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## Political representation and ethnic conflict in new democracies

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Sonia Alonso and Rubén Ruiz

Political Representation  
and Ethnic Conflict  
in New Democracies

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## **Abstract**

This paper is an exploratory analysis of the efficacy of parliamentary representation as a means to moderate ethnic conflict in new democracies. We agree with many others that the interests of an ethnic minority group are better protected when the group has access to decision makers, can block harmful government policies, and can veto potentially damaging decisions. Parliamentary representation, however, does not always allow for an effective representation of those who are not in government. Seats in the legislature may be of little use in a parliament where the executive dominates the policy process at all stages. This paper focuses on the new democracies of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union between 1990 and 2000. We use the number of parliamentary seats obtained by the ethnic minority group as our main independent variable and the MAR index of ethnic protest and rebellion as our dependent variables. In addition, we employ the system of government (i.e., parliamentary versus presidential) as a proxy indicator of the degree of influence that parliamentary parties have over decision-making. A cross-section-time-series regression analysis shows that the ameliorative effect of parliamentary representation over ethnic conflict is stronger in those legislatures where the ethnic group has effective influence over decision making. It is also shown that representation within national parliaments has no ameliorative effects over violent secessionist conflicts. When the ethnic minority's demands are too radical, parliamentary representation is simply an inadequate instrument.

## **Zusammenfassung**

Dieses Discussion paper enthält eine explorative Analyse der Wirksamkeit parlamentarischer Repräsentation als Mittel, um ethnische Konflikte in neuen Demokratien abzumildern. Wie viele andere Autoren sind wir der Ansicht, dass die Interessen einer ethnischen Minorität besser gewahrt werden, wenn die Gruppe Zugang zu Entscheidungsträgern hat, eine für sie nachteilige Politik verhindern kann und Einspruch gegen politische Entscheidungen erheben kann, die ihr schaden könnten. Die parlamentarische Repräsentation erlaubt jedoch nicht in jedem Fall eine tatsächliche Repräsentation derjenigen, die nicht an der Regierung beteiligt sind. Die Beteiligung an der Legislative durch Sitze im Parlament kann wenig Bedeutung haben, wenn die Exekutive den politischen Prozess auf allen Ebenen dominiert. Dieses Papier bezieht sich auf die neuen Demokratien in Osteuropa und der früheren Sowjetunion im Zeitraum von 1990 bis 2000. Wir verwenden die Anzahl der Sitze im Parlament, über die eine ethnische Minorität verfügt, als die wichtigste unabhängige Variable und nutzen den „Minorities at Risk“- Index (MAR) zu ethnischem Protest und ethnischen Unruhen für unsere abhängigen Variablen. Außerdem nutzen wir das Regierungssystem (d. h. parlamentarisches versus präsidentielles) als Ersatzindikator für das Ausmaß des Einflusses, den parlamentarische Parteien auf politische Entscheidungen haben. Eine Cross-section-time-series-Regressionsanalyse ergibt, dass der positive Effekt der

parlamentarischen Repräsentation auf ethnische Konflikte in jenen Legislativen stärker ist, wo die ethnische Gruppe einen wirkungsvollen Einfluss auf politische Entscheidungen hat. Es zeigt sich weiterhin, dass die Repräsentation in nationalen Parlamenten keine positive Wirkung auf gewalttätige Unabhängigkeitskonflikte hat. Wenn die Forderungen einer ethnischen Minderheit zu radikal sind, stellt die parlamentarische Repräsentation kein adäquates Mittel mehr dar.

*Sonia Alonso and Rubén Ruiz*

## **Political Representation and Ethnic Conflict in New Democracies<sup>1</sup>**

### **Introduction**

Democratization, by definition, entails devolution of power from the state to society. As such it opens a window of opportunity for the expression and mobilization of old and new grievances, among them ethnic ones. Democratization and ethnic conflict are in fact empirically correlated phenomena. Periods of democratization are usually accompanied by an increase in the levels of ethnic conflict (Horowitz 1985; Roeder 1991, 1999; Skalnik Leff 1999; Snyder 2000). Managing ethnic conflict is therefore a fundamental aspect of a successful transition to democracy and a subject of heated academic debate.

This paper is an exploratory analysis of the efficacy of parliamentary representation as a strategy to moderate ethnic conflict in new democracies.<sup>2</sup> A widely made argument in the literature holds that an appropriate way to deal with ethnic conflict is to make institutions more accessible to minority groups. There are many ways of making a political system more accessible. One route is facilitating the representation of ethnic minorities in national parliaments. The proponents of this view argue that parliamentary representation gives ethnic minorities a voice in decision-making processes. This allows their participation in the political game and, as a consequence, offers the ethnic group incentives to abandon extra-institutional action strategies. Higher levels of representation “endear [ethnic groups] sufficiently to the regime to prevent them from using extreme measures to resist the ethnic status quo” (Cohen 1997, p. 613).

Having a voice within the system does not imply direct participation in decision-making. Is gaining a voice a good enough access strategy to moderate ethnic conflict? Clearly,

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1 We would like to thank Thomas Cusack, José María Maravall, James Fearon, Ignacio Sánchez-Cuenca, Abel Escribá, José Fernández, Ignacio Lago, and the colleagues at the research unit DSPC of the Social Science Research Center Berlin for their comments and suggestions. They are not responsible for any mistakes this paper may contain.

2 New democracies are those regimes that have recently moved from dictatorship to democracy, that is, to a regime in which the political leadership is chosen through competitive elections. We do not intend to enter the academic debate about consolidated vs. unconsolidated democracies or to discuss the unsolved question of when a democracy can be considered a consolidated democracy. The term *new* simply emphasizes the time dimension, the fact that these are recently established democracies (in most cases, less than 15 years old). Therefore, all of them have gone through no more than five electoral and legislative periods and the process of institutionalization is still in its early stages, despite the considerable differences between countries in this respect.

obtaining representation in parliament falls short of the power-sharing arrangements defended by authors such as Lijphart (1984), based on the establishment of inclusive and partitioned decision-making mechanisms, such as consociationalism and federalism.<sup>3</sup> Our aim is therefore a modest one. We will focus our analysis on parliamentary representation. We will not discuss power-sharing institutional arrangements, which are qualitatively different in the sense that they provide for direct participation in decision-making.

Allegedly, the most direct way to make parliaments more accessible to ethnic minorities is to establish proportional electoral systems. This maximizes the ethnic groups' probability of obtaining parliamentary seats. The recipe is straightforward: the establishment of proportional electoral systems will contribute to the moderation of ethnic groups' action strategies by allowing increased access to the political system. We believe that the case for proportional electoral systems has been overstated for two reasons. First, proportionality does not necessarily lead to higher levels of representation of ethnic minorities. Second, higher levels of representation in parliament do not automatically lead to a moderation of ethnic conflict. We agree that the interests of an ethnic group are better protected when the group has access to decision makers, when the group can block harmful government policies and veto potentially damaging decisions (Saideman et al. 2002, p. 106). Parliamentary representation, however, does not always allow for an effective representation of those who are not in government. In other words, being in parliament is no guarantee that the ethnic group is able to access decision makers, block government policies and veto decisions that go against its interests. The argument needs to take into account how much influence on policy making different legislatures allow for.

This paper focuses on the new democracies of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. There are two reasons for this. First, this region has been a laboratory of institutional designs after the demise of Communist regimes. This provides us with a large measure of variation in institutions. This variation facilitates the exploration of political representation's impact on ethnic conflict. Second, this is a region with a high incidence of ethnic conflict during the democratization process, which started in 1989–1990, where outcomes differed dramatically.

In the first section of the paper we discuss critically the existing quantitative studies that have analyzed the effects of institutional arrangements on ethnic conflict. In the second and third sections we present our hypotheses and describe the measurement of the variables used in our analysis. The empirical results are put forward and discussed in the fourth and fifth sections. Finally, we present the conclusions that flow from this analysis.

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3 There is no agreement, however, about the efficacy of power-sharing arrangements to solve ethnic conflict. Many researchers believe that these arrangements institutionalize conflict and, by so doing, get it worse, not better (Roeder 1999; Snyder 2000; Ross 2000; Bunce 1999; Skalnik Leff 1999; Brubaker 1996).

## The Effects of Institutions on Ethnic Conflict

Following Gurr, we understand ethnic conflict as any extra-institutional action by which groups that define themselves through ethnic criteria make claims against the government, or other political agents, on behalf of their group interests (Gurr 1993, p. 349). Following the *Minorities at Risk* dataset criteria, we define ethnic groups as non-state groups that share a communal identity and have “political significance” as a result of their status and political actions. The bases of communal identity include shared language, religion, national or racial origin, common cultural practices, and common territory. To have political significance means that the group collectively suffers, or benefits from, systematic discriminatory treatment and that the group is the basis for political mobilization and collective action in defense or promotion of its self-defined interests.

The thesis according to which the presence of ethnic minority groups in national parliaments has a moderating effect on the levels of ethnic conflict has been buttressed by several quantitative studies (Cohen 1997; Saideman et al. 2002; Reynal-Querol 2002). These studies use the type of electoral system as their independent variable to find an empirical pattern: proportional electoral systems are related to lower levels of ethnic conflict. In order to explain this result, the authors of these studies assume that proportional systems are synonymous of higher levels of parliamentary representation or, at least, of a higher probability of obtaining such representation. By incorporating such an assumption, these authors explain their empirical result as follows: under proportional systems, ethnic minority groups are more likely to get representation in parliament and this, in turn, moderates their extra-institutional actions.<sup>4</sup> The policy recommendation for multi-ethnic democratizing countries is clear: if they want to see less conflict, they should establish a proportional electoral system.

Eastern European countries, however, do not seem to have paid much attention to this recommendation. If parliamentary representation really has such beneficial effects over ethnic conflict, we wonder why a majority of countries in the region have chosen a mixed electoral system, combining parliamentary representation with single-member districts. Some argue the reason for this is that this combination gives everybody a fairer chance to

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4 Here are a few examples:

“Proportional type institutions are more effective than majority type institutions as democratic instruments in overcoming ethnic conflict” (Cohen 1997, p. 629).

“Democracies with proportional representation systems have much fewer ethnic conflicts of both types [rebellion and protest]” (Saideman et al. 2002, p. 17).

“The doctrine emphasizes almost in unison that in societies which are nationally, culturally and ideologically heterogeneous, the proportional principle is the best option” (Goati 2000, p. 66).

“It so happens that the proportional system has a lesser probability of rebellion than the majority system [...] The level of representation of the population is a key element in preventing ethnic civil war” (Reynal-Querol 2002, p. 35).



compete and, therefore, maximizes the political inclusiveness of the system (Birch 2000, p. 9).

There are two reasons for questioning the moderating effects of proportional representation on ethnic conflict. First, it is not true that ethnic minority groups are always better off under proportional representation systems. One example suffices to see why. An ethnic minority that is geographically concentrated in one region and clustered around one ethnic party will be better off if the electoral system is majoritarian. The group's chances of obtaining seats will then be enhanced. It is therefore not correct to assume that proportional representation systems always bring about higher levels of representation. We will not use the electoral system as a proxy indicator for the level of representation. A superior indicator is simply the number of parliamentary seats obtained by ethnic parties in each legislature. It could be argued that by focusing on the number of parliamentary seats actually obtained by the ethnic party we are unable to analyze the effects of the *possibility* of obtaining seats on the levels of ethnic conflict. But, is it the *possibility* of obtaining seats or is it the number of seats actually obtained that reduces the levels of conflict? It is hard to believe that it is just the *possibility* of obtaining seats that moderates ethnic groups. After all, one only believes in the quality of a certain institutional design if it lives up to its expectations. The introduction of the electoral system as a variable in our analysis will enable us to assess this point.

Second, according to the studies mentioned above, parliamentary representation is attractive for ethnic groups because it allows them to have a voice within the system. When minority groups have no chances of obtaining seats in parliament, they may show hostility towards the rules of the game and this may, in turn, lead to the groups' withdrawal from the electoral competition and their engaging in confrontational action strategies against the government and the state (Goati 2000, p. 66). This explanatory mechanism rests on two assumptions that are, at best, doubtful. First, it assumes that parliamentary representation always gives the ethnic minority group effective influence over decision-making processes. Second, it takes as given that ethnic groups are internally homogeneous and that the moderation of the few is the moderation of the entire group. In other words, the ethnic groups' demands, action strategies, and internal dynamics are considered unimportant in the analysis of the institutional effects over ethnic conflict.

Seats in parliament are not always an effective way of influencing political decision-making. Imagine that the ethnic party representing a particular minority group obtains representation in the national parliament. If the party is in the opposition, seats will be of little use in a parliament where the executive dominates the policy process at all stages. In this situation, only participation in government would allow for, though by no means guarantee, participation in decision-making processes. However, when minorities in the legisla-

ture have a real chance of influencing decision making and of forcing the executive to bargain and to pull back when necessary, the moderating effect of representation over ethnic conflict seems more plausible.

The influence of the opposition in decision making is in part derived from the constitutional definition of government formation: under presidentialism there is a clear, definitional separation of powers between the executive and the legislative. It is a system of mutual independence, in contrast to parliamentarism where the legislative and the executive are mutually dependent. In principle, therefore, only presidentialism allows the parliament to be autonomous from the executive, and even to legislate against the executive's (the President's) will.<sup>5</sup> According to Saideman et al., minority ethnic groups are more secure under presidential systems since the separation of powers protects minorities from the absolute majorities of parliamentary systems and, in consequence, from the imposition of the executive's will on the parliament (Saideman et al. 2002, p. 110). This argument is flawed. It takes for granted that all presidential systems are based on a clear separation of powers. Shugart and Carey (1992) showed long ago that there are important differences among presidential systems. These differences are based on the powers constitutionally granted to the president. Shugart and Carey are right to note that strong presidents may render parliaments powerless to influence, or veto, the executive. There are many instances of presidents endowed with the capacity to initiate legislation and with the exclusive right to initiate legislation in some areas. Moreover, some presidents also have decree-power. This means that they are constitutionally able to unilaterally alter the status quo. In such an institutional context no group in the legislature, not even the majority, can "close the gates" to a presidential initiative made by decree (Cheibub and Limongi 2002). In the most extreme cases, the legislative powers of the parliament may be usurped by the president (Shugart and Carey 1998, p. 2). Russia would be an example among the Eastern European and former Soviet Union countries. This is what leads Shugart and Carey to conclude that minority representation in presidential systems is more symbolic than in parliamentary ones because of the dominance of presidents over the nomination process and dealings with the rest of the cabinet (1998, p. 2).

At the same time, there is also variation among parliamentary regimes. First, there are many instances of parties being forced to form coalition governments in order to get a parliamentary majority to back a particular government. Single-party majorities are not an intrinsic feature of parliamentary systems. Second, even under conditions of single-party majority governments, legislative committees may have considerable powers in parlia-

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5 The consequences of this for government and regime stability need not concern us here. It is the consequences for ethnic conflict that are of interest to us.

mentary assemblies and may erect barriers to the executive agenda. Parliamentarism is not necessarily synonymous with executive-imposed legislation (Cheibub and Limongi 2002).

Our main hypothesis is that ethnic conflict will only be moderated through representation in those cases where the minority groups in the legislature have a real chance of influencing decision making. In other words, minority groups in parliament should have access to decision makers and should be able to block harmful government policies and veto potentially damaging decisions. In Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, it is possible to use the constitutionally defined system of government (the presidential-parliamentary distinction) as a proxy for effective versus ineffective influence on decision making. Presidential systems in the region are not pure systems. There is no real separation of powers between the executive and the legislative, as in the case of US presidentialism.<sup>6</sup> Presidents have the capacity to initiate legislation and even to govern by decree. This often renders parliaments powerless to counteract the executive. On the other hand, legislative committees across the region's parliamentary systems are remarkably strong. According to Gungor, they have developed into important independent sources of information and are active participants in the legislative process possessing the ability to introduce new bills with remarkable high success rates (2004, p. 21). In Gungor's words, "the ability of the opposition to block the executive through participation in the internal control mechanisms of the parliament [...] is the norm in central and eastern European [parliamentary] democracies" (2004, p. 22). Therefore, we will assume that, for this region, parliamentary systems allow for effective representation while semi-presidential regimes do not.

The type of demands advanced by ethnic minorities is also a relevant factor in order to assess the moderating capacity of representation. What kind of access to the political system are minorities claiming: access to participate in decision-making processes at the centre or access to be able to run their own affairs independently? When the former is the case, the moderation of conflict through parliamentary representation is plausible. When it is the latter, representation in parliament makes little difference to the levels of conflict. Demands for greater autonomy or outright secession are not likely to be moderated with seats in the national parliament. In many cases, the secessionist group refuses to participate in elections until the group's demands are met. Boycotting elections is a confrontational strategy that shows complete rejection of the political status quo. As a matter of fact, the cases of prolonged or bitterly hostile violent conflict in the region are those where ethnic minority groups have systematically boycotted parliamentary elections: Russians from the Transdnistrian region in Moldova, Kosovo-Albanians from Serbia in Yugoslavia; Chechens in Russia; and Abkhazians and Ossetians in Georgia. These ethnic groups have not

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6 In fact, many analysts classify them as semi-presidential systems, in order to differentiate them from pure presidential systems.

achieved representation at the national parliament because they have not even tried to. Here, the absence of representation is not so much the result of institutional barriers but of a consciously designed strategy by the ethnic group. We expect that, in the presence of secessionist demands, there is little that parliamentary representation can do in order to moderate ethnic conflict.

Furthermore, are minorities actively seeking access? There are ethnic minority groups that do not act extra-institutionally despite the fact that they have no presence in the national parliament, as is the case of the Roma minority in many Eastern European countries. These minorities simply do not use any form of protest or rebellion. This is probably related to their weak organizational resources and capacity for group action. Here, again, the absence of representation is not the result of institutional barriers as much as it is the result of collective action problems. In fact, if we look at the ethnic groups in the region, we find that most of them have not obtained parliamentary representation and yet they do not engage in protest or rebellion against the state. The absence of representation is accompanied by high levels of protest and rebellion in only a few cases (see Annex 1). The absence of parliamentary representation is thus the effect of collective action problems and not the cause of increased conflict levels.

Finally, do ethnic minorities speak with one voice? Can we assume that they are unitary political actors? It is not uncommon to find ethnic groups divided into a radical and a moderate faction. Parliamentary representation may then be a double edge sword. On the one hand, it convinces the moderate factions to defend the ethnic minorities' interests from within the system. On the other hand, it further radicalizes the extremist factions, which try to differentiate themselves from the moderates in order to secure their loyalist bases.

To sum up, the moderating effect of parliamentary representation on ethnic conflict seems plausible, but only under certain conditions. First, parliamentary representation will not give ethnic minorities effective influence over decision-making processes unless the parliament is strong relative to the executive. Only then it is reasonable to expect a moderating effect of representation on conflict. Second, before parliamentary representation can have any effect on ethnic conflict minority groups must actively seek participation and influence in decision making. This may not be the case for one of two reasons; either the ethnic minority group has not solved its collective action problems or it has organized around radical demands including a change of the status quo and the use of violence.

## Hypotheses

Ethnic conflict can take two different forms: protest and rebellion. Protest aims at forcing the government to redress the minority groups' grievances by means of popular actions and mobilizations; rebellion aims at changing the status quo through the use of violence (Gurr 1993, p. 93). Therefore, protest and rebellion represent different action strategies reflecting, in turn, different types of demands.

Our first hypothesis is that the effect of parliamentary representation on ethnic protest is conditional on the power of the legislature relative to the executive. In those countries where parties in parliament have an impact on decision making, for example through participation in legislative committees, we expect to find a reduction of ethnic protest when the level of representation increases. Otherwise, we do not expect to find an ameliorative effect of representation on ethnic protest.

Our second hypothesis is that the electoral system has no effect on the level of ethnic conflict. Different electoral systems might be better for minorities in different circumstances. Therefore, we do not expect to find that a proportional assignation of seats reduces the levels of ethnic conflict. We think it actually has no direct effect on conflict, be it positive or negative.

Third, we expect representation to moderate ethnic protest but not ethnic rebellion. This is so because ethnic rebellion is driven by demands to change the status quo and turn it into a new distribution of state power. As we explained before, when the ethnic minority's demands are too radical, parliamentary representation is simply too little.

Among the democratizing countries of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, the level of political freedom achieved over time has varied widely. It is likely that this will affect the levels of ethnic conflict. As political freedom increases and the protection of individuals' and groups' political rights is enhanced, we should see less conflict. When the chances to defend the groups' interests from within the system are larger, only the most radical or uncompromising factions within the ethnic groups would then continue with their actions against the government and the state.

Finally, in order to regain their status, those ethnic groups that enjoyed an autonomous political status in the past are more likely to engage in conflict with the state once democratization begins than are those ethnic groups that have never enjoyed autonomous (or even independent) rule.

## Measuring the Variables

Ethnic conflict is measured by two different indexes: the protest index and the rebellion index (*Minorities at Risk* dataset, Phase III).<sup>7</sup> The protest index offers an annual measurement of the degree of participation in demonstrations and acts of protest by the ethnic group. This index is graded on a scale that ranges from 0, indicating no protest at all, to 5, indicating generalized demonstrations.<sup>8</sup> The rebellion index offers an annual measurement of the degree to which ethnic groups oppose the existing *status quo* and organize their demands through confrontations with the state. It therefore reflects the use of violence and armed conflict. The scale ranges from 0, indicating no violent acts, to 7, indicating civil war.<sup>9</sup>

The dataset has a cross-section-time-series structure.<sup>10</sup> The cross-section variable is the ethnic minority group and the time variable is the electoral period. There are 44 cross-sections, belonging to 16 Eastern European countries.<sup>11</sup> There are as many electoral periods as national elections between 1990 and 2000 (this number is usually between 4 and 5, depending on the country). The protest and rebellion scores in the dataset are the averages for each minority and each electoral period.

Ethnic protest has been much more common than rebellion in Eastern Europe between 1990 and 2000. In 85% of all observations, the ethnic minorities engaged in protest, as opposed to only 19% of all observations engaging in rebellion. Table 1 offers summary statistics for these variables.

Our independent variables are all centered on institutional and political indicators. Our main independent variable is the number of parliamentary seats obtained by each minority

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7 The *Minorities at Risk* database can be downloaded at [www.cidcm.umd.edu/insc/mar/data.htm](http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/insc/mar/data.htm).

8 Specifically, 0 represents no protests at all; 1 represents a verbal type of opposition such as putting up posters; 2 symbolic resistance such as blocking roads; 3 demonstrations of up to 10,000 persons; 4 demonstrations of up to 100,000 persons; 5 demonstrations with over 100,000 participants. Thus measured, the protest index depends on the size of the minority. The larger the group is, the more likely that the number of participants in demonstrations will be large. In order to answer to prospective criticisms in this respect we have replicated the regression analysis with a re-codified protest variable in which we have merged the last three index scores (3, 4, and 5) into one single score (3), accounting for mass street demonstrations (with no reference to the number of participants). The regression results are nearly the same. On the other hand, the inclusion of ethnic group size in the regression analysis does not contribute to improve the simpler model without the size variable. Its coefficient is not significant, while the other coefficients remain more or less the same.

9 On the Rebellion scale, 0 represents no violent action at all; 1 occasional terrorist acts; 2 terrorist campaigns; 3 the existence of rebellions at a local level; 4 small scale guerrilla activity; 5 guerrilla activity on a medium scale; 6 on a large scale; 7 civil war.

10 Our dataset is available on request.

11 Our dataset only covers those countries in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union where legislative elections have been held periodically since 1990 or the fall of the authoritarian regime. Here we are following the criteria used by Przeworski et al. to differentiate between democratic and dictatorial regimes (2000). This restriction excludes countries such as Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan.

group in each legislature since 1990. There are two possible ways to measure this. First, one can code representation as the number of seats obtained by co-ethnic representatives. These can be elected as independent deputies or as members of a political party that may or may not be an ethnic party. Second, one can code representation as the number of seats obtained by ethnic political parties representing particular ethnic groups, ignoring those deputies that do not belong to ethnic parties. Given the fact that in the region under analysis most ethnic representation, if it exists, takes place through ethnic political parties, we have chosen to code representation as seats obtained by ethnic parties. We are fully aware that this methodological strategy would be inadequate for other regions and countries. Summary statistics for this variable are presented in Table 1.

*Table 1: Summary Statistics of Ethnic Conflict and Parliamentary Representation*

	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Standard deviation</i>	<i>Min.</i>	<i>Max.</i>	<i>N</i>
Protest	1.8	1.1	0	5	141
Rebellion	0.5	1.4	0	7	141
% Seats	2.02	5.1	0	27.5	157

The number of seats is measured as the percentage of the total number of parliamentary seats for each minority and each electoral period (see Annex 1).<sup>12</sup> Whenever one ethnic group achieves parliamentary representation through more than one political party, we add the seats obtained by these parties. For example, if Albanians in Macedonia are represented in parliament by party A with 7 seats and by party B with 2 seats, the value for the Albanians in Macedonia will be 9 seats (1.5% of all seats in parliament). Those groups that have boycotted elections appear in the dataset as having 0 seats.

The system of government is represented by a dummy variable with value 1 for parliamentary systems and 0 otherwise. As detailed above, we assume that parliamentary systems in this context are a good proxy for effective representation. Moreover, there are hardly any cases of single-party majority governments in the region; there are only four between 1990 and 2000. Of the four cases, only one managed to last more than one year in office.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> In those countries where there is bicameralism, the data collected only corresponds to the lower chamber of parliament.

<sup>13</sup> In 1991, Albania elected a majority government led by the APL that only managed to survive one month. A majority government came into power again in 1996 and this time it lasted just 8 months. In Bulgaria the BSP achieved a majority government in 1990 that only survived 3 months and the same situation occurred in 1991 under a UDF government that lasted 13 months. Therefore, the only case that managed to last for a whole year, which is the time unit that we are going to use in this investigation, is the case of Bulgaria in 1991.

This form of parliamentarism enhances the representation of all the parliamentary parties (not just the government parties) and therefore the role of the legislature.<sup>14</sup>

For the electoral system we employ a dummy variable that has a value of 1 for proportional systems and 0 otherwise. The reason for this is that we are mainly interested in the effect that proportionality has on ethnic conflict. The Freedom House political rights index captures the degree of political freedom by measuring to what extent the system offers voters the opportunity to choose freely among candidates and to what extent the candidates are chosen independently of the state. This index ranges from 1 to 7 (1 represents the highest degree of political freedom and 7 the lowest). Finally, those ethnic minority groups that have had political autonomy in the past are coded as 1 (0 otherwise).

## Results

In order to see the effect of parliamentary representation on ethnic conflict depending on the system of government, we use a model that introduces a multiplicative term in our regression equation.<sup>15</sup> This term is the product of the percentage of seats in parliament and the system of government. The implication is that the regression coefficients that we obtain describe the relationships between the variables as conditional relationships rather than general relationships, as would be the case with the additive model. The main equation that incorporates the conditional effect of parliamentary representation on ethnic conflict is as follows:

$$EC_{i,t} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 Seats_{i,t} + \beta_2 Parl_{j,t} + \beta_3 Seats_{i,t} * Parl_{j,t} + \beta_4 PR_{j,t} + \beta_5 Fhpol_{j,t} + \beta_6 Auton_{i,t} + EG_{i,t} + e$$

where:

$EC_{i,t}$  = Ethnic conflict index (protest, rebellion) for group  $i$  at period  $t$ .

$Seats_{i,t}$  = Percentage of seats in parliament for group  $i$  at period  $t$ .

$Parl_{j,t}$  = Parliamentary system in country  $j$  at period  $t$ .

$PR_{j,t}$  = Proportional electoral system in country  $j$  at period  $t$ .

$Fhpol_{j,t}$  = Freedom House political rights index in country  $j$  at period  $t$ .

$Auton_{i,t}$  = Autonomy status for group  $i$  at period  $t$ .

$EG_{i,j}$  = Ethnic group  $i$  at period  $t$ .

14 The parliamentary systems in our sample are the following: Albania, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia after 1994, Macedonia, and Slovakia. Following Shugart (1996), we consider Bulgaria and Macedonia as having parliamentary systems because they have presidents that are directly elected but have very limited powers. Unlike Shugart (1996), Metcalf (2000) believes that there are semi-presidential regimes in these two countries.

15 For a defense of interaction terms in multiple regression equations see Friedrich (1982).



$i$  = Ethnic group

$j$  = Country

$t$  = Time period (i.e., legislative period)

We use a panel data model. Aside from the percentage of seats in parliament and the Freedom House political rights index, the independent variables in the model which capture institutional traits vary very little across time. The presence of the latter along with the fixed effects units (ethnic group dummies) poses an estimation problem. As some analysts have pointed out (Beck and Katz 2001; Kittel and Winner 2002), the inclusion of fixed effects “throws out the baby with the bath water” because of the correlation between the time-invariant variables and the fixed effects. In other words, including fixed effects means that any theoretically interesting independent variable that does not vary temporally cannot be used as an explanatory variable. In our case, most independent variables are institutional variables and, therefore, time-invariant (or nearly time-invariant).

In order to avoid this problem, we use a solution proposed by Plümper and Troeger (2004). This is the fixed-effects-vector-decomposition (*xtfevd*) estimating procedure. This procedure is preferable to the standard fixed effects model when the within variance (the variation across time) is small and the between variance significantly larger,<sup>16</sup> which is the case with our data. According to Plümper and Troeger, the *xtfevd* model is reliable when the coefficients obtained with fixed effects and with *xtfevd* are similar but the standard errors differ (they should be smaller with the *xtfevd* estimation procedure).<sup>17</sup> Results are reported in Table 2.

Although Table 2 reproduces the results for both the standard fixed effects and the *xtfevd* estimation techniques, we describe only the latter. As expected, representation in parliament moderates ethnic protest but not ethnic rebellion. As the number of seats in parliament increases, the level of ethnic protest is reduced. That is, there is supportive evidence for the moderating effects of representation on ethnic protest regardless of the parliamentary or presidential nature of the system, although the effect is very small. If we look at the interaction term, we see that an increase in the level of representation reduces the level of ethnic protest in parliamentary systems to a higher degree than in (semi)presidential ones. Therefore, the ameliorative effect of representation over conflict is stronger in parliamentary systems. There, an increase of 5% in the level of representation would reduce conflict

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16 The within standard deviation of an explanatory variable must be below 0.8 and the between-within variation ratio larger than 2.5 (Plümper and Troeger 2004, p. 14).

17 See Plümper and Troeger 2004, p. 17-18.

by 0.84. In (semi)presidential systems, the same increase in the level of representation would reduce conflict by a much smaller amount, namely, 0.18.<sup>18</sup>

*Table 2: Regression Results of the Conditional Effects of Parliamentary Representation on Ethnic Conflict*

	Protest		Rebellion	
	xtfevd <sup>a</sup>	fixed effects	xtfevd <sup>a</sup>	fixed effects
seats	-0.037** (0.016)	-0.037 (0.036)	0.019 (0.016)	0.019 (0.036)
parl	0.293 (0.200)	-0.300 (0.458)	-0.474** (0.189)	-2.258*** (0.449)
seats*parl	-0.131*** (0.032)	-0.131* (0.068)	-0.024 (0.027)	-0.024 (0.067)
PR	0.421** (0.170)	0.370 (0.335)	0.143 (0.166)	0.451 (0.329)
fhpol	0.230*** (0.061)	0.383*** (0.111)	0.222*** (0.060)	0.022 (0.109)
auton	-0.151 (0.180)	dropped	0.020 (0.176)	dropped
eta	1.000*** (0.098)		1.000*** (0.061)	
constant	1.022*** (0.258)	0.732* (0.409)	-0.042 (0.253)	1.156*** (0.401)
Observations	117	117	117	117
R-squared	0.65	0.03	0.82	0.06
Adj. R-square	0.63	-0.678	0.80	-0.626
F statistic	7.11***	4.89***	32***	5.22***

Standard errors in parentheses.

\* Significant at 10%; \*\* significant at 5%; \*\*\* significant at 1%.

a Fixed effects vector decomposition (Plümper and Troeger 2004).

As the estimated coefficient for the *Fhpol* term indicates, higher levels of political freedom clearly reduce ethnic protest and rebellion.<sup>19</sup> Therefore, the higher the level of protection of individuals' and groups' political rights, the lower the levels of ethnic conflict. When

18 In parliamentary systems the coefficient of the effect of seats on protest is -0.168; in non-parliamentary systems it is -0.037. As we explained above, in an interactive model the coefficients in the regression describe conditional relationships, not general ones.

19 The political rights index goes from 1 (highest political freedom) to 7 (lowest political freedom). Therefore, a positive coefficient means that ethnic conflict increases when political freedoms decrease.

the chances to defend the minorities' interests within the institutional system are sufficiently high, ethnic groups tend to abandon extra-institutional action strategies.

Contrary to expectation, proportionality has a positive significant effect on the level of ethnic protest. As a matter of fact, the average number of seats obtained by ethnic groups under majority electoral systems doubles that of the proportional systems in the region, despite the fact that the groups are larger in countries with parliamentary representation (see Table 3).<sup>20</sup> The proportional system also fares worse if compared with the mixed system, which combines parliamentary representation with single-majority seats. The mixed system allows proportionally for higher levels of representation than the parliamentary representation system. Moreover, the mean protest scores are higher among proportional electoral systems, although the difference is not statistically significant.

*Table 3: Electoral Systems and Ethnic Conflict*

Electoral system	Minority size	% Seats in	Protest score	Rebellion score
	(% over total pop.)	parliament	Mean	Mean
	Mean	Mean		
Majority	9.38**	4.63*	1.80	0.06
Proportional	11.88**	2.60*	1.96	0.52
Mixed	4.00**	1.58*	1.56	0.72

\* Statistically significant at 5%; \*\* statistically significant at 1%.

Representation in parliament has no significant effect on the level of ethnic rebellion, even when taking into account the difference between parliamentary and (semi)presidential systems.<sup>21</sup> Parliamentarism, however, does have a relevant effect. Rebellion is remarkably lower among parliamentary regimes, regardless of the number of seats in the legislature (see Table 4). This result cannot be explained with our hypotheses. There must be something else in Eastern European parliamentarism in addition to allowing minorities for more effective influence over decision-making that is having an important effect on ethnic rebellion.

To sum up, ethnic protest aims at persuading the government to redress the minority groups' grievances by means of popular mobilizations. In those countries where the legislature offers ethnic groups effective influence over decision making, higher levels of repre-

20 This result is in part due to the fact that the majority electoral system, the least common in our dataset, is only found in countries with geographically-concentrated minorities, and those always benefit more from the majoritarian assignation of seats than dispersed minorities.

21 In parliamentary systems the coefficient of the effect of seats on rebellion is -0.005; in non-parliamentary systems it is -0.019. In parliamentary regimes an increase of 5% in representation would reduce rebellion by 0.12; in (semi)presidential regimes it would reduce it by 0.095. These coefficients are not statistically significant.

sentation are associated with lower levels of ethnic protest. As the number of seats in parliament increases, there are more chances to get effective influence over decision making and, therefore, less need for extra-institutional action strategies. At the same time, exercising effective influence over policies can make the difference between radical violent conflict and non-violent popular mobilizations. According to the data, parliamentary regimes endure less rebellion than (semi)presidential ones. Certainly, the reason for this result may well be the endogeneity of institutions. Admittedly, in some cases, the absence of parliamentary representation is the effect of a rebellious outbreak rather than the cause of it. In other words, ethnic groups are not represented in parliament because they have boycotted elections as part of their strategy to oppose the status quo. Therefore, rebellion comes first. Similarly, having a parliamentary or a (semi)presidential system may come after, not before, rebellion and may in fact be explained by the breakout of conflict or by the expectation of the breakout of conflict. We tried to control for this problem by introducing the past autonomy variable. Nevertheless, the argument still holds that rebellion might have been avoided if ethnic groups had been given the power to veto decisions that run against their interests beforehand. In any case, the effects of institutions on conflict are small and therefore we should not take our conclusions too far.

*Table 4: Ethnic Conflict and Political Rights in Parliamentary and Presidential Systems*

	Parliamentary systems			(Semi)Presidential systems		
	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
Rebellion	0.1	0	2.5	0.7	0	7
Political rights (FH)	2.7	1	7	3.7	1	6
Minority group size (% over total pop)	8.6	1.7	34.4	5.7	0.05	33.9

FH Freedom House political rights index

## **Ethnic Rebellion and the Level of Threat**

Parliamentary systems experience less ethnic rebellion than (semi)presidential ones. This goes against the conclusion of Saideman et al. that presidential regimes endure lower levels of ethnic conflict. Their argument goes as follows: parliamentary systems increase the levels of ethnic conflict because minorities feel threatened by the majoritarian tendencies inherent to parliamentarism. We do not find evidence that this is the case among the new democracies of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. As a matter of fact, our results lead to the opposite conclusion. There may be two reasons for this. First, the post-

communist (semi)presidential regimes are mixed systems, with no real separation of powers between executive and legislative and with powerful presidents. In some cases, the transition to democratic rule has also been plagued by conflicts between the legislative and the president over the definition of their respective powers. The outcome has generally been a presidential victory over parliament. Second, the post-communist parliamentary regimes are characterized by fragmented party systems and an abundance of coalition governments. The more fragmented the party system, the higher the chances for the opposition to influence decision making. Threatening parliamentary majorities have been very uncommon. Moreover, parliamentary committees are strong relative to the executive. Under these circumstances, the levels of threat are likely to be higher in the (semi)presidential systems where minorities have less institutional opportunities for effective influence. However, institutional factors alone cannot explain the differences in the levels of threat to minority groups. Likewise, the levels of threat alone cannot account for the different rebellion outcomes. Let us briefly describe some examples.

It is useful to start with the language and citizenship laws that were enacted in Moldova and Estonia at the beginning of their democratization processes, in 1989 and 1991 respectively. These laws were threatening for their ethnic minorities. Many authors have concluded that the violent confrontation between the Russian minority in Transdnistria and the Moldovan state was sparked by the passage of what the Russians considered a threatening language law. However, in the case of Estonia, a rebellion by its Russian minority never broke out despite the approval of a citizenship law that was considerably more threatening for the minority than the Moldovan language law (Kolsto and Malgin 1998; Crowther 1998, Chinn and Roper 1998). The Estonian citizenship law of 1991 excluded a large part of its Russian minority from the political community and included provisions that truly threatened the existence of Russian as a language (Laitin 1998). Moldova, on the contrary, granted citizenship to all those who lived in the country and who wished to apply for it, whereas its language law was fairly moderate and generous with its deadlines. The law supported education in a variety of languages and even acknowledged the pre-eminence of the minority language over Moldovan in those regions where the minorities were concentrated (Kirschke 2001). According to Chinn and Roper, the government that took power in Moldova in 1991 was among the most accommodative to minorities in general, and to the Russian minority in particular, in the former Soviet Union, despite being dominated by the titular nationality (Chinn and Roper 1995, p. 317)<sup>22</sup>.

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22 However, in the following they do concede that “the Popular Front’s initial rhetoric was indeed anti-Russian. While an accommodative policy towards non-Romanians quickly developed and became policy, it could not undo the fear of Romanization on the part of the Russians in Transdnistria that, combined with their nostalgia for the Soviet system, led to the separatist movement” (Chinn and Roper 1995, p. 317). Perhaps the most significant point here is to distinguish between two very different

In 1990, when the Russians in Transdnistria were at the height of their rebellion, they held a large number of seats in the Moldovan parliament. Of the 380 seats, 64 were elected in Transdnistria. These seats were later boycotted in favor of violent confrontation with the state. Between 1992 and 1994, Russian and Gagauz leaders boycotted the Moldovan parliament. Approximately 30% of all Slavs in Moldova<sup>23</sup> are concentrated in Transdnistria, the region that witnessed the outbreak of armed conflict against the state. The remaining 70% of the Slavs live in Western Moldova and have never felt threatened by the Moldovan state since it gained its independence from the Soviet Union. This majority of Slavs in Western Moldova is overwhelmingly in favor of the territorial integrity of the country and of the reallocation of Transdnistria into Moldova (Waters 2001). This is telling evidence that the levels of threat are viewed differently by separate groups belonging to the same ethnic minority group. Here we find a radicalized minority of Russians engaging in armed conflict against the Moldovan state alongside a moderate majority of Slavs that does not feel threatened and does not demand secession. Surprisingly, the Russians that engaged in violent conflict are a *minority within a minority*, since they represent only 25% of the population (Waters 2001, p. 94), and still they managed to achieve armed control of the Transdnistrian region. The reason for this is obviously that they had the backing of the 14<sup>th</sup> Russian Army. This fact alone may well alter the way threat is defined in this context. The Russians in Moldova were more of a threat to the Moldovan state than the opposite. In fact, the Russians have set up an authoritarian political regime in Transdnistria. This regime is at present very threatening for the other ethnic groups in this region that, despite the threat, have not rebelled against the Russians.

We cannot resort to the fact of the geographical dispersion of Russians in Estonia in order to account for the absence of rebellion in this country. Quite the contrary, the Russian minority in Estonia was both highly concentrated in one region and was demographically larger than the Russian minority in Moldova. Nor can we say that it was subject to collective action problems. The Russians in Estonia were mobilized and radicalized with regard to objectives and strategies; the Russians in Narva and Sillamae managed to organize a referendum on regional independence in July 1993. However, violence did not break out and the Russians in Estonia, contrary to their counterparts in Moldova, stepped back. The reason is probably that the Russians in Estonia did not have the Russian Army backing them, as the Russians in Moldova did.

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political moments: before Moldova was an independent state, when it was still a Soviet republic, the Moldavian national elite wanted to expel the CPSU from power, and so they emphasized anti-Russian rhetoric in order to achieve this. After independence, however, the Moldovan elite had managed to take power and they then needed to achieve just the opposite, i.e., to appease the minorities by means of moderate laws.

23 According to Gurr's *Minorities at Risk* database (MAR), Slavs represent 26.76% of the total population.

Both Estonia and Moldova are (semi)presidential systems but the levels of threat vary considerably from one country to the other. Rebellion took place where the level of threat for the Russian minority was lower, i.e., in Moldova. The presidencies in both countries, however, played different roles. In Estonia, the president was instrumental in forcing the parliamentary majority to step back with yet another threatening piece of legislation drafted in the summer of 1993. The president vetoed a draft law on aliens approved by the Estonian legislature that was elected in 1992 and included no representatives from the Russian minority. The president sent the law back to parliament to be revised in order to bring it "to accordance with European principles." The amendments included guarantees on social security rights for ethnic Russians and removed the obligation of Russians to reapply for residency permits every five years. On the contrary, the Moldovan president between 1991 and 1996 was not seen as friendly to Moldova's minorities.

Let us now take the example of Macedonia, where the Albanian minority has been part of successive Macedonian governments between 1992 and 2000. One would think that, given their continuous participation in government, the Albanians in Macedonia would not feel as threatened as minorities elsewhere. However, the Albanians have registered mid-level rebellion scores during all these years. In January 1992 Albanians organized a referendum on autonomy. They were highly dissatisfied with the new Macedonian constitution that had been approved in November 1991. A few months later, the Albanian party PDP-NDP was invited to take part in the government coalition. As a result of its participation in government, the PDP-NDP split into a moderate and a radical faction in the winter of 1994, the NDP and the PDP respectively. The former was determined to work within the system and achieve ethnic Albanian demands through compromise. The NDP has been part of Albania's coalition governments ever since. The radical faction, on the contrary, was committed to a change in the status quo. An increase in the level of ethnic rebellion took place soon after the Albanian minority had doubled its number of seats in parliament between 1994 and 1998. This high level of representation together with the fact that they were part of the coalition government, did not prevent the violence that broke out in the region during the year 2000. The reason lies in internal group dynamics more than in anything else. Albanians in Macedonia are not a homogenous group. Representation in parliament has therefore helped to co-opt one part of the group but not the group as a whole.

Russia is a (semi)presidential system in which the president is constitutionally very strong and has decree-power. In this case, according to our hypotheses, we would not expect to see a moderating effect of parliamentary representation on ethnic conflict. In fact, representation (or non-representation) in the national parliament does not seem to have played any role in the evolution of ethnic conflict within the state's borders. The moderation of potentially explosive conflicts in those ethnic republics that claimed autonomy or

even independence from the federal state was actually achieved in all cases, except Chechnya, through bilateral negotiations between the presidential administration and the political leaders of the different republics. Thus, agreements over the distribution of power were reached that were satisfactory for the ethnic minorities. It was, therefore, the Russian president's resort to the bilateral treaties that moderated the attitude of the ethnic republics. These minorities had no interest in being represented within the Duma but in being given autonomy to run their affairs without interference from Moscow. However, by far the most violent conflict occurred between Moscow and Chechnya and the bilateral treaty strategy could not prevent it.<sup>24</sup> Whether a parliamentary regime would have led to a different result is a moot question. However, it could be argued that the first Chechen war broke out much as a consequence of the clash between the Russian and the Chechen presidents, with no other institutional power being able to veto their decisions. In fact, the federal parliament of Russia and the republican parliament of Chechnya were blocked from involvement with the decisions about the conflict.

In the post-communist (semi)presidential systems, the actual relationship between the president and the legislature varies as a consequence of political factors and this variation explains, in part, the different rebellion outcomes in countries which are institutionally similar. In both parliamentary and (semi)presidential systems, ethnic groups can be internally divided between moderates and radicals. When this is the case, the prospects for the moderation of ethnic rebellion through parliamentary representation will depend, partly, on the political dynamics internal to the group.

## Conclusions

It is generally acknowledged that those ethnic minorities that achieve representation in national parliaments are less likely to engage in conflict with the state. Parliamentary representation gives them a say in decision making and, as a consequence, ethnic groups have institutional incentives to abandon extra-institutional action strategies. There are reasons to believe that increased levels of influence over decision making are likely to reduce the levels of ethnic conflict. However, we question whether having a voice in parliament is enough to convince ethnic minorities to give up extra-institutional action strategies and to act according to the rules of the game. Just how effective is parliamentary representation as a strategy to reduce ethnic conflict? We have argued that parliamentary representation is

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<sup>24</sup> It could be argued that it was precisely the example set by the Chechen conflict that convinced the Russian president and the rest of the ethnic republics of the necessity to avoid further violent clashes between the centre and the ethnic minorities.



more effective under certain circumstances: the ethnic group is moderate in its demands and action strategies, the ethnic group speaks with one voice, and the legislature offers minority groups effective influence over policy making.

Concerning the nature of the ethnic groups' demands, we have shown that representation within national parliaments has no ameliorative effects over violent secessionist conflicts. Demands for outright secession are not likely to be moderated with seats in the national parliament. In many cases, the secessionist group refuses to participate in elections until the group's demands are met. When the ethnic minority's demands are too radical, parliamentary representation is simply too little.

With respect to the strength of the legislature, being in parliament is no guarantee that the parties outside government will be able to access decision makers, to block government policies, and to veto decisions that go against their minority interests. Clearly, as Powell has put it, "[s]eats in the legislature are not enough. In contrast to the large literature on the measurement and explanation of legislative representation, there has been little systematic and comparative work on *effective representation* in policy making" (2000: 97). As a matter of fact, we have shown that the effect of parliamentary representation over the levels of ethnic conflict depends on the strength of the legislature relative to the executive. The ameliorative effect of parliamentary representation over conflict is stronger in those legislatures where the ethnic group has effective influence over decision making and, therefore, less need for extra-institutional action strategies. According to our results, the ethnic groups of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union have more chances to influence policy making in parliamentary systems than in (semi)presidential ones. Therefore, parliamentary representation as an instrument to reduce ethnic conflict is more effective in parliamentary systems. However, this need not be the case elsewhere. The parliamentary-presidential distinction is a good proxy indicator for effective versus ineffective influence in this region. Most likely, it could not be used as such in other countries. Westminster-type parliamentarism certainly does not allow for effective representation of minority parties in the assembly. US-type presidentialism, on the other hand, gives presidents much less legislative powers than post-communist (semi)presidential systems do and has a real separation of powers between the legislative and the executive when compared to post-Communist (semi)presidential regimes.

Effective influence over decision-making processes depends greatly on the internal organization of the legislative assembly. The chances individual legislators have to influence the agenda setting and to have a say in decision making depends upon the legislative rights granted to them by the internal rules of their assembly. Hence, "legislative organization affects the structure of the decision-making process and the weight of legislators in policy decisions" (Cheibub and Limongi 2002, p. 18). The same applies to parliamentary

political parties, not just to individual legislators. In Powell's words, "the nature of the committee system in the legislature and other special features of the policy process can involve various levels of decentralization and autonomy that enhance the possible bargaining power of each party" (Powell 2000, p. 97). However, the structure of the committee system and the internal rules of the assembly are not all that matters. It is also necessary to look at the political strength of the government. Representation in the assembly can be more or less effective in different periods, depending on whether the government is a majority or a minority one, a coalition or a single-party government.

This is an exploratory paper. In order to be able to extend the analysis to other countries and regions, it would be necessary to measure the degree of *effective representation* in policy making (to use Powell's expression) in a systematic comparative way. This should be done by looking at the internal rules and committee structure of each national assembly as well as at the political strength of each government.<sup>25</sup>

Finally, the process of democratization in itself influences outcomes. Most of the violent clashes involving an ethnic group and the state in our sample broke out during the early stages of the Communist regimes' collapse. During this period of regime collapse, institutions were changing, constitutions were being drafted, new distributions of political power were taking shape, outcomes were uncertain. Under these circumstances, ethnic minorities may believe that their interests are being threatened while, simultaneously, they have enhanced opportunities to fight politically to defend their interests. It is therefore difficult to disentangle the effect of parliamentary representation over ethnic conflict from the effects of democratization per se. We need to compare the new democracies of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union with old democracies in order to see whether there is a difference in the way that parliamentary representation moderates ethnic conflict.

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25 Powell himself proposes a way to measure effective representation that he then applies to several Western democracies (Powell 2000, p. 104). Harfst (2001) made an attempt to measure the power of the parliament relative to the executive in Eastern Europe. Although we are more interested in the effective representation of all political forces in parliament for the purpose of this research, we have replicated the regression analysis using Harfst's scores of parliamentary strength in Eastern Europe. These scores correlate highly with our parliamentary/(semi)presidential dichotomy. The regression results are similar, emphasizing even more the relevance of the interaction term and rendering irrelevant the percentage of seats and the parliamentary/(semi)presidential dichotomy variables outside the interaction. The other coefficients remain the same. (Harfst's analysis, however, does not provide scores for all the countries in our dataset).

**Annex 1: Average Percentage of Seats and Protest and Rebellion Scores**

Country	Minority	Size (% over total pop.)	Average % seats (1990-2000)	Average protest (1990-98)	Average rebellion (1990-98)
Albania	Greek	3.97	2.02	1.6	0.2
Bulgaria	Turks	8.73	7.49	2.3	0
	Roma	7.41	0	1.2	0
Croatia	Serbs	8.35	4.73	1.4	4.7
	Roma	2.78	0	1.0	0
Czech Republic	Roma	2.30	0.62	1.6	0
	Slovaks	15.70	0	1.3	0
Estonia	Russians	29.85	9.39	2.8	0
Georgia	Abkhazians	1.73	0 (Boycott)	2.2	3.7
	Adzhars	5.80	6.94	0.9	0
	Ossetians	3.20	0 (Boycott)	2.3	2.9
	Russians	4.79	0	2.4	3.2
Hungary	Roma	5.66	0	1.8	0
Latvia	Russians	34.03	0	2.2	0
Lithuania	Poles	7.00	1.42	1.7	0
	Russians	8.78	1.06	1.7	0.1
Macedonia	Albanians	16.00	18.29	2.4	0.6
	Serbs	3.54	0	1.9	0
	Roma	8.78	0.83	0	0
Moldova	Gagauz	3.50	2.53	2.1	2.0
	Slavs	26.78	0 (Boycott)	2.1	3.3
Romania	Hungarians	8.44	7.77	2.6	0
	Roma	7.80	0.28	1.6	0
Russia	Chechens	0.46	0	2.6	3.8
	Tartars	3.16	0	2.0	0
	Karachay	0.08	0	1.4	0
	Roma	0.15	0	0	0
	Avars	0.36	0	1.3	0.3
	Ingush	0.14	0	2.4	0.9
	Lezgins	1.00	0	2.9	0
	Buryats	0.24	0	1.3	0
	Kumyks	0.17	0	2.2	0
	Tuvinians	0.14	0	1.0	0
	Yakut	0.24	0	1.4	0
Slovakia	Hungarians	7.75	10.22	2.4	0
	Roma	8.96	0	1.6	0
Ukraine	Russians	21.48	27.16	1.3	0
	Crimean Tartars	0.50	0	2.6	0
	Crimean Russians	3.29	0 (Boycott)	2.3	0
Yugoslavia	Kosovo Albanians	11.14	0 (Boycott)	3.8	1.1
	Hungarians	5.82	3.39	2.6	0
	Sandzak Muslims	1.84	0.76	2.6	0
	Roma	2.78	0	0.4	0
	Croats	1.32	0 (Boycott)	1.1	0

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