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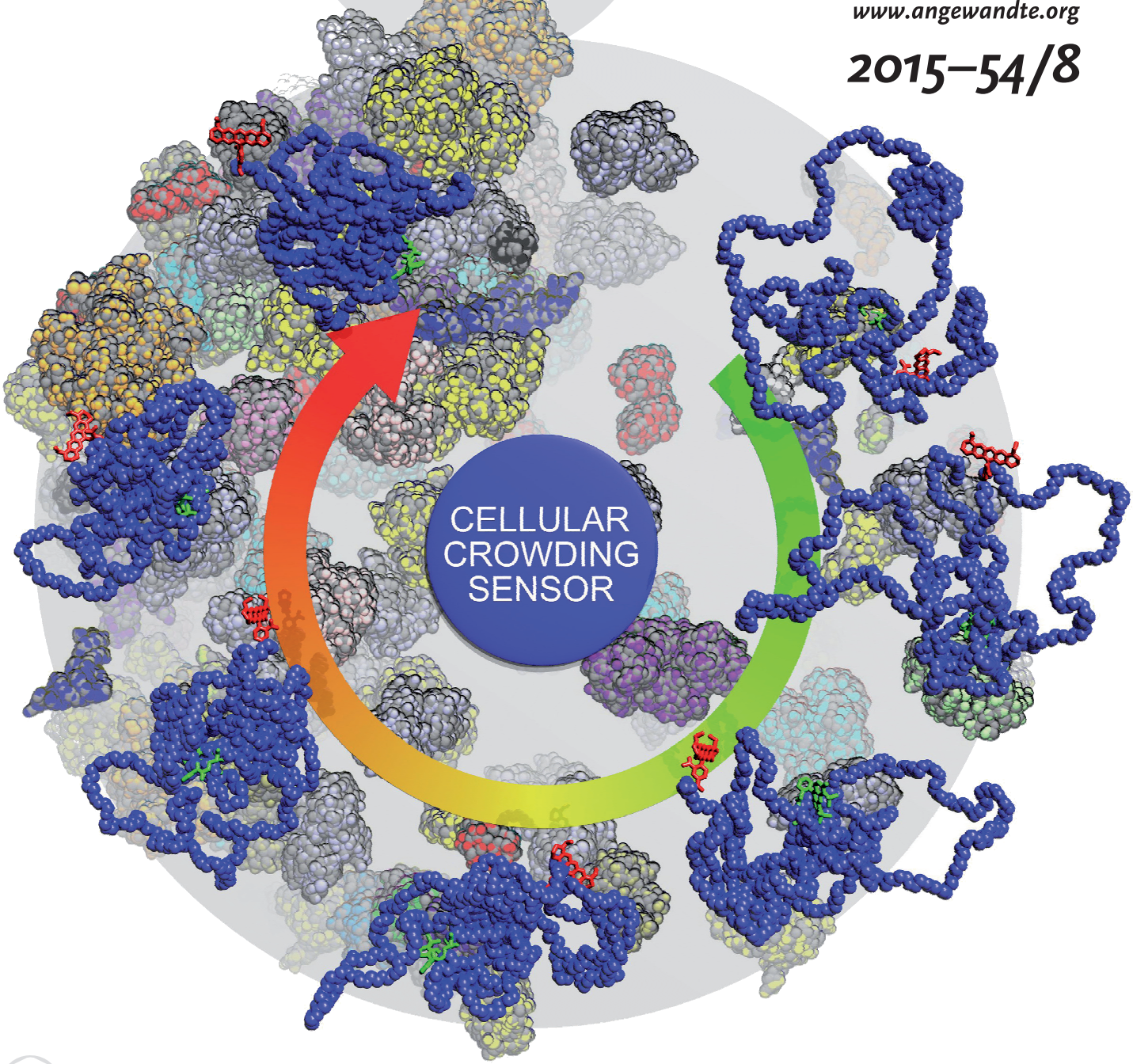

The interior of cells ...

… is highly crowded and has unique physicochemical properties. In their Communication on page 2548 ff., S. Ebbinghaus and co-workers report the use of a polymer-based sensor to study the effects of the excluded volume in living cells. They show that the cellular environment causes a significant compression of the sensor only under osmotic stress conditions. Thus the balance of compressive forces and nonspecific interactions can be used to fine-tune the properties within the cell.

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