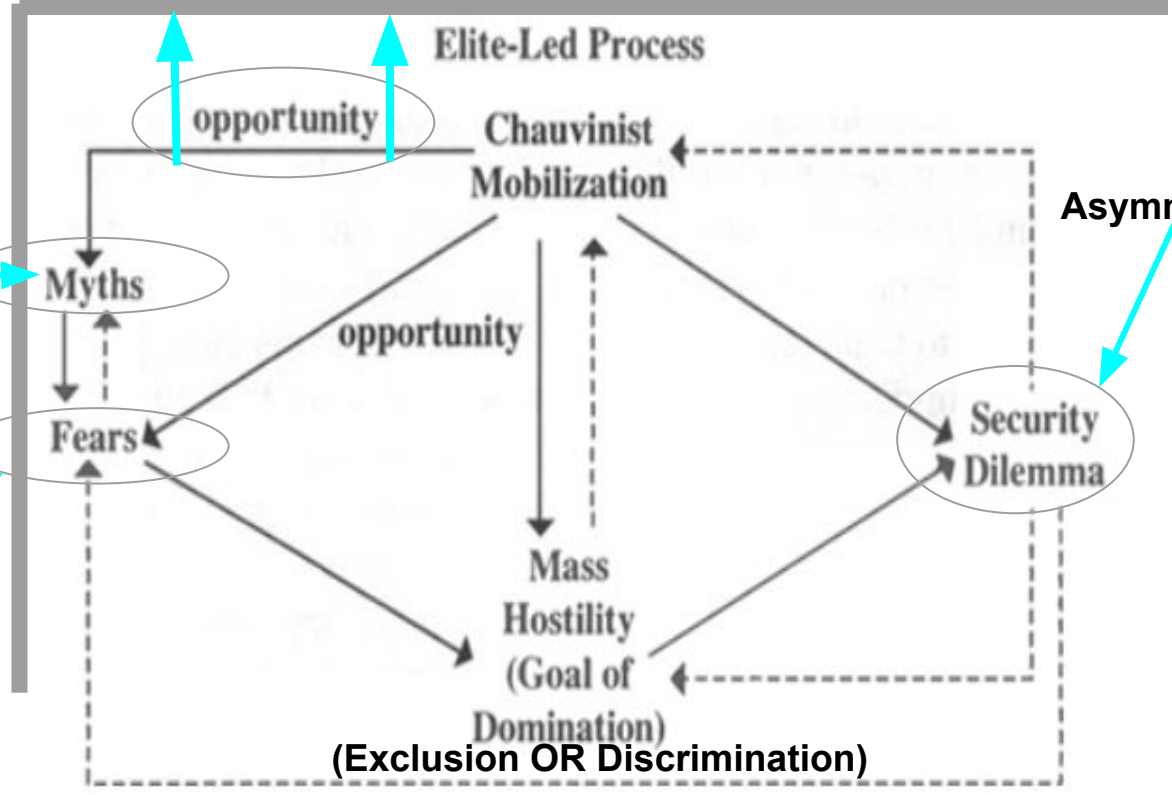
# Process of Ethnic Conflict Escalation



Kaufman (2015). *Modern Hatreds: The Symbolic Politics of Ethnic War*. Cornell University Press, 49.



**STRUCTURAL THREATS**



Pre-existing (often nationalized) myths of migration

Native fears and anxieties

Asymmetric

**H3: Political elites incite  
xenophobic activity by  
mediating the meaning of  
structural threats.**



# Research Design

Heckman Selection Equation

Structural Equation Model

45,000 Incidents of Xenophobic Activity  
109 Countries | 1990 - 2016

<input type="checkbox"/>	↕ Date	↕ Country	↕ Type of incident	↕ Source	Description
<input type="checkbox"/>	2016	Greece	Violent attacks against people	Racist Violence Recording Network (RVRN)	Show info
<input type="checkbox"/>	2016	Greece	Violent attacks against people	Racist Violence Recording Network (RVRN)	Show info
<input type="checkbox"/>	2016	Greece	Violent attacks against people	Racist Violence Recording Network (RVRN)	Show info
<input type="checkbox"/>	2016	Greece	Threats	Racist Violence Recording Network (RVRN)	Show info
<input type="checkbox"/>	2016	Greece	Violent attacks against people	Racist Violence Recording Network (RVRN)	Show info
<input type="checkbox"/>	2016	Greece	Violent attacks against people	Racist Violence Recording Network (RVRN)	Show info
<input type="checkbox"/>	2016	Greece	Attacks against property	Racist Violence Recording Network (RVRN)	Show info
<input type="checkbox"/>	2016	Greece	Attacks against property	Racist Violence Recording Network (RVRN)	Show info
<input type="checkbox"/>	2016	Greece	Attacks against property	Racist Violence Recording Network (RVRN)	Show info
<input type="checkbox"/>	2016	Russian Federation	Violent attacks against people	Moscow Protestant Chaplaincy (MPC)	Show info



# HECKMAN SELECTION EQUATION

## Model 1: Incident Equation

Dependent Variable: Xenophobic Activity

*Dichotomous, whether or not an incident of xenophobic activity occurred within a country-year*

## Model 2: Intensity Equation

Dependent Variable: Xenophobic Activity

*Count measure, number of violent and non-violent incidents of xenophobic activity within a country-year*



Table 5.1

## The Determinants of Ethnic Xenophobic Activity

## Stage One: The Selection (or 'Incident') Equation

Explanatory Variable	Model 1 ALL HOST STATES	Model 2 DEVELOPED HOST STATES	Model 3 DEVELOPING HOST STATES
Election Year	0.295*** (0.0608)	0.372*** (0.0970)	0.285*** (0.0743)
Anti-migrant Elite Rhetoric	0.000535*** (0.0000936)	0.000224*** (0.0000646)	0.000745*** (0.0000772)
Number of Refugees	0.00000548*** (0.000000121)	0.00000112*** (0.000000168)	0.00000507*** (4.93e-08)
Urban Population Percentage	0.000519 (0.00223)	0.00612 (0.00553)	-0.00300* (0.00153)
State Fragility Index (SFI)	0.00269*** (0.000718)	0.00276* (0.00111)	0.00307*** (0.000676)
Social Globalization	-0.00135* (0.000682)	-0.00187* (0.000731)	-0.00188+ (0.000967)
Constant	1.641*** (0.129)	1.326*** (0.450)	1.744*** (0.0717)
Number of Observations at the Selection Stage	1617	320	1297

## Stage Two: The Intensity Equation

Explanatory Variables	Model 1 ALL HOST STATES	Model 2 DEVELOPED HOST STATES	Model 3 DEVELOPING HOST STATES
Election Year	0.414*** (0.103)	0.1550 (81.43)	0.441** (0.138)
Anti-migrant Elite Rhetoric	0.00300* (0.00141)	0.0187+ (0.0113)	0.00248** (0.000828)
Number of Refugees	0.0000312*** (0.0000848)	0.00000231*** (0.00000438)	0.0000408*** (0.00000367)
Urban Population Percentage	0.00778** (0.00284)	0.0206* (0.0170)	0.00875*** (0.00252)
State Fragility Index (SFI)	0.00148 (0.00111)	-0.00183 (0.00407)	0.00119 (0.000991)
Social Globalization	-0.00299 (0.00187)	0.00427 (0.00547)	-0.00274 (0.00202)
Constant	-0.477** (1.85)	2.263** (1.459)	-6.37*** (0.130)
Number of Observations at the Intensity Stage	1384	313	1071
Heckman Model Chi-Square	178.59***	9.21**	194.33***
Wald Test of Independent Equations, Chi-Square	149.42***	127.78***	133.86**
Robust Standard errors in parentheses + p<0.10, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001			

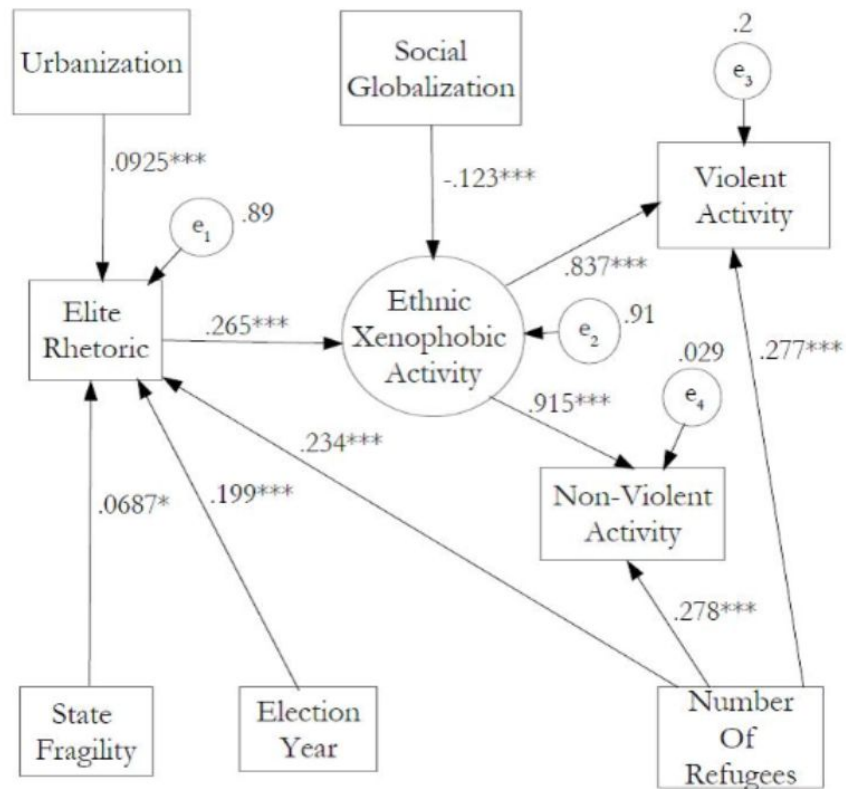
# STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODEL (SEM)

Dependent Variable: Xenophobic Activity

*Count measure, number of violent and non-violent incidents of xenophobic activity within a country-year*

Figure 1

## SEM Cross-National Analysis of Ethnic Xenophobic Activity



Statistical Significance: + $p < 0.10$ ; \* $p < 0.05$ ; \*\* $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\* $p < 0.001$

Notation: The error terms –  $e^i$  – are the residual variances within variables not accounted for by the pathways hypothesized in the model. They are accompanied by their coefficients.

**Table 5.2**  
**SEM Cross-National Analysis of Ethnic Xenophobic Activity**

Dependent Variables in Bold Face Explanatory Variables Below	Estimates of the Structural Model
<b>Anti-migrant Elite Rhetoric</b>	
Urban Population	.093*** (.023)
Election Year	.199*** (.023)
State Fragility Index	.069** (.023)
Refugee Number	.022*** (.022)
Constant	-.011 (.06)
<b>Ethnic Xenophobic Activity (violent)</b>	
Ethnic Xenophobic Activity (latent)	.84*** (.023)
Refugee Number	.277*** (.022)
Constant	.25*** (.031)
<b>Ethnic Xenophobic Activity (non-violent)</b>	
Ethnic Xenophobic Activity (latent)	.92*** (.024)
Refugee Number	.28*** (.022)
Constant	.485*** (.032)
<b>Ethnic Xenophobic Activity (latent)</b>	
Anti-migrant Elite Rhetoric	.269*** (.024)
Social Globalization	-.123*** (.024)
Constant	
Number of Observations	1,623
Standard errors in parentheses: Levels of statistical significant: * $p < 0.05$ , ** $p < 0.01$ , *** $p < 0.001$	
<b>Goodness of Fit Statistics</b>	
Model chi-square: $p > \chi^2 = .0000$	
Population error: Root Mean Squared Error Approximation (RMSEA) = .073	
Baseline comparison: Comparative Fit Index = .97; Tucker-Lewis Index = .95	
Size of residuals: Standardized Root Mean Squared Residual (SRMR) = .04	

# IMPLICATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

Raise the political costs of incitement

→ Kenya indictment (2018)

→ India Supreme Court decision (2017)

+ Campaign divestment

CSR initiatives and associational networks, including employment initiatives for local and foreign workers

Media laws, guidelines and codes of conduct

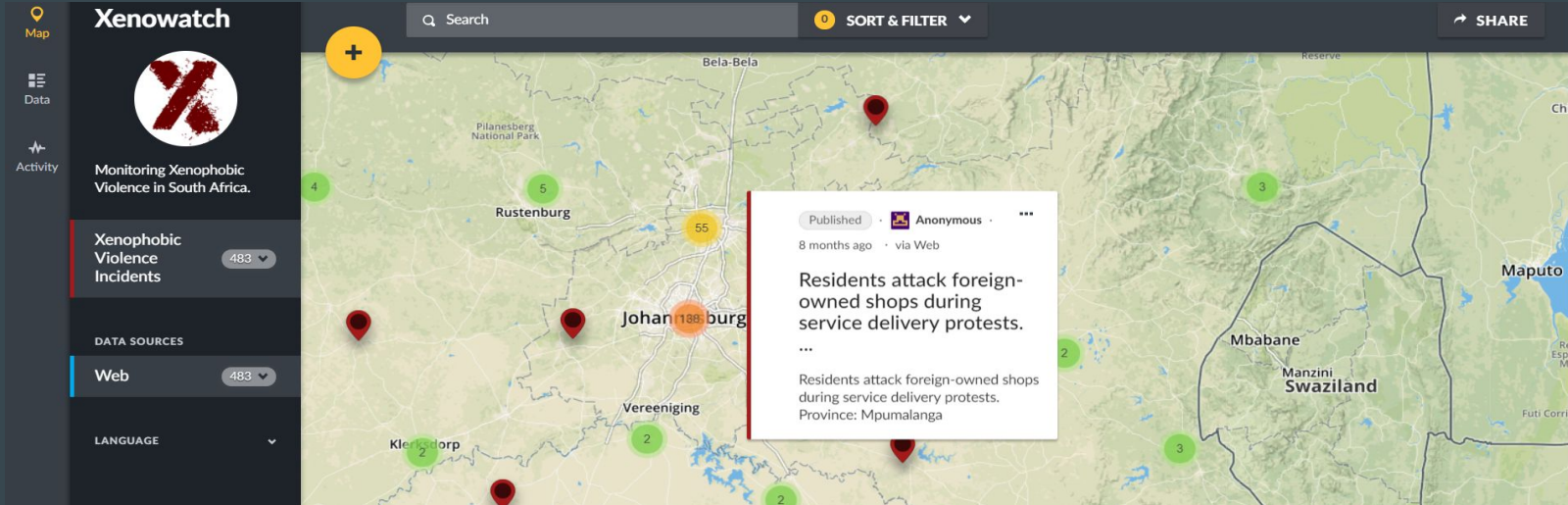
→ See: IFES white paper on countering hate speech during elections

Build coalitions of voters (at local and national level) that force compromise on key issues of migration and protection. This includes opening local elections to non-citizens.

# IMPLICATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

Develop 'safe community' initiatives to enhance localized protection options and crisis response. Includes notification services through geo-based apps and other tech, including AI.

Empower and invest in migrant leaders and businesses.



THANK YOU!!

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