

# Conflict and Democratic Preferences\*

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## Abstract

This paper examines how exposure to conflict events influences individuals' democratic preferences, focusing on support for democracy in general and perceptions of governance within one's own country. We account for the moderating role of ethnicity—specifically, whether an individual belongs to an ethnic group that has access to state power. Using a rich data set that spans 20 years and more than 30 African countries, we exploit the timing of conflict events relative to survey interviews to identify causal effects. Our findings show that conflict exposure increases support for democracy on average, but its effects vary by ethnicity and regime type. In autocracies, violence strengthens pro-democratic views, and also improves perceptions of democracy among out-group members. In democracies, the exposure to protests has stronger effects. Violence also increases trust in ruling institutions in autocratic regimes, an effect that is absent in democratic settings.

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# 1 Introduction

Conflict, whether violent or nonviolent, challenges governance and societal cohesion while shaping political attitudes. How do individuals adjust their democratic preferences when exposed to conflict? And how does ethnicity influence these responses? These questions are important given global trends of political polarization and democratic backsliding, and particularly relevant in Africa, a continent experiencing democratic recession, persistent conflict, and rapid demographic change. Our paper contributes to a better understanding of the formation of democratic preferences, particularly in ethnically diverse and polarized societies.

This paper examines how conflict exposure affects individuals’ democratic preferences—support for democracy in general, and perceptions of governance within their country. It also investigates how ethnicity and representation in the government influence these effects. We provide new causal evidence of how exposure to conflict events impacts individuals’ democratic views, conditional on whether an individual’s ethnic group has access to state power. Previous research on conflict, ethnicity, and political behavior presents mixed findings (e.g., Blattman 2009; Rozenas et al. 2017; Bautista et al. 2023). Our study provides new insights into how external events influence individuals’ democratic views.

We use a rich dataset on conflict events, individuals’ democratic preferences, and ethnicity for more than 30 African countries and spanning over 20 years. The focus on Africa is important for many reasons: Commitment to democracy varies between countries and within countries over time (M’Cormack-Hale and Zupork Dome 2022; Mattes and Bratton 2016), and the continent is considered to be part of a global democratic recession (Diamond 2015; Boese et al. 2022). Simultaneously, the past two decades are marked by increasing levels of conflict (Carter and Straus 2019; Cilliers 2016). These trends raise concerns about the democratic process and the overall health and sustainability of democratic systems in the region. Many countries in Africa have some of the fastest-growing and youngest populations (Stanley 2023) and are among the fastest-growing economies in the world (Carnegie 2024). Understanding the formation of democratic preferences in the region is therefore crucial.

To overcome the endogeneity of conflict occurrence and local characteristics, we take advantage of the timing of survey fieldwork with respect to the timing of conflict events. The timing of an individual’s interview is considered conditionally exogenous to the timing of a conflict event in the individual’s region. We compare individuals who were interviewed shortly before a conflict event in the region to individuals in the same region interviewed shortly after the event. We examine the impact of conflict on individuals’ democratic preferences in general—preference for democracy above other forms of governance—and views on their own country’s governance—perception of how democratic their country is. We examine the impacts of violent events and demonstration events separately. Furthermore, we consider the effect of conflict on democratic views conditional on a person’s ethnic in-group or out-group status, as well as on the regime type.

Conceptually, we consider exposure to a conflict event as a shock to individuals’ views of government. Occurrence of a conflict event is considered as a signal of the quality of government, related

for instance to the government’s ability to provide safety. Conflict is likely to have a differential impact depending on a person’s position in society. A person that is part of the in-group—an ethnic group that has access to state power—may have easier access to benefits such as material and non-material goods and better social standing (Horowitz 1993; Miguel and Gugerty 2005). Crises and conflicts may therefore influence these groups differently. Similarly, depending on the current regime, individuals may have different expectations about whether a more democratic government would be better at providing safety.

First, our findings show that exposure to conflict events on average has a positive impact on support for democracy, with exposure to violent events and demonstration events causing similar effects. Second, we find no average effects on perceptions of governance within one’s country. These average effects mask significant heterogeneity. The impact of conflict exposure depends on an individual’s in-group status—specifically, whether one belongs to an ethnic group whose representatives have meaningful access to state power. Our results reveal that exposure to violence significantly decreases the perceived extent of democracy among out-group members, while no effect is observed among in-group members.

To explore the mechanisms, we examine how conflict exposure influences individuals’ trust in institutions. On average, violence tends to increase trust in political institutions, especially in the president and the ruling party, i.e., those holding the most political power. In contrast, exposure to protests decreases trust in political institutions. This finding is consistent with protest exposure increasing the salience of societal grievances and institutional shortcomings, and thereby eroding trust.

These findings are also partly consistent with the rally-around-the-flag phenomenon, where external threats increase support for the current government. The positive effect on the perceived extent of democracy is particularly pronounced among out-group members, suggesting convergence of views and increased cohesion. However, our results regarding trust in institutions, conditional on in-group status, point to deepening polarization. Although conflict exposure increases trust in the ruling government among in-group members, trust among out-group members tends to decrease.

Furthermore, we investigate the effects of conflict exposure by regime type, splitting our sample into autocratic and democratic countries. Our findings reveal substantial variation depending on the type of regime. In more autocratic settings, exposure to both violent and protest events increases democratic support and perceived extent of democracy, particularly among out-group members. In contrast, in more democratic settings, exposure to violence does not significantly affect democratic views. However, protest exposure increases democratic support among out-group members but at the same time decreases the perceived extent of democracy. Finally, we find that the positive impact of conflict on trust in ruling political institutions is driven by autocratic regimes. In an autocratic setting, violence appears to increase support for those in power, consistent with a rally-around-the-flag effect, while this effect is absent in more democratic countries.

This paper contributes to research on democratic preferences, conflict, and ethnicity. First, existing research that studies how conflict influences political behavior and preferences documents

conflicting results. While fear of violence or experiences of it have been shown to deter political participation and lead to political disengagement (Rozenas and Zhukov 2019; García-Ponce et al. 2021), there is also evidence that exposure to violence can foster resistance and fuel a desire for change. Consequently, violence can also increase political participation and the demand for democracy (Blattman 2009; Rozenas et al. 2017; Bautista et al. 2023). Another strand of the literature examines how terrorism and other major crime events influence political views (Davis and Silver 2004; Rehman and Vanin 2017; Garcia-Montoya et al. 2022; Giavazzi et al. 2024). A recent meta-analysis of the literature shows that while the effects of terrorism vary substantially, on average such events are associated with increased support and trust in the government, i.e., rally effects, support for national security and conservative politics, as well as increased hostility towards out-groups, such as immigrants and refugees (Godefroidt 2023).

We contribute to this body of research by providing broad, cross-national causal evidence on the effects of exposure to violent conflict and protests. We study effects across contexts, focusing on individuals’ views on democracy, both in general and within their own country. With our identification strategy, we provide causal evidence regarding the sign and size of the effects of both violent and nonviolent events. We show that conflict affects preferences, on average increasing support for democracy, but that the effects vary by social group and differ substantially between more democratic and autocratic settings.

We also contribute to the literature examining the influence of ethnic divisions on political attitudes and development (see, e.g., Horowitz 1993; Collier 1998; Easterly 2001; Blimes 2006; Desmet et al. 2020; Mueller et al. 2022; Laurent-Lucchetti et al. 2024). When ethnicity and conflict are studied together, it is typically through the lens of ethnic violence and its influence on political participation and preferences for ethnic parties (e.g., Bezemer and Jong-A-Pin 2013; Lupu and Peisakhin 2017; Hadzic et al. 2020). Related literature also examines how ethnic polarization influences conflict (see, e.g., Montalvo and Reynal-Querol 2005; Esteban et al. 2012). In this study, we consider ethnicity as a moderating factor in shaping individuals’ views on the current government and their democratic preferences. Our results show that a person’s identity and position in society is of crucial importance.

Lastly, we contribute to the literature on ethnicity and individuals’ political attitudes. We build upon studies examining how grievances and ethnic polarization are affected by conflict and changing the political landscape (discussed in, e.g., Fearon and Laitin 2003). We also relate to the literature on in-group bias and political participation (Horowitz 1993; Robalo et al. 2017). By accounting for the role of ethnic diversity in societies and the influence of one’s ethnicity, we take into account a key determinant of political instability, conflict, and the unequal distribution of resources. We provide new evidence of the implications that these dynamics have for democratic preferences and institutional trust.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows. Section 2 describes the data. Section 3 describes the empirical strategy. Section 4 presents our findings. Section 5 concludes.

## 2 Data

### 2.1 Afrobarometer

We measure democratic preferences—individuals’ subjective views on governance both in one’s country and in general—using data from the Afrobarometer.<sup>1</sup> The Afrobarometer data is based on personal interviews with randomly selected and nationally representative samples. We use data from rounds 2–8, which covers up to 38 countries and years 2002–2021, with varying country-year coverage.<sup>2</sup> The surveys in each country are conducted with a national partner responsible for data collection. Field work period in one country is about four weeks, while one round is conducted in 12 to 24 months. The sample sizes range from 1200 to 2400 respondents per country.

To be included in Afrobarometer, a country must be sufficiently open so that individuals can respond freely, and the security situation must be such that all sampling areas can be reached. The most closed and authoritarian regimes are therefore excluded. Since sample locations are randomly selected and interviews are conducted face-to-face, significant effort is invested in planning the field work to ensure reaching very remote locations. Each country team develops a field work deployment plan, which includes scheduling and planning the route for sampling areas in advance (Afrobarometer 2022).<sup>3</sup>

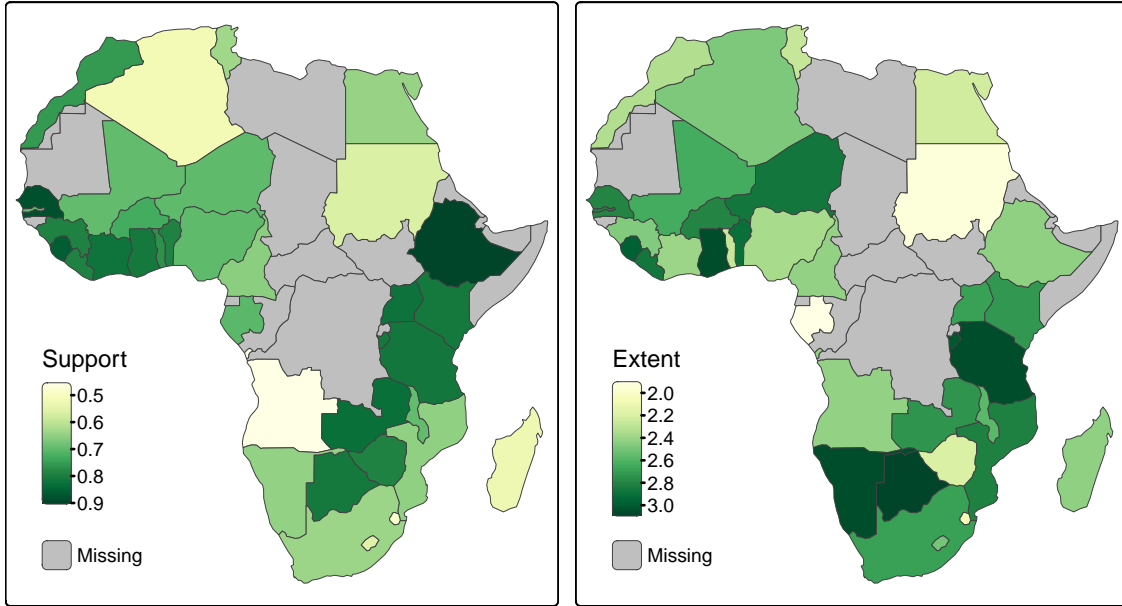
Our main outcomes are based on the following questions:

- Support for democracy: “Which of these three statements is closest to your own opinion?”
  - (1) Democracy is preferable to any other kind of government
  - (2) In some circumstances, a non-democratic government can be preferable
  - (3) For someone like me, it doesn’t matter what kind of government we have
- Extent of democracy: “In your opinion, how much of a democracy is [your country] today?”
  - (1) Not a democracy
  - (2) A democracy, with major problems
  - (3) A democracy, but with minor problems
  - (4) A full democracy

Since the response categories in the first question have ambiguous ordering, we use a binary variable that takes value one if the response is that democracy is preferable to any other kind of government, and zero otherwise. Support for democracy captures individuals’ views on governance in general, while extent of democracy captures individuals’ views on governance within their own country.

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1. While there are studies on support for democracy, most rely on the World Values Survey, which has limitations highlighted by Panel (2019). Related studies using Afrobarometer data often utilize only one or two rounds of data (e.g., Rohner et al. 2013; Sangnier and Zylberberg 2017) or focus on a single country, limiting their ability to observe patterns over time and across countries. By using multiple rounds of Afrobarometer data, we explore citizens’ attitudes towards democracy across the continent over a long period of time.
  2. The country coverage has grown from 12 countries in Round one to 34 countries in Round eight. We exclude Round 1 as the variables and response categories differ significantly from later rounds.
  3. This plan also includes matching interviewers’ language skills to languages spoken in specific sampling areas, organizing transport, accommodation, and meals.

Figure 1: Support for democracy and perceived extent of democracy



*Notes:* The figure shows the average value of support for democracy (left), which is a binary variable, and perceived extent of democracy (right), which takes values 1–4, in Afrobarometer Rounds 2–8. Data source: Afrobarometer.

Figure 1 shows the average values of support for democracy and extent of democracy by country across survey rounds.

Detailed information and descriptive statistics for these and further survey questions used to examine democratic preferences are provided in Appendix A. Figure A.1 shows the share of respondents indicating each response category in the two questions on democracy. While a persistent majority believes that democracy is preferable to other forms of government, an increasing share of people perceive their country as either not a democracy or a democracy with problems. Figure A.2 shows responses to statements about authoritarian forms of government. Consistent with support for democracy, majority of respondents disapprove of authoritarian forms of government.

## 2.2 Ethnic Power Relations (EPR)

We use the data on Ethnic Power Relations (EPR) (Vogt et al. 2015) to determine an individuals' membership in a specific ethnic power group. We link the classification of ethnic power groups to the ethnicity reported in the Afrobarometer. The EPR data identifies ethnic groups that are politically relevant in a country, irrespective of the size of the group.<sup>4</sup> The groups are categorized based on their level of access to central state power through representatives of the ethnic group. There are four categories: monopoly rule and dominance (when the group rules alone), being a senior

4. A group is politically relevant if “at least one significant political actor claims to represent the interests of that group in the national political arena or if group members are systematically and intentionally discriminated against in the domain of public politics” (Vogt et al. 2015).

or junior partner (when the group shares power), or being discriminated against, self-excluded, or otherwise powerless. The remaining category, “other”, includes groups that have become irrelevant after previously holding power or are in a situation of state collapse, where no authority is recognized and there is a total disintegration of institutions.

There are 15 countries with overlap between the ethnicities recorded by the Afrobarometer and the EPR. Consequently, the sample used when considering ethnicity is smaller than the full sample used in other parts of the analysis. To analyze the effects of conflict exposure depending on an ethnic group’s access to power, we create a binary variable that is equal to one if the group is represented in government (rules alone or shares power) and zero if the group is not represented (powerless or irrelevant). This binary variable captures individuals’ membership in an ethnic in-group or out-group. Since the powerless group (the out-group) is relatively small compared to the in-group, we also analyze differences between the groups represented in government; the dominant group (dominant or senior partner) and the junior partner (see Appendix D). Summary statistics on the different groups are shown in Table A.2.

### 2.3 Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED)

Our conflict data comes from ACLED (Raleigh et al. 2010).<sup>5</sup> It is a large event-based dataset that provides precise descriptions, locations and the timing of both violent and non-violent events.<sup>6</sup> We match respondents from the Afrobarometer by region with conflict events. In our heterogeneity analysis, we consider both different event types and whether the state was involved in the event.

The events in ACLED are categorized as violent events, which include battles, explosions/remote violence, and violence against civilians, and demonstrations (hereafter referred to as demonstration or protest events), which include protests and riots.<sup>7</sup> The data is mostly based on media sources and supplemented with reports from NGOs, international organizations, selected social media accounts and through partnerships with local conflict observatories. Data are collected manually (ACLED 2019). Figure 2 shows the average yearly number of conflict events in our sample countries. In addition, Figure A.3 shows the average number of different types of conflict events. The graphs show a clear increasing trend in the number of conflict events on the continent.

Figure 3 maps the average population-weighted number of conflict events in our sample countries during 2002–2021. The graph shows that although conflict is common across the continent, it is heavily concentrated in certain countries. In our sample, violent conflict is most common in Nigeria and Sudan. Demonstration events occur most frequently in South Africa, Algeria, Tunisia, and

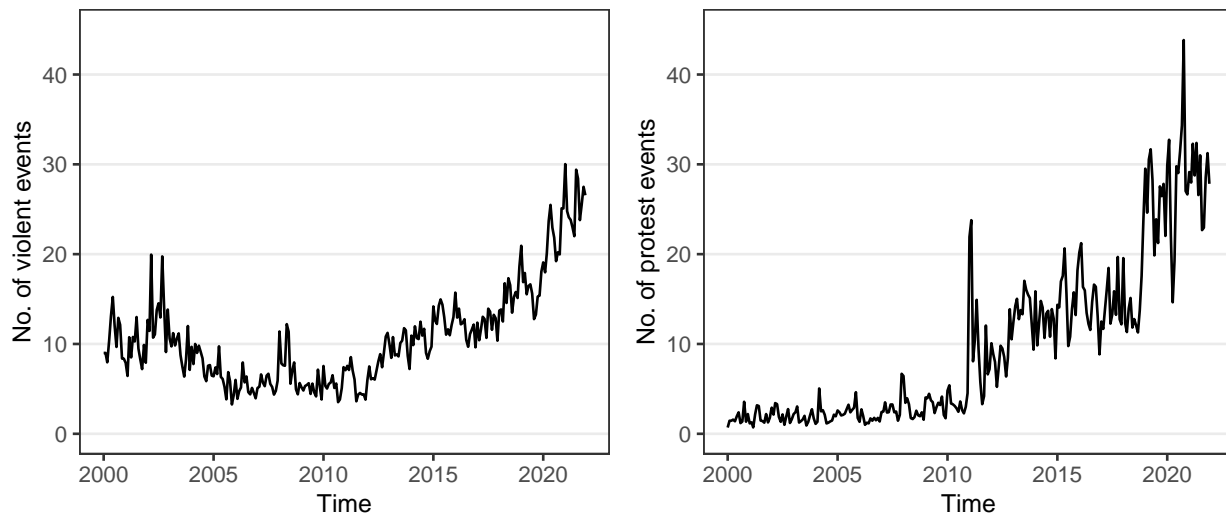
5. Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED); <https://acleddata.com>

6. It is important to note that we abstract from focusing on ethnic violence as well as electoral violence (considered in, e.g., Laakso 2007; Collier and Vicente 2014; Shenga and Pereira 2019; Bekoe and Burchard 2017). As shown by Canetti (2016), any type of conflict may influence political attitudes and behavior. We examine a broad range of conflict types, including non-violent conflict events such as protests. In particular, our results show stark differences in the effects of exposure to violent or non-violent events, highlighting the importance of considering both types of conflict.

7. Riots include violent demonstrations and mob violence. Although riots may involve violence, we follow the general classification of ACLED and treat them as demonstration events.



Figure 2: Average monthly number of violent events (left) and protest events (right) across countries. Data source: ACLED



*Notes:* The figure shows the monthly average number of events across all countries included in the Afrobarometer Rounds 2–8. Violent events: battles, explosions/remote violence, violence against civilians. Protest events: protests, riots.

Nigeria.

## 2.4 Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem)

Data on regime types comes from V-Dem (Coppedge et al. 2024). V-Dem provides measures on the extent of democracy in countries based on expert reports. The project provides information on five aggregated measures: electoral, liberal, participatory, deliberative, and egalitarian democracy. It also classifies countries into democracies and autocracies based on the Regimes of the World (RoW) measure (Lührmann et al. 2018). The basic regime types are closed autocracy, electoral autocracy, electoral democracy, and liberal democracy. The RoW measure with ambiguous cases also identifies countries close to thresholds and ranges from 0: closed autocracy to 9: liberal democracy. Despite holding elections, most African countries are considered to be either (electoral) autocracies or electoral democracies with limited civil liberties or lacking constraints on the executive. Figure A.4 in the appendix illustrates the average values of the regime score between 2002 and 2021.

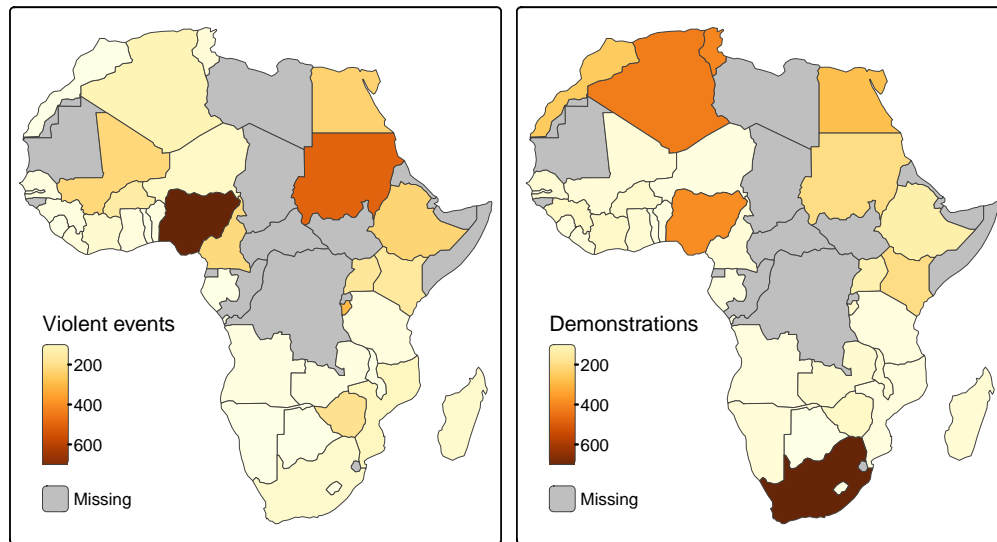
A summary of the variables used in this study can be found in Table A.1 in the appendix.

## 2.5 First Look at the Data

To get an impression of the underlying conditional correlations between conflict exposure and views on democracy and types of rule, we estimate a two-way fixed effects (TWFE) model. Specifically, we estimate the correlation between number of conflict events in individual’s country in the previous year on democratic views. First, as shown in Table B.1, past protest events are not significantly



Figure 3: Average number of violent events (left) and demonstration events (right) in 2002–2021. Data source: ACLED



*Notes:* The figure shows the average yearly number of conflict events per 1000 inhabitants in our sample period (2002–2021) in countries included in the Afrobarometer. Violent events: battles, explosions/remote violence, violence against civilians. Demonstration events: protests, riots.

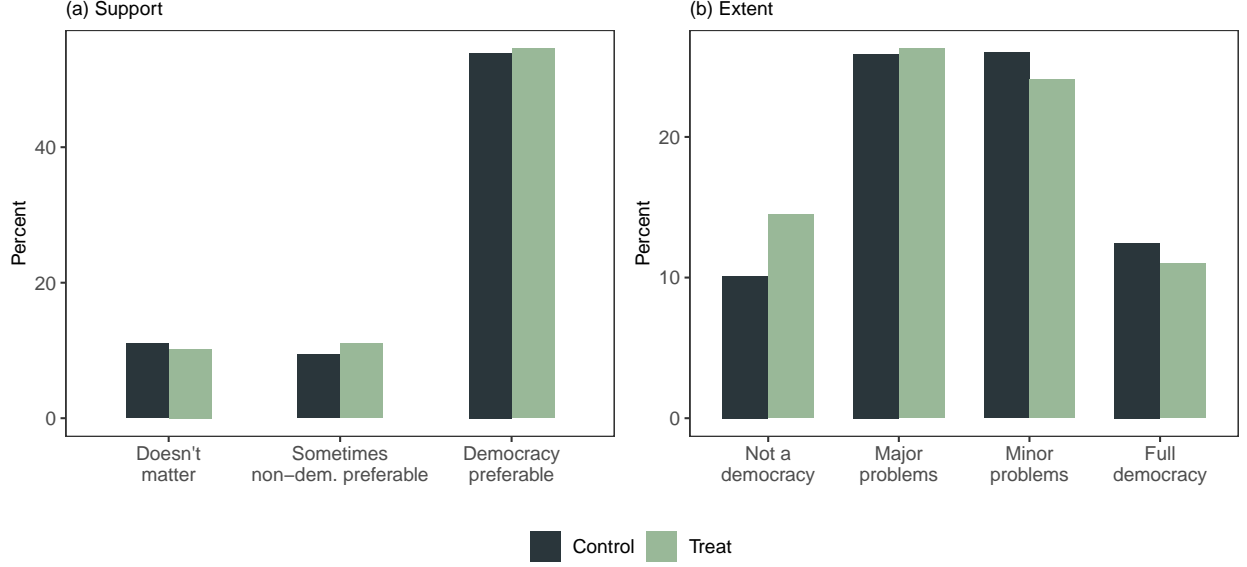
associated with democratic views. Second, democracy-related outcomes are positively correlated with lagged battles and negatively correlated with violence against civilians. Battles typically involve state forces and either rebel groups or militias, which might make civilians view the state in a more positive light.<sup>8</sup> We do not find that the measures for approval of one-party, military, or one-man rule are significantly correlated with past conflict (Table B.2).

### 3 Empirical strategy

We estimate how exposure to conflict events influences individuals’ democratic preferences. To establish the direction of causality, we take advantage of the timing of survey collection and the occurrences of violent events (for a similar approach, see e.g., Clark et al. 2020; Giani and Méon 2021). Although the occurrence of conflict is not random, the timing of when an individual is interviewed is considered conditionally exogenous to the timing of a conflict event in the individual’s region. We compare individuals who were interviewed shortly before a conflict event in their region, to individuals in the same region interviewed shortly after the event. Given that we have the exact timing of when the survey was conducted, as well as when an event took place, we can estimate the

8. Rebel groups are defined as “political organizations whose goal is to counter an established national governing regime by violent acts”, while political militias are defined as “a more diverse set of violent actors, who are often created for a specific purpose or during a specific time period and for the furtherance of a political purpose by violence” (ACLED 2019, p. 21). Identity militias are defined as “armed and violent groups organized around a collective, common feature including community, ethnicity, region, religion or, in exceptional cases, livelihood” (p. 21).

Figure 4: Conflict exposure and democratic views



*Notes:* The figure presents share of respondents indicating a specific response category by conflict exposure. (a) Support for democracy: “Which of these three statements is closest to your own opinion?”; (b) Extent of democracy: “In your opinion, how much of a democracy is [your country] today”. Adjusted with the multi-country weighting factor. Treat takes value one if an individual was interviewed within 7 days after an event of violent conflict in their region, and zero if an individual was interviewed within 7 days before such an event.

effect of being exposed to conflict on individuals’ attitudes towards democracy.

We estimate the following regression model

$$y_{irt} = \beta T_{irt} + \mathbf{x}_i' \boldsymbol{\delta} + \alpha_{r,y(t)} + \lambda_t + \varepsilon_{irt} \quad (1)$$

where  $y_{it}$  is individual  $i$ ’s stated support for democracy in region  $r$  and time  $t$ ,  $T_{irt}$  is the treatment variable,  $\mathbf{x}_i$  is a set of individual level controls,  $\alpha_{r,y(t)}$  are region $\times$ survey-round fixed effects, and  $\lambda_t$  are month-year fixed effects. The inclusion of fixed effects means that we are comparing individuals within the same region and survey round. We also extend the regression model to include an interaction effect with a dummy that captures whether someone is a member of the ethnic in-group or out-group.

In our baseline analysis, we define the treatment as  $T_{irt} = 1$  if individual  $i$  was exposed to conflict in region  $r$  within seven days before being surveyed, and zero if the individual was interviewed within seven days before a conflict event. We also explore different treatment definitions with respect to the time window around exposure to conflict in one’s region (see Section C). We consider violent events and demonstration events (referred to as protest exposure) separately. Standard errors are clustered at country level to allow for within country spatial correlation of conflict.

Figure 4 presents distributions of our main outcome variables, support for democracy and perceived extent of democracy, in the treatment and control groups. Treatment is defined based on

exposure to an event of violent conflict within a seven-day period. The graph shows that support for democracy, i.e., individuals' views on governance in general, is on average very similar in the treated group than in the control group. The perceived extent of democracy is on average lower among individuals exposed to conflict.

### 3.1 Validity

The identifying assumption is that within a region and within a relatively short period of time, timing of the interview is as-good-as-random with respect to the timing of conflict events. The main threat to identification is that conflict influences the survey collection and the timing of who is interviewed when. The Afrobarometer country teams make detailed fieldwork deployment plans that include a route plan, planning for transportation and hiring vehicles, booking rest houses, and so on. A key motivation for detailed plans is to match the language skills of the interviewees with the languages spoken in the areas to be visited (Afrobarometer 2017).

Table E.1 presents the balance of pre-treatment covariates and pre-treatment conflict events, with respect to exposure to violent events. Table E.2 shows the balance with respect to protest exposure. Each variable is regressed on the treatment dummy, which takes value one if the individual  $i$  was exposed to a conflict event within region  $r$  and within seven days before being surveyed, and zero if the individual is interviewed seven days before a conflict event. Note that the resulting sample is considerably smaller than the full Afrobarometer data. There are somewhat more treated than control observations, which is due to conflict events being relatively frequent. Figure A.5 shows the number of treated and control observations in each round. In general, the individuals interviewed shortly before or after a conflict event in their region are very similar to each other. There are some differences when considering protest exposure, with demonstration events being more likely in urban areas, where people are slightly more educated and where protest events are more likely to reoccur. In the following analysis, we include controls for individual characteristics, gender, age, education, employment, and for urban areas. Importantly, either the number of unsuccessful calls, or the number of calls made to the home where the interview took place, do not differ between those interviewed before or after a conflict event, suggesting that individuals were not less likely to participate after conflict exposure.

## 4 Results

### 4.1 Effects of Conflict Exposure

We examine the impact of conflict exposure on individuals' democratic views, both in general and regarding governance within their country. We compare individuals who were interviewed shortly after a conflict event in their region to those interviewed shortly before it. Table 1 presents the regression results. The outcome in columns (1)-(3) is support for democracy in general, and in columns (4)-(6) perceived extent of democracy within one's country. All specifications include controls for individual characteristics: gender, age, age squared, education, employment status, and

Table 1: Effect of conflict exposure on democratic views

	Support for democracy		Extent of democracy	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Violence	0.022** (0.010)		0.043 (0.030)	
Protest		0.023** (0.010)		-0.001 (0.019)
N	24883	42694	24467	42248
R <sup>2</sup>	0.11	0.11	0.20	0.19
Mean(Y)	0.73	0.72	2.49	2.52
Region-Round FEs	X	X	X	X
Month-Year FEs	X	X	X	X
Controls	X	X	X	X

\*\*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \* $p < 0.1$ . Standard errors adjusted for clustering at country level. All specifications use the multi-country weighting factor from the Afrobarometer. The dependent variable in columns (1)-(2) is a dummy that takes value one if the interviewee indicated that democracy is preferable to any other kind of government. The dependent variable in columns (3)-(4) is perceived extent of democracy, which takes values 1–4. Violence (Protest) is a dummy that takes value one if a violent (protest) event occurred in the region within a week before the individual was interviewed. Controls include gender, age, age squared, education, employment, and a dummy for urban.

a dummy for urban location. All specifications also control for region-round fixed effects and month-year fixed effects. We define exposure based on time to an event taking place in one’s region: An individual is treated if a conflict event occurred in her region within seven days before the individual was interviewed. We examine the impacts of violent events (first row) and demonstration events (second row) separately.<sup>9</sup>

Estimates show that exposure to conflict has a positive impact on support for democracy. The point estimates indicate that on average, a conflict event in one’s region increases the probability of support for democracy above other forms of governance by 2 percentage points. Exposure to violent events and exposure to protests have very similar impacts. Individuals’ perceptions of governance in their own country are not significantly affected by conflict exposure.

Appendix Table E.3 shows results regarding approval of authoritarian forms of governance; one-party rule, military rule, and one-man rule. Although we do not find that conflict exposure has a systematic effect on approval of authoritarian governance, exposure to protests has a significant negative effect on support for military rule. The point estimates of protest exposure are negative in the two other models, but not statistically significant. The point estimates also suggestive of violence exposure having a positive effect on the approval of military rule.

9. As demonstration events are more common than violent events, the resulting sample when using protest exposure as treatment is larger.

Table 2: Effect of conflict exposure on democratic views by in-group status

	Support for democracy		Extent of democracy	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Violence	0.024*** (0.007)		0.130*** (0.040)	
Violence×In-group	0.006 (0.011)		-0.187** (0.071)	
Protest		0.080* (0.044)		-0.057 (0.071)
Protest×In-group		-0.067 (0.051)		0.017 (0.063)
In-group	0.006 (0.018)	0.082** (0.035)	0.171* (0.084)	0.096 (0.057)
N	5845	10986	5749	10857
R <sup>2</sup>	0.09	0.10	0.16	0.17
Mean(Y)	0.76	0.76	2.65	2.67
Region-Round FEs	X	X	X	X
Month-Year FEs	X	X	X	X
Controls	X	X	X	X

\*\*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \* $p < 0.1$ . Standard errors adjusted for clustering at country level. All specifications use the multi-country weighting factor from the Afrobarometer. The dependent variable in columns (1)-(2) is a dummy that takes value one if the interviewee indicated that democracy is preferable to any other kind of government. The dependent variable in columns (3)-(4) is perceived extent of democracy, which takes values 1–4. Violence (Protest) is a dummy that takes value one if a violent (protest) event occurred in the region within a week before the individual was interviewed. Controls include gender, age, age squared, education, employment, and a dummy for urban.

## 4.2 Effects of Conflict Exposure by Ethnic In-Group Status

We consider ethnicity as a moderating factor in shaping individuals’ views on the current government and their democratic preferences, and examine how an individuals ethnic in-group status—belonging to an ethnic group whose representatives have meaningful access to state power—conditions the effect of conflict exposure. As in-group status may influence individuals’ social standing and access to benefits and other resources (Horowitz 1993), exposure to conflict may shape democratic views differently among in-group and out-group members. We define in-group status based on EPR measures of power access (Vogt et al. 2015). Individuals belonging to ethnic groups that either rule alone or share power are defined as in-group, while individuals belonging to ethnic groups without access to state power are defined as out-group. Due to limited overlap of ethnicities listed per country in the Afrobarometer and the EPR, this analysis is conducted using a subsample of the data.

The results are presented in Table 2. The first two columns show the estimates on support for democracy. The coefficients on Violence and Protest show estimates of conflict exposure for the

ethnic out-group, and the interaction terms test for differences between in-group and out-group. The point estimate on violence is very similar to the baseline effect, and we find no difference between the out-group and in-group. The effect of protest exposure is larger for the out-group than in the baseline, and the interaction term suggests that the effect is smaller for the in-group, although the estimate lacks statistical significance. It is noteworthy that the baseline level of democratic support is higher among the in-group than the out-group. Taken together, this indicates that exposure to conflict —be it violence or protests —increases the support for democracy as a form of governance. This is consistent with the interpretation that exposure to a crisis increases citizens’ perception of a democracy’s ability to either deter conflict or effectively and fairly handle such situations.

Columns (3) and (4) show estimates on the perceived extent of democracy. The impact of exposure to violence strongly depends on individuals’ in-group status. Exposure to violence increases how democratic individuals in out-group perceive their country to be, while the effect on the in-group is significantly different and negative. The magnitude of the interaction term suggests that the perceptions among in-group decrease. The perceived level of democracy is higher among in-group members in the baseline, but exposure to violence has opposite effects on the two groups. These opposite effects cancel out when examining the average effect (Table 1). Our findings demonstrate that the impact of conflict on individuals’ views on governance within their own country crucially depends on the individuals’ group identity.

A potential explanation for these findings is the ‘rally round the flag’ phenomenon: In times of crises, individuals turn to the government to provide stability and safety (Chatagnier 2012). Simultaneously, the rally itself might boost the perceptions a group holds about the government (Hetherington and Nelson 2003). While the in-group might barely shift their views on governance within their country after being exposed to violence, there is a more pronounced positive effect for the out-group, who might arguably have been less trusting or supportive of the government initially. Hence what might be the underlying mechanism behind these results is a change in trust in institutions. We examine this in the next section.

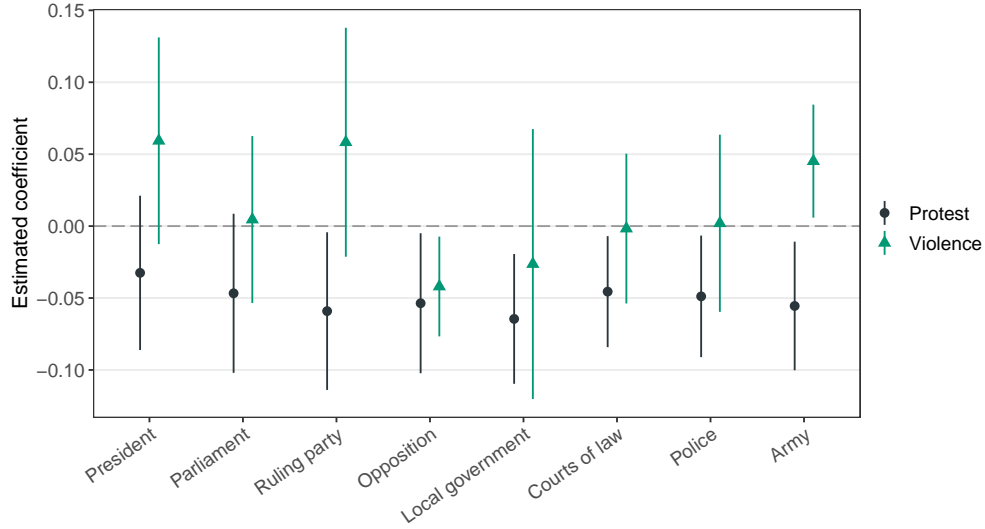
To further examine effects in different ethnic power groups, we also estimate our model using a categorical ethnicity variable with three categories: Senior partners, junior partners, and powerless. These results are presented in Appendix D. This analysis confirms that the differences in responses are mainly driven by differential impact on the ethnic groups without access to state power, while effects are not significantly different between senior and junior partners.

### 4.3 Trust in Institutions

To better understand the mechanisms behind our findings, we examine how conflict exposure influences individuals’ trust in institutions<sup>10</sup>. Figure 5 presents our results. While most of the estimates remain imprecise, we can see a clear pattern of differences between exposure to violence and exposure to protests: Protest exposure decreases trust across the board, whereas violence tends to increase trust in ruling political institutions and the army, and decrease trust in the opposition (see

10. See Appendix A for details of the survey questions.

Figure 5: Effects of conflict exposure on trust in institutions



*Notes:* The figure presents estimates for the effect of conflict exposure on trust in institutions. Each dot represents an estimate from a separate regression. Individual controls, region-round FEs and month-year FEs included. Vertical bars represent 95 % confidence intervals. Light green triangles represent estimates of violence exposure, and dark green dots represent estimates of protest exposure.

also Appendix Table E.5).

We also examine the impacts on trust conditional on in-group status. Table 3 presents the estimates, showing that the effects of conflict exposure vary significantly depending on individuals' in-group status. First, we do not find that exposure to violent events significantly affects trust among the out-group, with the exception of decreasing trust in local government and increasing trust in army – effects which do not vary significantly between in-group and out-group. Among individuals in the in-group, exposure to violence has a significantly different effect from the out-group, increasing trust in president and decreasing trust in opposition. These findings are consistent with the rally-around-the-flag effect for the in-group. They also indicate deepening polarization. Those that might not support or feel represented by the government, i.e., the out-group, do not experience similar increase in trust, signaling potential alienation of this group during a crisis. These findings are also consistent with previous research showing that conflict exposure can strengthen ethnic identity (Rohner et al. 2013).

Second, protest exposure significantly decreases the out-group's trust in ruling politicians—namely, the ruling party, local government, and the president, although the effect on trust in the president is not statistically significant. Trust in the courts of law decreases, and the point estimates for trust in police and army are also negative. The effects differs for in-group members; the point estimates are of similar magnitudes but with opposite signs, suggesting no impact on their trust levels. These results are intuitive. Protests are a form of uprising or discontent in society,



Table 3: Effect of conflict exposure on trust in institutions by in-group status

	Trust in...							
	President (1)	Parliament (2)	Ruling party (3)	Opposition (4)	Local government (5)	Courts of law (6)	Police (7)	Army (8)
<i>Panel A: Violence</i>								
Violence	-0.030 (0.027)	-0.088* (0.042)	0.020 (0.016)	0.085 (0.101)	-0.062* (0.028)	0.007 (0.028)	0.032 (0.065)	0.063** (0.020)
Violence×In-group	0.111*** (0.025)	0.092 (0.056)	0.049 (0.043)	-0.206* (0.102)	0.000 (0.052)	0.006 (0.036)	-0.068 (0.091)	-0.093 (0.066)
In-group	0.038 (0.137)	0.035 (0.071)	0.170 (0.148)	-0.063 (0.193)	0.067 (0.049)	0.017 (0.036)	0.099 (0.074)	0.289*** (0.078)
N	6180	6105	6109	5976	6045	5993	6211	4488
R <sup>2</sup>	0.14	0.10	0.13	0.07	0.09	0.12	0.13	0.15
Mean(Y)	1.75	1.57	1.51	1.28	1.56	1.61	1.41	2.05
<i>Panel B: Protest</i>								
Protest	-0.097 (0.061)	-0.006 (0.086)	-0.123*** (0.037)	0.052 (0.120)	-0.150* (0.078)	-0.168*** (0.026)	-0.013 (0.038)	-0.064 (0.037)
Protest×In-group	0.089 (0.078)	0.000 (0.069)	0.126** (0.045)	-0.101 (0.110)	0.112 (0.074)	0.084*** (0.025)	-0.082 (0.058)	-0.016 (0.056)
In-group	0.113 (0.094)	-0.010 (0.125)	0.013 (0.092)	0.028 (0.176)	-0.094 (0.109)	-0.117** (0.045)	0.128* (0.060)	0.105 (0.076)
N	11617	11425	11511	11408	11167	11353	11700	10657
R <sup>2</sup>	0.23	0.13	0.20	0.09	0.11	0.13	0.20	0.20
Mean(Y)	1.72	1.46	1.44	1.24	1.39	1.64	1.44	2.01
Region-Round FEs	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Month-Year FEs	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Controls	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

\*\*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \* $p < 0.1$ . Standard errors adjusted for clustering at country level. All specifications use the multi-country weighting factor from the Afrobarometer. The dependent variable is trust in (1) president, (2) parliament, (3) ruling party, (4) opposition, (5) local government, (6) courts of law, (7) police, (8) army. The outcomes take values 0=Not at all, 1=A little bit, 2=A lot, 3=A very great deal. Violence (Protest) is a dummy that takes value one if a violent (protest) event occurred in the region within a week before the individual was interviewed. In-group is a dummy for belonging to an ethnic in-group. Controls include gender, age, age squared, education, employment, and a dummy for urban.

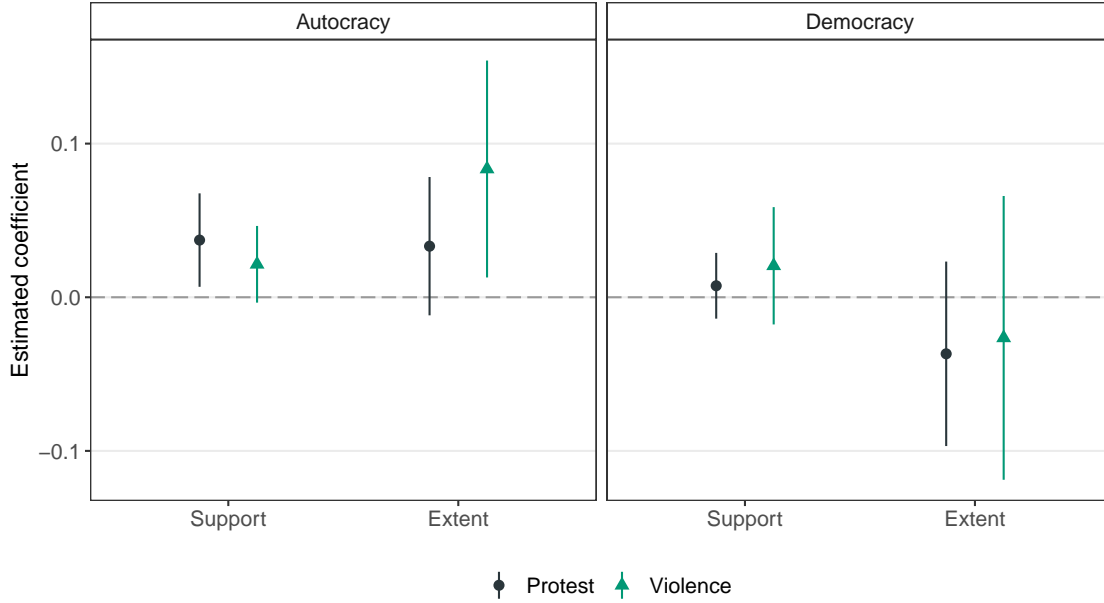
often directed at institutions in power. Exposure to protests can therefore increase the salience of such discontent, leading to lower levels of trust toward the ruling government, especially among the out-group members.

#### 4.4 Regime Type

We examine how the direction and intensity of the effects of conflict exposure vary depending on the regime type. The results on trust suggest that conflict exposure may deepen societal cleavages. This effect should be more pronounced under autocratic regimes, where the under-representation of out-groups may have greater consequences for access to public goods and distribution of resources.

Using the regime variable from V-Dem, we split the sample into autocratic and democratic countries. However, many countries classified as democratic exhibit non-democratic features, such as limited civil liberties. Similarly, countries designated as autocracies often display some democratic elements, such as holding elections, even if they offer little real chance of changing the government.

Figure 6: Effects of conflict exposure on democratic preferences by regime type



*Notes:* The figure presents estimates for the effect of conflict exposure on democratic preferences, separately in autocracies (left panel) and democracies (right panel). Each dot represents an estimate from a separate regression. Individual controls, region-round FEs and month-year FEs included. Vertical bars represent 95 % confidence intervals. Light green triangles represent estimates of violence exposure, and dark green dots represent estimates of protest exposure.

Even among autocratic countries, there is substantial variation in our outcome measures. It is worth noting that very few countries in our sample are classified as closed autocracies.<sup>11</sup> As shown in Figure 6, the average effects of conflict exposure differ substantially between more autocratic and more democratic countries. In autocracies, exposure to either violence or protests increases both support for democracy and the perceived extent of democracy. Conversely, in democratic countries, conflict exposure does not have a significant impact on democratic preferences, although the point estimates suggest that the perceived extent of democracy is negatively affected.

Table 4 presents estimates of conflict exposure on democratic preferences conditional on in-group status and separately for autocratic and democratic regimes. In autocratic regimes, exposure to violent events significantly increases democratic support, both among the out-group and even more among the in-group (column (1)). In contrast, exposure to protest increases democratic support only among in-group members. Exposure to violence increases the perceived extent of democracy among out-group members (column (3)). The coefficient on the interaction term has a similar magnitude but an opposite sign, indicating no impact on perceptions of in-group members.

In democratic countries, violent events do not significantly affect democratic support (column (5)) or perceptions of democracy (column (7)). Protest exposure, however, increases out-groups'

11. Only three countries, Egypt, Eswatini and Sudan, are classified as closed autocracies at any point while included in our sample. Figure A.4 illustrates countries' average regime scores.

Table 4: Effect of conflict exposure on democratic views: by regime type and in-group status

	Autocracy				Democracy			
	Support		Extent		Support		Extent	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Violence	0.028*** (0.006)		0.140*** (0.010)		-0.003 (0.021)		-0.070 (0.046)	
Violence×In-group	0.032*** (0.007)		-0.149** (0.049)		-0.034 (0.029)		-0.084 (0.087)	
Protest		0.015 (0.023)		0.063 (0.066)		0.221*** (0.057)		-0.294*** (0.036)
Protest×In-group		0.036** (0.015)		-0.028 (0.057)		-0.214** (0.067)		0.229*** (0.026)
In-group	0.011 (0.023)	0.038 (0.029)	0.073 (0.107)	0.057 (0.048)	-0.017 (0.021)	0.156*** (0.041)	0.268*** (0.021)	-0.002 (0.111)
N	3617	4017	3542	3971	2228	6969	2207	6886
R <sup>2</sup>	0.09	0.13	0.12	0.17	0.09	0.08	0.17	0.11
Mean(Y)	0.78	0.74	2.57	2.46	0.73	0.77	2.77	2.79
Region-Round FEs	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Month-Year FEs	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Controls	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

\*\*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \* $p < 0.1$ . Standard errors adjusted for clustering at country level. All specifications use the multi-country weighting factor from the Afrobarometer. The dependent variable in columns (1)-(2) and (5)-(6) is a dummy that takes value one if the interviewee indicated that democracy is preferable to any other kind of government. The dependent variable in columns (3)-(4) and (7)-(8) is perceived extent of democracy, which takes values 1–4. Violence (Protest) is a dummy that takes value one if a violent (protest) event occurred in the region within a week before the individual was interviewed. Controls include gender, age, age squared, education, employment, and a dummy for urban.

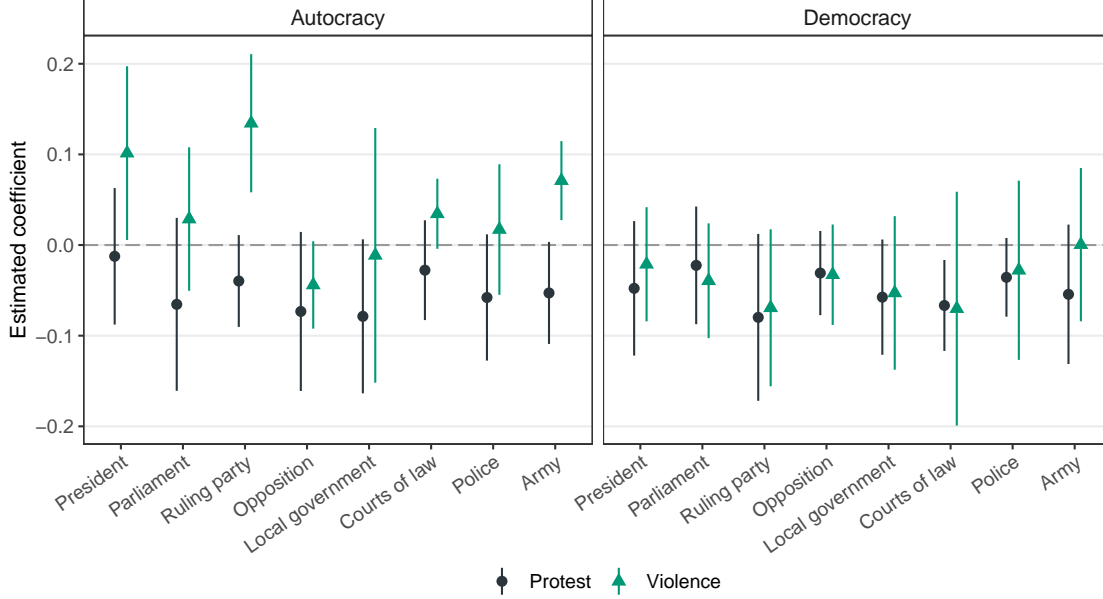
democratic support but has no effect on the in-group. At the same time, exposure to protest decreases the perceived extent of democracy among the out-group (column (8)).

The initially observed higher baseline level of support for democracy among the in-group (as in Table 1) seems to be driven by higher baseline support among in-group members in democracies (Table 4, column (6)). It is intuitive that those who see themselves represented in democracy are more supportive of that type of governance. Similarly, those who are part of the in-group in autocracies might benefit from having the regime in place.

As shown in Figure 7, the effects on trust also diverge between autocratic and democratic countries. In autocracies, exposure to violence generally increases trust in key political institutions, particularly in president, ruling party, and army, while trust in parliament, opposition, local government, and courts of law is not affected. This pattern suggests that violence may increase support for those in power, consistent with a rally-around-the-flag effect. However, exposure to protests appears to reduce trust across the board, although the estimates are imprecise. In democracies, the effects of conflict exposure on trust are less pronounced. Although not statistically significant, the estimates point towards both violence and protests having negative effects on trust, especially in ruling political institutions.

Taken together, our findings underscore the marked differences in the effects of conflict exposure

Figure 7: Effects of conflict exposure on trust in institutions by regime type



*Notes:* The figure presents estimates for the effect of conflict exposure on trust in institutions, separately in autocracies (left panel) and democracies (right panel). Each dot represents an estimate from a separate regression. Individual controls, region-round FEs and month-year FEs included. Vertical bars represent 95 % confidence intervals. Light green triangles represent estimates of violence exposure, and dark green dots represent estimates of protest exposure.

across regime types. In autocracies, violence often strengthens pro-government attitudes, with out-groups perceiving the state more favorably, while in more democratic settings, violence does not have a significant influence on democratic views. In democratic settings, however, protest exposure may highlight institutional shortcomings, decreasing trust in institutions, and at the same time increasing the out-groups' support for democracy as a form of government and decreasing the perceived extent of democracy.

#### 4.5 Heterogeneity and Robustness

We further examine heterogeneity by severity of the conflict event and the actors involved in the conflict. In addition, we extend our baseline estimation by varying the time window to the event as a robustness test. We report and discuss these analyses in more detail in Appendix C.

First, we consider the severity of the event by focusing on events with fatalities (Table C.1). Estimates show that the positive effect of exposure to conflict on support for democracy disappears when treatment is defined solely by fatalities events. Furthermore, the impact on democratic support does not significantly differ between in-group and out-group members. Although there is no average effect on the perceived extent of democracy, the results show that the perceived extent decreases among the out-group when exposed to events with fatalities.

Second, we explore heterogeneity by actors involved in the conflict events. Specifically, we examine exposure to violent events and distinguish whether an event involves the state or not, and whether it involves civilian victims. As shown in Figure C.1, exposure to conflict increases democratic support when state forces are involved, whereas conflict events without state involvement increase the perceived extent of democracy.

Finally, since the choice of time window used to define the treatment and control group is somewhat ad hoc, we test the treatment effects using longer time windows of 14, 21, and 28 days. Figure C.2 shows the effects of exposure to conflict on democratic views and Figure C.3 presents the effects on trust. The results suggest that the impact of exposure to violence on the support for democracy is short-term. Coefficients are positive and statistically significant when using 7- and 14-day windows, but become negligible with longer time windows. In contrast, the point estimates suggest that the effect of violence on the perceived extent of democracy is more persistent, although estimates are imprecise. Protest exposure has a persistent effect on support for democracy but does not affect perceived extent of democracy. Regarding trust, violence has a persistent positive effect on trust in the president and in the ruling party, while effects on trust in the other institutions are less precise and diminish over time. The effects of protest exposure also tend to fade over time, with the negative effect on trust in the opposition being most persistent across specifications.

## 5 Conclusions

This paper how exposure to conflict events influences individuals’ democratic preferences—democratic support in general, and perceived extent of democracy in one’s country. In particular, we focus on how an individual’s in-group or out-group status, determined by their ethnicity, affects one’s preferences when exposed to conflict. By doing so, this research contributes to a better understanding of development of democratic views and democratic institutions in hybrid regimes, specifically those with an ethnically diverse population. Given the crucial role that institutions play in economic growth (e.g., Tavares and Wacziarg 2001; Acemoglu et al. 2005), our paper also sheds light on democratic support, viewed as a necessary condition for democratization and the strengthening of democratic institutions.

Using rich data for a large sample of African countries over a long period of time, we examine the causal effects of conflict exposure taking advantage of the timing of survey fieldwork with respect to timing of conflict events. Our findings show that exposure to conflict events on average has a positive impact on support for democracy, while perceived supply of democracy is not significantly affected. The findings also reveal that exposure to conflict, whether violent or protest-related, has heterogeneous effects that vary by individual in-group status. Protest exposure increases democratic support more among the out-group, while violence increases perceived extent of democracy only among the out-group.

We also find evidence that conflict exposure affects trust in institutions, with significant divergence between in-group and out-group members. In autocracies, conflict exposure increases in-group trust in ruling institutions, consistent with a ‘rally-around-the-flag’ effect, while decreasing

trust among out-groups. This polarization highlights how conflict can deepen societal cleavages, particularly in contexts where political power and resources are unequally distributed.

Furthermore, in autocratic regimes, exposure to violence and protests enhances democratic support and can paradoxically improve perceptions of democracy, particularly among out-groups. However, in democratic regimes, exposure to conflict does not have significant effects on democratic support. Protest exposure increases democratic support, but at the same time, diminishes perceptions of democracy among out-groups.

Our findings underscore the importance of understanding how conflict shapes political attitudes within diverse social and institutional contexts. Our results point to the potential for conflict to mobilize both pro-democratic sentiments and exacerbate societal divisions.

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# Conflict and Democratic Preferences

Online Appendix

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## Appendix A Data and Summary Statistics

### Subsection A.1 Afrobarometer

Figure A.1 shows the share of respondents indicating a specific response category in our two outcome variables.

In addition to our main outcomes of interest, we examine further questions measuring attitudes to authoritarian forms of governance. Specifically we use the following set of statements: “There are many ways to govern a country. Would you disapprove or approve of the following alternatives?” [*Strongly disapprove; Disapprove; Neither approve nor disapprove; Approve; Strongly approve*]

- One-party rule: “Only one political party is allowed to stand for election and hold office?”
- Military rule: “The army comes in to govern the country?”
- One-man rule: “Elections and Parliament are abolished so that the president can decide everything?”

Figure A.2 show the share of respondents indicating a specific response category in these variables. See also summary statistics in Table A.1.

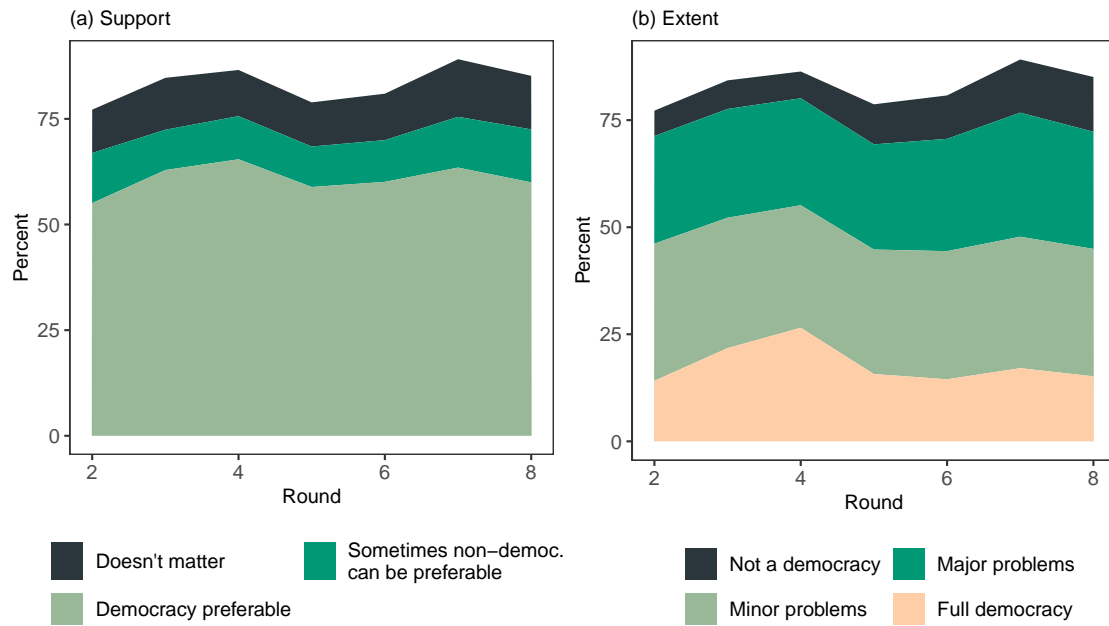
We also examine trust in institutions to explore the mechanisms behind our results. The survey question we use is: “How much do you trust each of the following:” [*Not at all; Just a little; Somewhat; A lot*]

- President/Prime minister (asked about the key leadership figure)
- Parliament/National assembly
- Ruling party
- Opposition political parties
- Elected local government council: Metropolitan, municipal or district assembly
- Courts of law
- Police
- Army<sup>1</sup>

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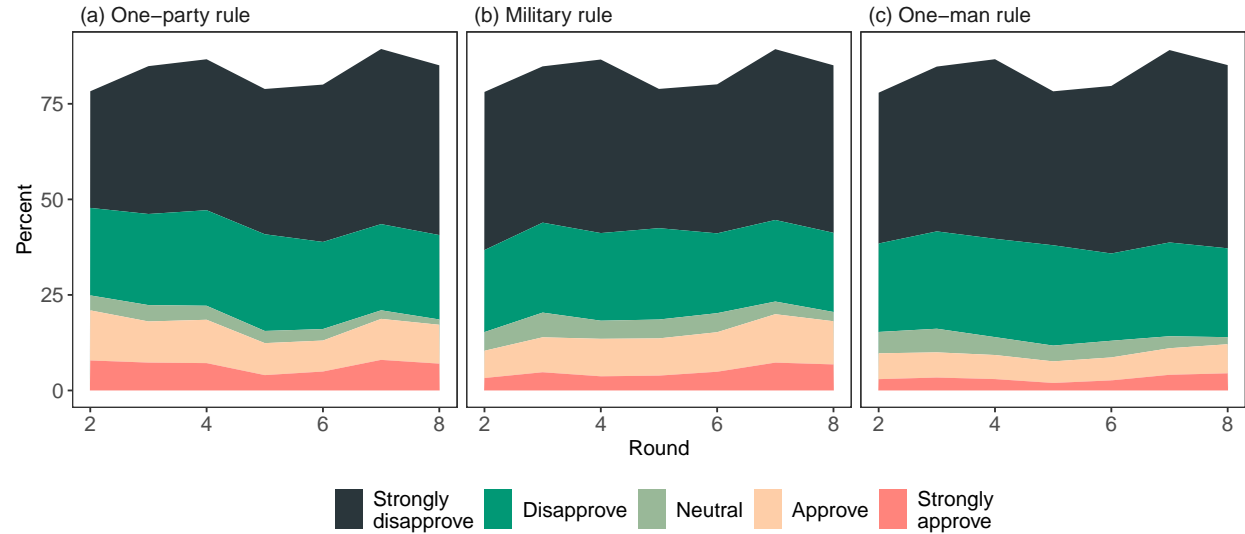
<sup>1</sup> Not included in Round 4.

Figure A.1: Afrobarometer: attitudes towards democracy



*Notes:* The charts present share of respondents indicating a specific response category by survey wave. (a) Support for democracy: “Which of these three statements is closest to your own opinion?”; (b) Extent of democracy: “In your opinion, how much of a democracy is [country] today”. Missing, Refused to answer, and Don’t know are treated as missing. Adjusted with the multi-country weighting factor.

Figure A.2: Afrobarometer: attitudes towards alternative forms of government



*Notes:* The charts present share of respondents indicating a specific response category by survey wave. The questions are the following: (a) One-party rule: “Only one political party is allowed to stand for election and hold office?” (b) Military rule: “The army comes in to govern the country?” (c) One-man rule: “Elections and Parliament are abolished so that the president can decide everything?” Missing, Refused to answer, and Don’t know are treated as missing. Adjusted with the multi-country weighting factor.

## Subsection A.2 Summary Statistics

Table A.1: Respondent summary statistics

	Mean	Std.Dev.	N
Support for democracy (dummy)	0.73	0.44	248733
Extent of democracy	2.66	0.92	244570
Approval of one-party rule	2.02	1.30	261364
Approval of military rule	1.98	1.26	259975
Approval of one-man rule	1.77	1.08	253924
Treat	0.67	0.47	61366
Treat: Violence	0.60	0.49	27541
Treat: Protest	0.68	0.47	47406
Number of violent events (7 days)	2.46	20.63	268848
Number of demonstration events (7 days)	3.78	16.40	268848
Ethnic in-group	0.90	0.30	62874
Age	36.90	14.70	266833
Female	0.50	0.50	268848
Education	3.26	2.09	263466
Employment	1.21	1.17	267716
Urban	0.40	0.49	268848
Regime type	1.59	0.70	268848
Regime: democracy	0.52	0.50	268848

The treatment dummies take value one if a conflict event was recorded in the individuals region within seven days before being surveyed, and zero if the respondent was interviewed within seven days after an event. Treat is a dummy for any conflict event, Violence is a dummy for a violent event, and Protest is a dummy for demonstration event. Number of violent events and demonstration events refers to number of events in individual's region within seven days before being surveyed. Ethnic in-group takes value one when an individual belongs to an ethnic group whose representatives have meaningful access to state power. Employment is employment status in a job that pays cash income. Regime type takes values from 0=closed autocracy to 3=liberal democracy.



Table A.2: Summary statistics on ethnic power groups

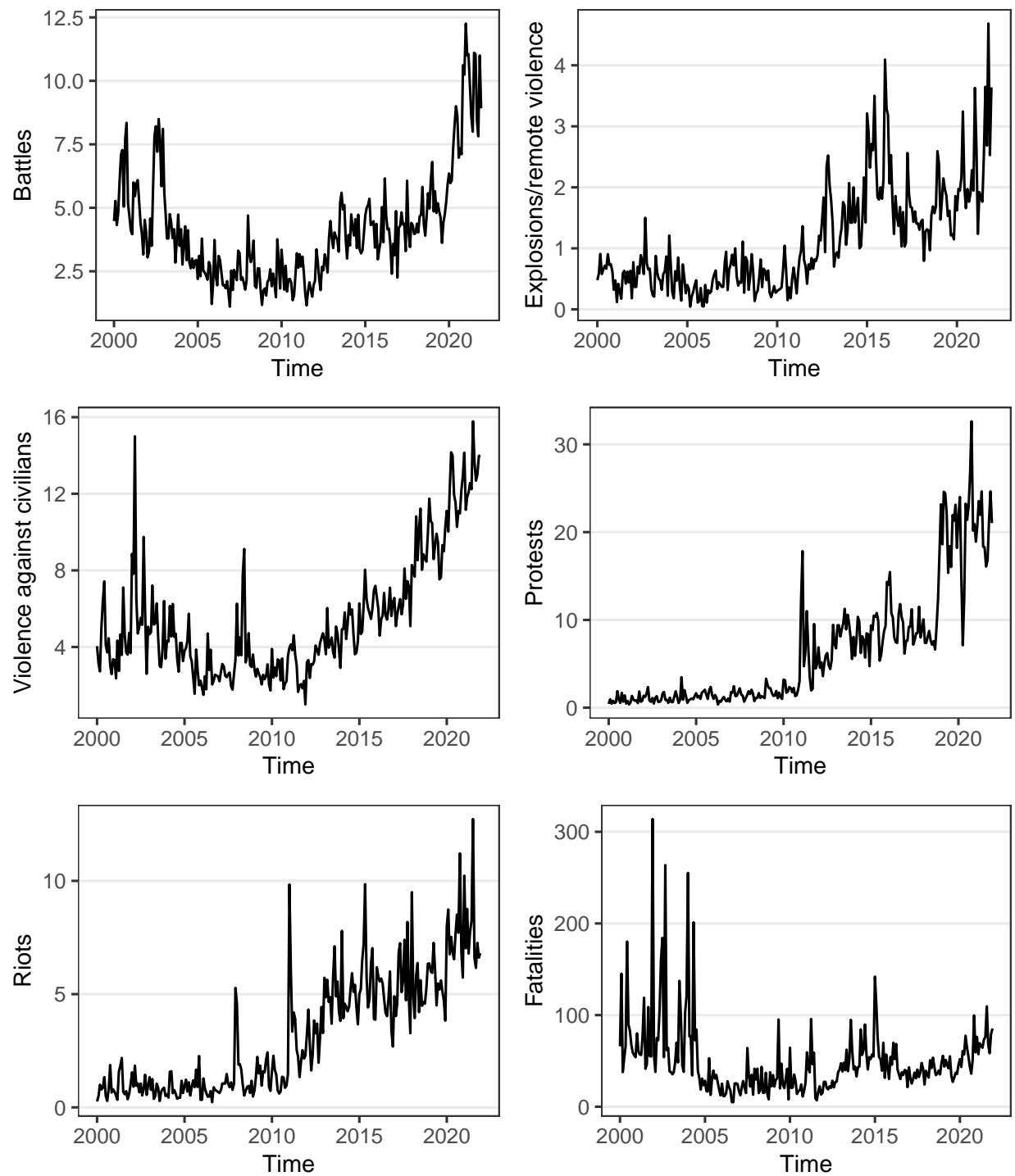
	Powerless			Junior			Senior			Powerless-Junior		Junior-Senior	
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	Diff.	SE	Diff.	SE
Support (dummy)	5561	0.77	0.42	31960	0.79	0.41	21152	0.74	0.44	-0.01	0.014	0.05	0.006
Extent	5517	2.74	0.82	31493	2.73	0.88	20858	2.84	0.88	0.01	0.073	-0.11	0.016***
One-party rule	5983	2.01	1.31	33657	1.86	1.27	21997	2.02	1.34	0.14	0.122	-0.16	0.024
Military rule	5954	1.81	1.15	33475	1.76	1.19	21827	1.98	1.29	0.05	0.104	-0.22	0.036
Dictatorship	5888	1.67	1.04	33418	1.59	1.00	21683	1.80	1.13	0.07	0.077	-0.21	0.017**
Female	6209	0.50	0.50	34246	0.50	0.50	22419	0.50	0.50	-0.00	0.007	0.00	0.009
Urban	6209	0.30	0.46	34246	0.43	0.49	22419	0.34	0.47	-0.13	0.06	0.09	0.019
Age	6141	35.20	13.62	33987	36.77	14.56	22169	37.23	14.77	-1.57	0.922	-0.46	0.326
Education	6105	3.22	1.99	33728	3.22	2.01	22133	2.79	2.10	0.00	0.267	0.43	0.117
Employment	6173	1.24	1.17	34148	1.38	1.22	22372	1.07	1.16	-0.14	0.151	0.31	0.034

\*\*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \* $p < 0.1$ . Standard errors adjusted for clustering at country level. Differences are within country-round. Weighted with the multi-country weighting factor. Powerless includes discriminated, irrelevant, and powerless groups.

### Subsection A.3 Additional Figures

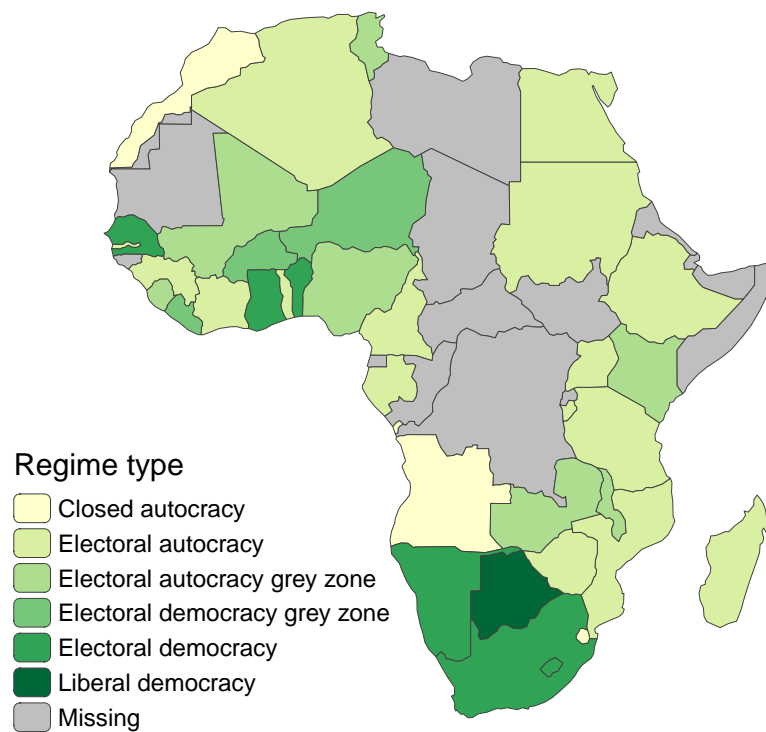
This Appendix presents additional figures describing our data. Figure A.3 shows time series of monthly average numbers of events across countries in different event categories. Figure A.5 shows the sample sizes in treatment and control group for each Afrobarometer round, based on exposure to violent events (panel (a)) or Demonstration events (panel (b)).

Figure A.3: Average monthly number of different types of conflict events and fatalities across countries in 2000-2021. Data source: ACLED



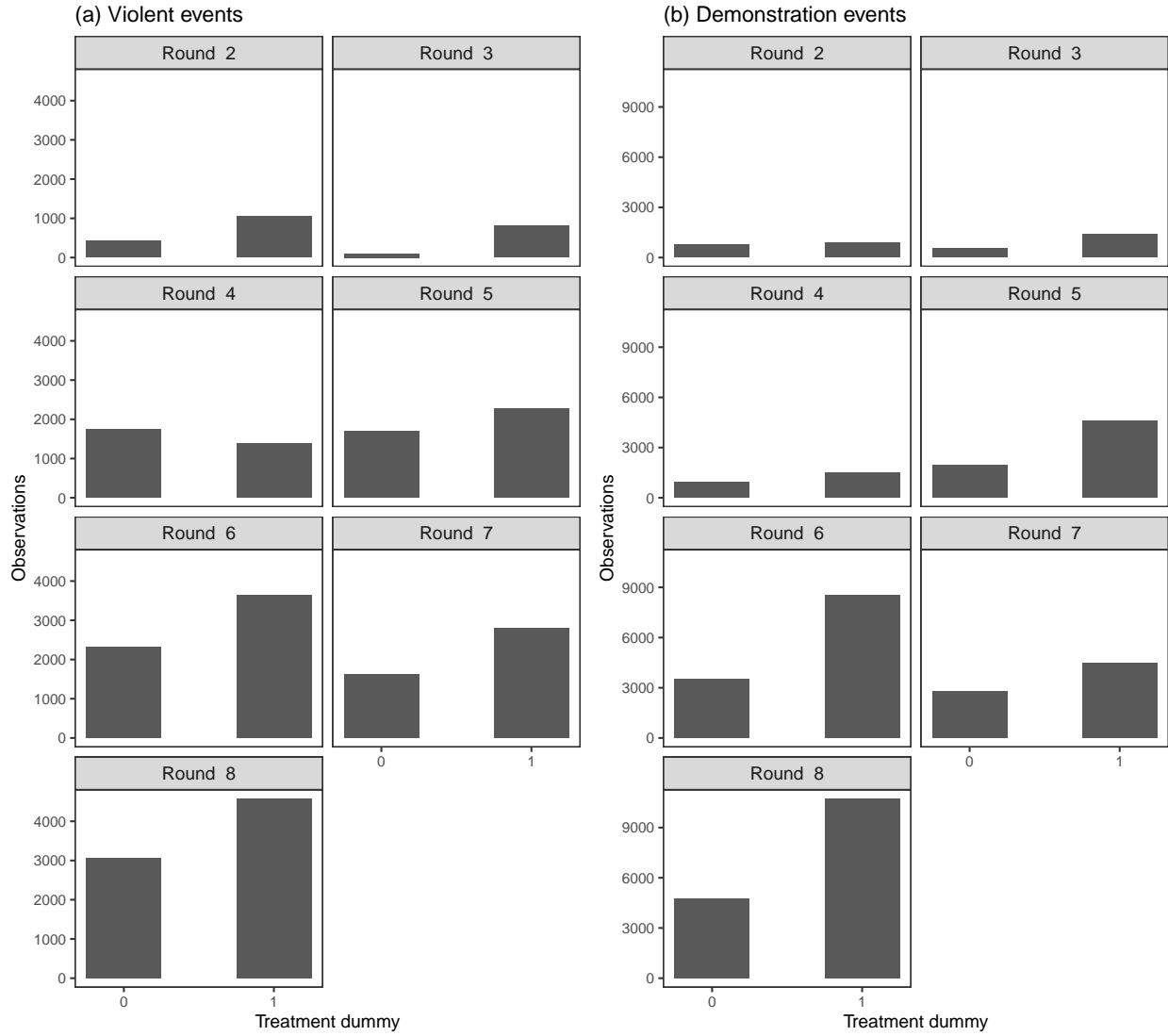
*Notes:* The figure shows the monthly average number of events across all countries included in the Afrobarometer Rounds 2-8.

Figure A.4: Regime type



*Notes:* The figure shows the average values of the Regimes of the World (RoW) measure (Lührmann et al. 2018) in 2002–2021 across all countries included in the Afrobarometer Rounds 2–8. Data source: V-Dem.

Figure A.5: Treatment and control group sizes by round



*Notes:* The figure shows the number of observations in treatment and control group by Afrobarometer round. In the left panel the treatment is based on exposure to violent events within a week, and in the right panel on demonstration events within a week.

## Appendix B Two-Way Fixed Effects

This Appendix reports results of our two-way fixed effects analysis. We estimate the following model:

$$y_{ict} = \beta \text{Conflict}_{c,t-1} + \mathbf{x}_i' \boldsymbol{\delta} + \alpha_c + \lambda_t + \varepsilon_{ict} \quad (2)$$

where the outcome  $y_{ict}$  is a measure of democratic preference of individual  $i$  in country  $c$  in year  $t$ . We examine the association of democratic views with number of conflict events in country  $c$  in year  $t - 1$ . We control for a set of individual level controls  $\mathbf{x}_i$ . The country fixed effect  $\alpha_c$  accounts for all country-specific time invariant characteristics, and for instance controls for cross-country differences in conflict propensity. The year fixed effect  $\lambda_t$  captures common time varying factors. Table B.1 presents estimates on support for democracy, perceived extent of democracy, and satisfaction with functioning of democracy. Table B.2 presents estimates on views on different forms of governance.

Table B.1: Conflict events and democratic views—TWFE results

	Support for democracy	Extent of democracy
	(1)	(2)
Battles $_{t-1}$	0.029** (0.011)	0.095*** (0.032)
Violence against civilians $_{t-1}$	-0.024*** (0.007)	-0.082*** (0.024)
Explosions $_{t-1}$	-0.011 (0.007)	0.009 (0.027)
Protests $_{t-1}$	-0.024 (0.018)	-0.002 (0.049)
Riots $_{t-1}$	0.004 (0.014)	0.018 (0.044)
N	225068	221023
R <sup>2</sup>	0.07	0.13
Mean(Y)	0.73	2.66
Country FEs	X	X
Year FEs	X	X
Controls	X	X

\*\*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \* $p < 0.1$ . Standard errors adjusted for clustering at country level. All specifications use the multi-country weighting factor from the Afrobarometer. The conflict variables are standardized. The dependent variable in column (1) is a dummy that takes value one if the interviewee indicated that democracy is preferable to any other kind of government. The dependent variable in column (2) is perceived extent of democracy, which takes values 1–4. Controls include gender, age, age squared, education, employment, and a dummy for urban.

Table B.2: Conflict events and views on rule—TWFE results

	Approval of...		
	One-party rule	Military rule	One-man rule
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Battles <sub><i>t</i>-1</sub>	0.068 (0.060)	0.038 (0.037)	0.020 (0.027)
Violence against civilians <sub><i>t</i>-1</sub>	-0.035 (0.041)	0.001 (0.025)	-0.011 (0.020)
Explosions <sub><i>t</i>-1</sub>	0.002 (0.017)	-0.031 (0.021)	0.011 (0.026)
Protests <sub><i>t</i>-1</sub>	-0.034 (0.044)	-0.009 (0.041)	-0.028 (0.052)
Riots <sub><i>t</i>-1</sub>	0.054 (0.035)	0.035 (0.050)	0.069 (0.056)
N	236544	235547	229973
R <sup>2</sup>	0.08	0.09	0.08
Mean(Y)	2.04	1.99	1.77
Country FEs	X	X	X
Year FEs	X	X	X
Controls	X	X	X

\*\*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \* $p < 0.1$ . Standard errors adjusted for clustering at country level. All specifications use the multi-country weighting factor from the Afrobarometer. The conflict variables are standardized. The dependent variable is approval of one-party rule (columns (1)), approval of military rule (column (2)), or approval of one-man rule (column (3)). Controls include gender, age, age squared, education, employment, and a dummy for urban.



## Appendix C Heterogeneity and Robustness

### Subsection C.1 Event Severity

To examine what role event severity plays, we next define the treatment based on the number of fatalities involved in the most severe event within the seven-day window. Specifically, we consider whether there was an event in the individual's region that involved any fatalities, or an event that involved at least five fatalities. Table C.1 presents the estimates. Columns (1)-(2) and (5)-(6) present average estimates for the sample, and columns (3)-(4) and (7)-(8) present effects conditional on in-group status. First, the estimates for the average effects indicate that the positive effect of conflict exposure on support for democracy disappears when treatment is defined solely based on events with fatalities. Furthermore, the impact on democratic support does not differ between in-group and out-group members. Second, there is no average effect on the perceived extent of democracy. However, the estimates in the last column show that the perceived extent decreases among out-group members. The point estimate for the interaction term suggests that this effect is smaller for the in-group.

Table C.1: Effect of conflict exposure on democratic views by event severity

	Support of democracy				Extent of democracy			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Fatalities > 0	0.009 (0.016)		0.037 (0.048)		-0.021 (0.024)		0.071 (0.094)	
Fatalities ≥ 5		0.017 (0.016)		0.018 (0.036)		-0.021 (0.098)		-0.543*** (0.036)
Fatalities > 0 × In-group			-0.046 (0.074)				-0.132 (0.112)	
Fatalities ≥ 5 × In-group				0.061 (0.056)				0.221 (0.191)
In-group			0.108** (0.039)	0.085 (0.082)			-0.036 (0.149)	-0.477 (0.444)
N	21249	5797	5286	1300	20981	5689	5235	1272
R <sup>2</sup>	0.12	0.13	0.09	0.03	0.21	0.23	0.13	0.12
Mean(Y)	0.72	0.72	0.74	0.79	2.49	2.31	2.65	2.66
Region-Round FEs	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Month-Year FEs	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Controls	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

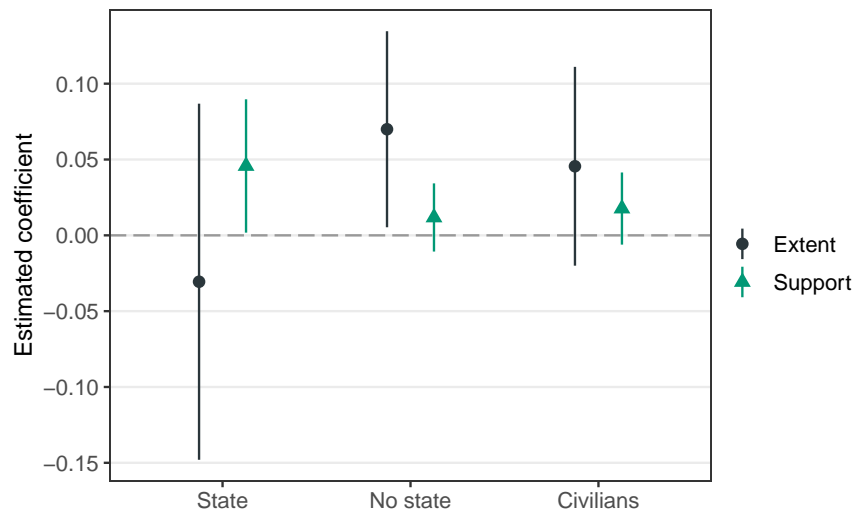
\*\*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \* $p < 0.1$ . Standard errors adjusted for clustering at country level. All specifications use the multi-country weighting factor from the Afrobarometer. The dependent variable in columns (1)-(4) is a dummy that takes value one if the interviewee indicated that democracy is preferable to any other kind of government. The dependent variable in columns (5)-(8) is perceived extent of democracy, which takes values 1-4. *Fatalities* > 0 is a dummy that takes value one if a conflict event with at least one fatality occurred in the region within a week before the individual was interviewed. *Fatalities* ≥ 5 is a dummy for an event with at least five fatalities. Controls include gender, age, age squared, education, employment, and a dummy for urban.

### Subsection C.2 Actors Involved in Conflict

To further examine how conflict exposure influences democratic preferences, we explore heterogeneity by actors involved in the conflict events. We examine exposure to violent events, and distinguish

whether an event involves the state or not, and whether it involved civilian victims.<sup>2</sup> Figure C.1 presents the results.<sup>3</sup> Conflict exposure increases support for democratic when state forces are involved, whereas absence of state forces increases the perceived level of democracy.

Figure C.1: Effects of conflict exposure by perpetrator on trust in institutions



*Notes:* The figure presents estimates for the effect of conflict exposure on democratic views. Each dot represents an estimate from a separate regression. *State* is a dummy that takes value one if a conflict event involving state forces occurred in the region within a week before the individual was interviewed. *No state* is a dummy for an event without state involvement, and *Civilians* is a dummy for an event with civilian victims. Individual controls, region-round FEs and month-year FEs included. Vertical bars represent 95 % confidence intervals. Light green triangles represent estimates of violence exposure, and dark green dots represent estimates of protest exposure.

Conditional on in-group status, we do not find that conflict with specific actors influences democratic support (Table C.2). Regarding extent of democracy, state involvement decreases the perceptions among in-group members (column (4)), while absence of state forces has a positive effect on the perceived extent of democracy (column (5)). Similarly, conflict with civilian victims has a positive effect on the perceived extent of democracy among out-group members, while the interaction effect, although imprecise, suggests no effect on in-group members. It is possible that exposure to conflict with state involvement decreases the perceived level of democracy because the state is seen to act as the oppressor, or otherwise in an undemocratic way.

### Subsection C.3 Effects by Time to Event

As the choice of time window used to define the treatment and control group is somewhat ad hoc, we examine treatment effects when we increase the time window from seven days to 14, 21, and 28 days. Figure C.2 presents estimates for the effects of conflict exposure on democratic views, and Figure C.3 presents estimates on trust in institutions.

<sup>2</sup> Violent events include battles, violence against civilians, and explosions/remote violence. *State* refers to state forces, i.e., police forces, government, or military (ACLED 2019).

<sup>3</sup> see also Appendix Table E.7.

Table C.2: Effect of conflict exposure on democratic views by actor type

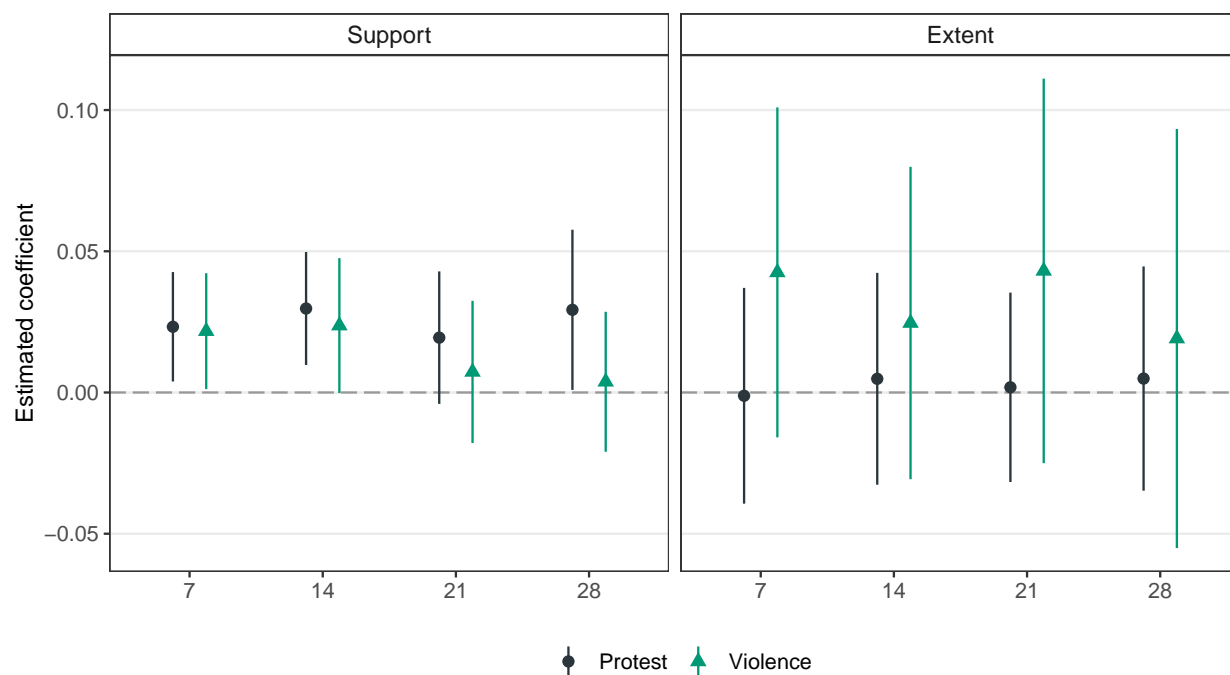
	Support of democracy			Extent of democracy		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
State	0.024 (0.022)			0.089 (0.058)		
State×In-group	0.020 (0.022)			-0.267* (0.113)		
No state		-0.030 (0.082)			0.091* (0.042)	
No state×In-group		0.038 (0.082)			-0.054 (0.074)	
Civilians			-0.006 (0.047)			0.104*** (0.029)
Civilians×In-group			0.054 (0.048)			-0.158 (0.090)
In-group	0.065*** (0.009)	0.023 (0.030)	-0.017 (0.018)	0.236*** (0.058)	0.123 (0.120)	0.204** (0.067)
N	3395	4213	4725	3314	4140	4635
R <sup>2</sup>	0.07	0.10	0.08	0.11	0.18	0.13
Mean(Y)	0.76	0.75	0.76	2.59	2.69	2.59
Region-Round FEs	X	X	X	X	X	X
Month-Year FEs	X	X	X	X	X	X
Controls	X	X	X	X	X	X

\*\*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \* $p < 0.1$ . Standard errors adjusted for clustering at country level. All specifications use the multi-country weighting factor from the Afrobarometer. The dependent variable in columns (1)-(3) is a dummy that takes value one if the interviewee indicated that democracy is preferable to any other kind of government. The dependent variable in columns (4)-(6) is perceived extent of democracy, which takes values 1–4. *State* is a dummy that takes value one if a conflict event involving state forces occurred in the region within a week before the individual was interviewed. *No state* is a dummy for an event without state involvement, and *Civilians* is a dummy for an event with civilian victims. Controls include gender, age, age squared, education, employment, and a dummy for urban.

First, the impact of exposure to violence to democratic support seems to be a short-term one (Figure C.2). The estimated effects on support for democracy are positive and statistically significant when using the 7 and 14 day windows, but become negligible with wider time windows. The estimates indicate that the effect on extent of democracy, although imprecise, is more persistent. Second, the impact of protest exposure on support for democracy is persistent and the point estimates remain stable across different time windows. The perceived extent of democracy is not influenced by protest exposure.

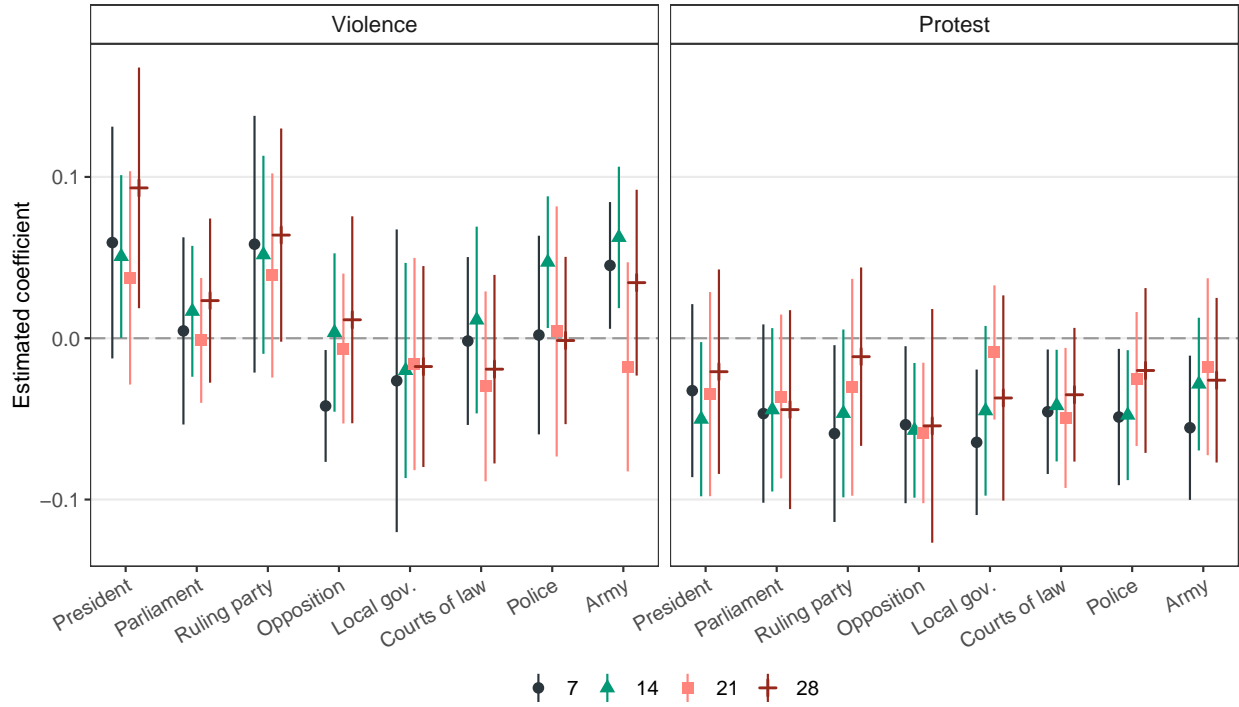
The effects on trust are fairly stable over time. In particular, violence has a positive effect on trust in the president and in the ruling party that is persistent, while trust in the police and in the army are less precise and seem to wane over time. The effects of protest exposure also diminish somewhat over time, with the negative effect on trust in the opposition and courts of law being most stable.

Figure C.2: Time sensitivity of the effect of conflict exposure on democratic views



*Notes:* The figure presents estimates for the effect of conflict exposure on support for democracy (left panel) and perceived extent of democracy (right panel). Each dot represents an estimate from a separate regression with a varying time window used to define treatment. The x-axis shows the time window in days. Light green triangles represent estimates of violence exposure, and dark green dots represent estimates of protest exposure. All specifications include controls, region-round FEs and month-year FEs. Standard errors adjusted for clustering at country level. Vertical bars represent 95 % confidence intervals.

Figure C.3: Time sensitivity of the effect of conflict exposure on trust



*Notes:* This figure presents estimates for the effect of violence (left panel) and protest (right panel) exposure on trust in institutions. Each dot represents an estimate from a separate regression with a varying time window used to define treatment. The x-axis ticks denote the dependent variable. Colors and shapes denote the time window in days. All specifications include controls, region-round FEs and month-year FEs. Standard errors adjusted for clustering at country level. Vertical bars represent 95 % confidence intervals.

## Appendix D Ethnicity

This Appendix presents additional results on conflict exposure conditional on ethnicity. After matching the Afrobarometer and EPR data, our subsample contains the following ethnic power groups: senior partner (36 %), junior partner (54 %), powerless (6 %), discriminated (1 %), and irrelevant (2 %). In our main analysis, in-group consists of senior and junior partners, and out-group of the remaining categories. As the group sizes are significantly imbalanced, we also estimate our model using the following three groups: senior, junior, and powerless (consisting of the remaining categories). Table D.1 presents estimates on support for democracy and extent of democracy. Table D.2 presents results on trust in institutions.

Table D.1: Effect of conflict exposure on democratic views—3 power groups

	Support for democracy		Extent of democracy	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Violence	0.037* (0.020)		-0.073 (0.065)	
Protest		0.006 (0.029)		-0.013 (0.043)
Violence×Powerless	-0.013 (0.017)		0.199** (0.077)	
Protest×Powerless		0.073 (0.063)		-0.035 (0.063)
Violence×Senior	-0.017 (0.039)		0.029 (0.050)	
Protest×Senior		0.016 (0.029)		-0.060 (0.071)
Group: Powerless	0.013 (0.031)	-0.095** (0.042)	-0.096 (0.072)	-0.002 (0.093)
Group: Senior	0.043 (0.041)	-0.027** (0.011)	0.170*** (0.044)	0.196* (0.096)
N	5845	10986	5749	10857
R <sup>2</sup>	0.09	0.10	0.16	0.17
Mean(Y)	0.76	0.76	2.65	2.67
Region-Round FEs	X	X	X	X
Month-Year FEs	X	X	X	X
Controls	X	X	X	X

\*\*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \* $p < 0.1$ . Standard errors adjusted for clustering at country level. All specifications use the multi-country weighting factor from the Afrobarometer. The dependent variable in columns (1)-(2) is a dummy that takes value one if the interviewee indicated that democracy is preferable to any other kind of government. The dependent variables in columns (3)-(4) is perceived extent of democracy, which takes values 1–4. Violence (Protest) is a dummy that takes value one if a violent (protest) event occurred in the region within a week before the individual was interviewed. Ethnic power groups: senior, junior (reference category), and powerless. Controls include gender, age, age squared, education, employment, and a dummy for urban.

Table D.2: Effect of conflict exposure on trust in institutions by in-group status—Power groups

	Trust in...							
	President (1)	Parliament (2)	Ruling party (3)	Opposition (4)	Local government (5)	Courts of law (6)	Police (7)	Army (8)
<i>Panel A: Violence</i>								
Violence	0.071** (0.026)	-0.023 (0.043)	0.092** (0.037)	-0.146*** (0.028)	-0.065 (0.042)	0.040 (0.043)	0.092* (0.049)	0.086 (0.126)
Violence×Powerless	-0.103*** (0.017)	-0.065 (0.056)	-0.075* (0.035)	0.234** (0.100)	0.001 (0.044)	-0.033 (0.043)	-0.061 (0.079)	-0.026 (0.130)
Violence×Senior	0.023 (0.061)	0.065 (0.077)	-0.056 (0.065)	0.063 (0.060)	0.005 (0.072)	-0.063 (0.077)	-0.304*** (0.075)	-0.242 (0.135)
Group: Powerless	0.029 (0.127)	-0.037 (0.085)	-0.081 (0.116)	-0.046 (0.180)	-0.002 (0.085)	-0.004 (0.037)	-0.044 (0.035)	-0.138 (0.160)
Group: Senior	0.153** (0.055)	-0.003 (0.053)	0.199* (0.106)	-0.244*** (0.070)	0.150* (0.070)	0.028 (0.036)	0.119 (0.100)	0.299* (0.161)
N	6180	6105	6109	5976	6045	5993	6211	4488
R <sup>2</sup>	0.14	0.10	0.13	0.07	0.09	0.12	0.13	0.15
Mean(Y)	1.75	1.57	1.51	1.28	1.56	1.61	1.41	2.05
<i>Panel B: Protest</i>								
Protest	-0.010 (0.047)	0.021 (0.046)	0.018 (0.035)	-0.074 (0.051)	-0.059 (0.049)	-0.074* (0.035)	-0.096* (0.048)	-0.040 (0.054)
Protest×Powerless	-0.054 (0.091)	-0.016 (0.062)	-0.116** (0.052)	0.118 (0.104)	-0.073 (0.061)	-0.086* (0.041)	0.091 (0.071)	-0.020 (0.067)
Protest×Senior	0.026 (0.056)	-0.056 (0.085)	-0.019 (0.089)	0.053 (0.061)	0.063 (0.102)	-0.016 (0.062)	0.010 (0.061)	-0.080* (0.038)
Group: Powerless	0.051 (0.073)	0.117 (0.136)	0.158* (0.080)	-0.117 (0.148)	0.148 (0.095)	0.185*** (0.047)	-0.093 (0.061)	0.014 (0.080)
Group: Senior	0.345*** (0.102)	0.222*** (0.049)	0.355** (0.160)	-0.183 (0.133)	0.116** (0.045)	0.139** (0.045)	0.073 (0.051)	0.230** (0.076)
N	11617	11425	11511	11408	11167	11353	11700	10657
R <sup>2</sup>	0.24	0.13	0.21	0.09	0.11	0.13	0.20	0.20
Mean(Y)	1.72	1.46	1.44	1.24	1.39	1.64	1.44	2.01
Region-Round FEs	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Month-Year FEs	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Controls	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

\*\*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \* $p < 0.1$ . Standard errors adjusted for clustering at country level. All specifications use the multi-country weighting factor from the Afrobarometer. The dependent variable is trust in (1) president, (2) parliament, (3) ruling party, (4) opposition, (5) local government, (6) courts of law, (7) police, (8) army. The outcomes take values 0=Not at all, 1=A little bit, 2=A lot, 3=A very great deal. Violence (Protest) is a dummy that takes value one if a violent (protest) event occurred in the region within a week before the individual was interviewed. Ethnic power groups: senior, junior (reference category), and powerless. Controls include gender, age, age squared, education, employment, and a dummy for urban.

## Appendix E Additional Tables

This Appendix presents additional tables regarding our analysis.

Table E.1: Balance of individual characteristics and lagged conflict—Exposure to violent events

	Treat			Control			Difference	Std. Error
	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	N	Mean	Std. Dev.		
Female	16531	0.50	0.50	11010	0.50	0.50	-0.00	0.002
Urban	16531	0.37	0.48	11010	0.40	0.49	-0.04	0.026
Age	16488	35.38	13.68	10962	35.83	13.83	-0.45	0.472
Education	16130	3.43	2.20	10780	3.46	2.13	-0.03	0.064
Employment	16441	1.20	1.17	10975	1.24	1.18	-0.05	0.034
Number of unsuccessful calls	16531	0.33	0.87	11010	0.31	0.82	0.02	0.019
Number of calls	11958	1.06	0.29	7937	1.05	0.24	0.01	0.009
Ethnic in-group	3878	0.70	0.46	2557	0.75	0.43	-0.05	0.03
Violent events	16531	275.43	317.50	11010	221.04	299.28	54.39	0.817
Demonstration events	16531	226.40	342.90	11010	230.90	365.08	-4.50	1.262

\*\*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \* $p < 0.1$ . Standard errors adjusted for clustering at country level. Differences are within country-round. Weighted with the multi-country weighting factor. Violent events and demonstration events are number of events in  $t - 1$ .

Table E.2: Balance of individual characteristics and lagged conflict—Exposure to protests

	Treat			Control			Difference	Std. Error
	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	N	Mean	Std. Dev.		
Female	32158	0.50	0.50	15248	0.50	0.50	-0.00	0.002
Urban	32158	0.57	0.49	15248	0.49	0.50	0.09	0.025**
Age	32044	36.16	14.23	15171	36.20	14.03	-0.05	0.367
Education	30960	3.84	2.07	14800	3.55	2.09	0.30	0.066*
Employment	32036	1.30	1.19	15178	1.33	1.20	-0.03	0.035
Number of unsuccessful calls	32158	0.40	1.00	15248	0.33	0.86	0.08	0.022
Number of calls	21439	1.06	0.26	10469	1.04	0.20	0.02	0.006
Ethnic in-group	7901	0.89	0.31	4306	0.85	0.35	0.04	0.038
Violent events	31925	158.83	283.73	15074	160.08	291.06	-1.25	2.74
Demonstration events	31925	234.93	344.91	15074	165.75	231.63	69.18	2.865**

\*\*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \* $p < 0.1$ . Standard errors adjusted for clustering at country level. Differences are within country-round. Weighted with the multi-country weighting factor. Violent events and demonstration events are number of events in  $t - 1$ .



Table E.3: Effect of conflict exposure on support for authoritarian governance

	Approval of...					
	One-party rule		Military rule		One-man rule	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Violence	0.003 (0.032)		0.049 (0.042)		-0.025 (0.034)	
Protest		-0.015 (0.027)		-0.063** (0.029)		-0.030 (0.022)
N	26001	44449	25922	44362	25778	43555
R <sup>2</sup>	0.12	0.12	0.16	0.15	0.14	0.10
Mean(Y)	2.01	1.97	2.02	2.00	1.75	1.75
Region-Round FEs	X	X	X	X	X	X
Month-Year FEs	X	X	X	X	X	X
Controls	X	X	X	X	X	X

\*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*  $p < 0.1$ . Standard errors adjusted for clustering at country level. All specifications use the multi-country weighting factor from the Afrobarometer. The dependent variable is approval of one-party rule (columns (1)-(2)), of military rule (columns (3)-(4)), or of one-man rule (columns (5)-(6)). Violence (Protest) is a dummy that takes value one if a violent (protest) event occurred in the region within a week before the individual was interviewed. Controls include gender, age, age squared, education, employment, and a dummy for urban.

Table E.4: Effect of conflict exposure on support for authoritarian governance by in-group status

	Approval of...					
	One-party rule		Military rule		One-man rule	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Treat Violence	-0.041*		-0.106		-0.134***	
	(0.020)		(0.091)		(0.033)	
Treat Protest		0.015		-0.003		-0.109
		(0.091)		(0.162)		(0.138)
Treat Violence×In-group	0.016		0.133		-0.030	
	(0.065)		(0.107)		(0.020)	
Treat Protest×In-group		-0.027		-0.017		0.088
		(0.079)		(0.182)		(0.114)
In-group	-0.214	-0.032	-0.329***	-0.047	0.134*	-0.058
	(0.153)	(0.097)	(0.093)	(0.158)	(0.068)	(0.103)
N	6180	11659	6174	11644	6161	11608
R <sup>2</sup>	0.10	0.11	0.12	0.11	0.10	0.08
Mean(Y)	1.98	1.90	1.80	1.75	1.63	1.61
Region-Round FEs	X	X	X	X	X	X
Month-Year FEs	X	X	X	X	X	X
Controls	X	X	X	X	X	X

\*\*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \* $p < 0.1$ . Standard errors adjusted for clustering at country level. All specifications use the multi-country weighting factor from the Afrobarometer. The dependent variable is approval of one-party rule (columns (1)-(2)), of military rule (columns (3)-(4)), or of one-man rule (columns (5)-(6)). Violence (Protest) is a dummy that takes value one if a violent (protest) event occurred in the region within a week before the individual was interviewed. Controls include gender, age, age squared, education, employment, and a dummy for urban.

Table E.5: Effect of conflict exposure on trust in institutions

	Trust in...							
	President (1)	Parliament (2)	Ruling party (3)	Opposition (4)	Local government (5)	Courts of law (6)	Police (7)	Army (8)
<i>Panel A: Violence</i>								
Violence	0.059 (0.037)	0.005 (0.030)	0.058 (0.041)	-0.042** (0.018)	-0.026 (0.048)	-0.002 (0.027)	0.002 (0.031)	0.045** (0.020)
N	25999	24639	24874	25232	25051	25570	26271	22906
R <sup>2</sup>	0.21	0.18	0.19	0.13	0.17	0.14	0.21	0.21
Mean(Y)	1.64	1.42	1.40	1.16	1.42	1.58	1.38	1.89
<i>Panel B: Protest</i>								
Protest	-0.032 (0.027)	-0.047 (0.028)	-0.059** (0.028)	-0.054** (0.025)	-0.065*** (0.023)	-0.046** (0.020)	-0.049** (0.022)	-0.056** (0.023)
N	43866	42723	41899	42242	41768	43624	44755	41630
R <sup>2</sup>	0.21	0.15	0.20	0.10	0.14	0.16	0.19	0.21
Mean(Y)	1.58	1.33	1.33	1.10	1.29	1.55	1.34	1.83
Region-Round FEs	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Month-Year FEs	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Controls	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

\*\*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \* $p < 0.1$ . Standard errors adjusted for clustering at country level. All specifications use the multi-country weighting factor from the Afrobarometer. The dependent variable is trust in (1) president, (2) parliament, (3) ruling party, (4) opposition, (5) local government, (6) courts of law, (7) police, (8) army. The outcomes take values 0=Not at all, 1=A little bit, 2=A lot, 3=A very great deal. Violence (Protest) is a dummy that takes value one if a violent (protest) event occurred in the region within a week before the individual was interviewed. Controls include gender, age, age squared, education, employment, and a dummy for urban.

Table E.6: Effect of conflict exposure on democratic views: by regime type

	Autocracy				Democracy			
	Support		Extent		Support		Extent	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Violence	0.021 (0.013)		0.083** (0.036)		0.020 (0.019)		-0.026 (0.047)	
Protest		0.037** (0.016)		0.033 (0.023)		0.007 (0.011)		-0.037 (0.031)
N	15320	20286	14961	20026	9563	22408	9506	22222
R <sup>2</sup>	0.12	0.12	0.19	0.19	0.11	0.09	0.17	0.13
Mean(Y)	0.75	0.73	2.41	2.36	0.69	0.72	2.61	2.67
Region-Round FEs	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Month-Year FEs	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Controls	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

\*\*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \* $p < 0.1$ . Standard errors adjusted for clustering at country level. All specifications use the multi-country weighting factor from the Afrobarometer. The dependent variable in columns (1)-(2) and (5)-(6) is a dummy that takes value one if the interviewee indicated that democracy is preferable to any other kind of government. The dependent variable in columns (3)-(4) and (7)-(8) is perceived extent of democracy, which takes values 1–4. Violence (Protest) is a dummy that takes value one if a violent (protest) event occurred in the region within a week before the individual was interviewed. Violence (Protest) is a dummy that takes value one if a violent (protest) event occurred in the region within a week before the individual was interviewed. Controls include gender, age, age squared, education, employment, and a dummy for urban.

Table E.7: Effect of conflict exposure on democratic views by actor type

	Support of democracy			Extent of democracy		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
State	0.046*			-0.031		
	(0.022)			(0.060)		
No state		0.012			0.070**	
		(0.011)			(0.033)	
Civilians			0.018			0.046
			(0.012)			(0.033)
N	14152	18709	20497	13878	18367	20115
R <sup>2</sup>	0.09	0.12	0.11	0.21	0.22	0.20
Mean(Y)	0.73	0.73	0.73	2.43	2.47	2.44
Region-Round FEs	X	X	X	X	X	X
Month-Year FEs	X	X	X	X	X	X
Controls	X	X	X	X	X	X

\*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*  $p < 0.1$ . Standard errors adjusted for clustering at country level. All specifications use the multi-country weighting factor from the Afrobarometer. The dependent variable in columns (1)-(3) is a dummy that takes value one if the interviewee indicated that democracy is preferable to any other kind of government. The dependent variable in columns (4)-(6) is perceived extent of democracy, which takes values 1-4. *State* is a dummy that takes value one if a conflict event involving state forces occurred in the region within a week before the individual was interviewed. *No state* is a dummy for an event without state involvement, and *Civilians* is a dummy for an event with civilian victims. Controls include gender, age, age squared, education, employment, and a dummy for urban.