

## **Geopolitical Claims by EPR Groups (EPRclaims) Dataset Coding Instructions**

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### **Project Description**

The goal of this project is the coding of ethnic geopolitical claims. Based on the group list of the EPR-ETH dataset (Vogt et al., 2015), we identify groups who make geopolitical claims, covering the years 1946 through 2013.

A geopolitical claim is defined as a claim raised by a member of a politically relevant ethnic group concerning the improvement of the status of an ethnic group in a given territory. Claims range from autonomy (cultural, political, economic) to independence and unification with another state. Hence, geopolitical claims include the introduction of self-rule within existing administrative units or within redrawn state borders.

This project builds directly on the SDM Dataset (Sambanis et al., 2015a), in which self-determination movements, and whether they raise any geopolitical demands, such as autonomy, secession or irredentist claims, are coded.<sup>1</sup> The SDM coding is available for all minority groups in Europe and Asia and a random sample of the remaining regions, that is the Middle East, Africa and America. Where available, we complement our EPRclaim coding with the SDM data.

This documents 1) lists the tasks of the coding team, 2) introduces the definition of claims and the different subcategories and 3) presents the coding instructions.

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<sup>1</sup>The SDM Codebook defines a self-determination movement as “at least one significant political organization that makes a claim for increased self-determination within the nation-state context.” For a more detailed description of the SDM Dataset see the codebook (Sambanis et al., 2015a).

## Geopolitical Claims

An ethnic geopolitical claim refers to the demanded change of the status of an ethnic group in a territory. Geopolitical claims include demands for greater autonomy, secessionism and irredentism.

In order to be politically relevant and thus, recorded in our dataset, a claim must meet the following criteria:

- The claim must be raised by a member of a political organization representing the ethnic group. Party members, parliamentarians, the government or any other representative of the ethnic group can make geopolitical statements.
- The claim must explicitly refer to *increasing* the current situation of self-rule (see Sambanis et al., 2015a). Thus, movements that aim at keeping the status quo are not recorded.
- The claim-making political organization needs not have support of the majority of the ethnic group. Moreover, many groups seeking greater self-determination are internally divided (Cunningham, 2014).
  - If several claims are made simultaneously or if several political organization represent the same ethnic group, with demands ranging from more autonomy to irredentism, the dominant claim is coded, i.e. the one with most political importance and strongest support among the group members.
  - If it is impossible to determine the dominant claim in a given year, we code the most radical claim (autonomy < independence < irredentism) (see Sambanis et al., 2015a, 27).

**Example:** Albanians in Macedonia, autonomy claim 1991 - 2013

Since Macedonian independence in 1991, the dominant claim among the ethnic Albanians in Macedonia is autonomy. However, claims vary between moderates who demand non-territorial political autonomy and radicals who wish to secede from Macedonia and unify with Kosovo or Albania. The majority of Albanians favor a solution in the middle between these two extreme positions, such as regional autonomy. Despite internal clashes and disagreements, all ethnic Albanian parties demand more rights for ethnic Albanians. Moreover, the majority of the NLA/UCK insurgents fighting against the Macedonian authorities in the civil conflict in 2001 did not demand independence of the Albanian inhabited territories from Macedonia, in contrast to the Albanian insurgents in Kosovo. Their major aim was a better representation of Albanians in the Macedonian government

**Example:** Irrelevant claim

The football fans flying a drone carrying a flag showing Greater Albania over the stadium in Belgrade during a match between Serbia and Albania in 2014 are not recorded as a politically relevant irredentist claim.

## **Autonomy**

Autonomy claims are defined as demands for the establishment of territorial autonomy within an existing state (e.g. Afars in Ethiopia), an increase in the number of competencies of an already existing autonomous sub-state entity (e.g. Scots in Great Britain, Corsicans in France) or separation from an existing autonomous sub-state entity (e.g. Jura in Switzerland or Ingushetia in Russia). Autonomy claims include demands for greater authority over taxes, security, such as police forces, cultural practices, language etc. (see Sambanis et al., 2015a).

## **Secessionist Claim**

A secessionist claim is defined as a demand for independence of a territory from an existing state. E.g. Croats in Yugoslavia, Abkhazians in Georgia. Thus, secessionists demand sovereign self-rule and that existing state borders are redrawn.

## **Irredentist Claim**

An irredentist claim is broadly defined as a demand for union with another state or part of another state. E.g. Serbs in Bosnia, Somalis in Kenya and Ethiopia, Crimean Russians in Ukraine. Independence is a precondition for irredentism. Irredentists demand unification with a territory, either a state or part of a state, that is inhabited by a co-ethnic group across the border. This conceptualization of irredentism excludes revisionist cases where territories that have been inhabited by co-ethnics in previous times are annexed. Hence, we only code irredentist claims to territories that are currently populated by ethnic kin groups.

The original concept of irredentism is based on the idea that a homeland claims to unify with a “lost territory” settled by kin minorities. Irredentist demands are often expressed with the word “greater” and / or based on “Pan-ideologies”, such as “Greater Serbia” or “Pan-Turkism” (e.g. Landau, 1981, 180). Since irredentists demand the incorporation of foreign territory that is inhabited by co-ethnics, irredentist

claims are usually made by transborder ethnic groups.

**Example:** Serbs in Serbia, general irredentist claim 1991 - 2008

The creation of Greater Serbia ("Velika Srbija") was a core goal stated in the program of the Serbian Radical Party, that was popular in Serbia in the 1990s and 2000s (until its split in 2008). While the prospects of European integration strongly decreased Serbian irredentist claims, because the recognition of existing state borders is a precondition for negotiations with the European Union, several groups in Serbia still demand unification with the Bosnian Republika Srpska and the Serbs in Kosovo (→ directed claims).

We distinguish three potential irredentist scenarios:

- "Detach land and people from one state to incorporate them in another" (Horowitz, 1991, 9-10). E.g. Serbs in Bosnia.
- "Detach land and people divided among more than one state in order to incorporate them in a single new state" (Horowitz, 1991, 9-10). E.g. Kurds.
- Merge two existing states. E.g. Greece and Cyprus.

## **Coding Instructions**

The coding procedure consists of two parts: First, the dominant geopolitical claim of the group has to be identified. Of course, many ethnic groups do not raise any geopolitical demands. Second, the periods, that is start and end year, during which group members actively made these claims have to be identified. Importantly, the intensity of the dominant claim might change, for instance, while a group initially demands independence, they might advance to claiming unification with another state.

### **Identify Claim**

For each ethnic group we code if it demanded autonomy, independence (separatist claim) or unification with another state (irredentist claim).

For structural reasons, ethnic groups that have major control over the state government cannot demand autonomy or independence for themselves, but they can make these claims for foreign ethnic brethren. Thus, we distinguish between claims raised by political minorities and majority ethnic groups. Political minorities include ethnic groups that are categorized in EPR as powerless, discriminated or

self-exclusionist (marginalized ethnic groups (MEG)) as well as groups that participate in the government as junior partners. Ethnic groups with major influence in state decision-making are groups with the political status monopoly, dominant or senior partner (see Cederman, Wimmer and Min, 2010). In contrast to the distinction between marginalized ethnic groups and ethnic groups in power, used by many researchers building on EPR-ETH, we differentiate between minority and majority groups. Minority groups include all MEG groups plus junior partners. Although they are included in their state government, several junior partner groups also demand autonomy, for example the Hungarians in Romania or the Albanians in Macedonia.

### **Duration of Claim**

Allowing for temporal variance, we code claim periods indicated by start and end years in cases where the dominant geopolitical claim of a group changes over time, or when a group starts or stops making any claims. The reference date is January 1. Countries that were not independent on January 1 are excepted from this rule, i.e. in these cases the date of independence is the reference date.

**Example:** Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina, irredentist claim 1992 - 1995, autonomy claim 1996 - 2013

The Croats in Bosnia changed their dominant claim from irredentism to autonomy: From 1992 to 1995, during the war, the Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina demanded to be united with Croatia (irredentist claim). From 1996 to 2013, since the Dayton Conference in 1995, the Croats retracted their irredentist statement but are nevertheless disaffected by the fact that they do not have their own federal entity like the Serbs. The two main Croatian political parties, HDZ and the HDZ 1990, share the goal of the creation of a new entity that would be dominated by Croats.

Thus, we focus on the periods where groups actively demand geopolitical alterations. "Actively demanding" includes repeating statements of claiming more self-rule, keeping an already formulated party program or ongoing mobilization such as demonstrations etc. Building on the SDM coding rules, we apply a ten-year threshold (see Sambanis et al., 2015a). This means that we stop coding a claim after ten years if we do not find any source proofing activity.

If an ethnic group raised geopolitical demands before the country was included in the EPR-ETH dataset, we code the start year of the first EPR period as start year of the claim. The same rule applies to groups with ongoing activity, that is we code the end year of the last period (usually 2013) as end year.

## Minority versus governmental claims

### Minority Claims

For all minority groups worldwide, the SDM data provides information on years during which the groups actively demanded increased self-determination (SDM variable `active` = 1). The SDM group list is nominally matched to the EPR group list and all groups who appear in both datasets are actively claiming more self-rule. These are the EPR groups with the political status powerless, discriminated, self-exclusionist and junior partner. Political minority groups are not necessarily demographic minorities. The docking procedure is described in subsection 4.1 in the SDM codebook (Sambanis et al., 2015a). All self-determination movements in Europe and Asia (indicated with the variable `region`) have been matched to EPR already. For the claim coding, we focus on EPR groups and do not investigate in potential claims of self-determination groups that have no match in EPR.

Moreover, the claims of all minority groups in Europe and Asia are already coded, they serve as coding examples for the remaining world. Politically marginalized ethnic groups that are not recorded in SDM do not make any claims. Hence, we already know the periods during which minority groups were active, we only have to record the type of claim. We distinguish between three different claim types raised by minority groups:

- Autonomy
- Independence (= Secessionism)
- Unification (= Irredentism)

**Example:** Hungarians in Serbia, autonomy claim 1992 - 2013

The Hungarian minority in Serbia demand greater autonomy since 1992. The first official declaration of cultural and territorial autonomy dates to the year 1992, when the Democratic Community of Hungarians in Vojvodina (DCHV/VDMK) published a proposal demanding wide autonomy rights for the Hungarians. In 2002, Vojvodina regained many competencies that it lost when its autonomy was taken away in 1990. Still, many Hungarian representatives continue to argue that the Vojvodina region should have more powers.

## **Governmental Claims**

For all groups in EPR that are ethnic majority groups in power, we code if and when they demanded border changes or increased self-rule for foreign ethnic groups. These are the ethnic groups with the EPR status monopoly, dominant and senior partner. Potential irredentist claims also have to be identified for groups that were upgraded or downgraded in their political status (i.e. from powerless to senior partner). Since SDM does not include governmental groups, we have to identify their claims and the duration of their activity.

Some governmental groups make claims other than irredentist for their transnational kin, for example the Hungarian government demands greater autonomy rights for Hungarians in Serbia. Therefore, we also distinguish between the type of claims that governments make for their foreign kin. Similarly to the claims of minority groups, governments can demand more autonomy, independence or unification for their foreign ethnic brethren. This distinction builds on Landau's (1981, 1) categorization of moderate and extreme irredentist demands: the former claims include the desire to defend co-ethnics from discrimination or assimilation, while the later aim at annexing territories that kin groups inhabit.

Moreover, we differentiate between, on the one hand, general irredentist claims, when governments demand unification with their foreign co-ethnics without explicitly mentioning the territories or countries where these groups live. General irredentist claims are more diffuse and often stated in combination with the words "Greater" or "united" or are based on "Pan-ideologies", such as Pan-Turkism or Pan-Arabism. General claims are only irredentist, but not autonomy or independence.

On the other hand, we code directed claims, when governmental groups explicitly claim and pursue policies to support or incorporate co-ethnics in a certain foreign country. For example, the Serbian government openly demanded that Serbs in Bosnia be united with Serbs in Serbia during the Yugoslav wars. Directed claims are coded for all politically relevant transnational ethnic groups. The TEK-EPR dataset provides a list of all ethnic groups with transnational linkages (Vogt et al., 2015). The countries where these foreign kin groups live are specified in the coding scheme.

We distinguish the following claim types by governments:

- General claim: irredentism

*Does a political representative of the governmental ethnic group make a diffuse claim for unification with foreign co-ethnics?*

- Directed claim

*Assess for each transnational ethnic kin group in each country if a representative of the governmental ethnic group (or directly the government where the ethnic group has control) makes a directed claim.*

- Autonomy
- Independence (= Secessionism)
- Unification (= Irredentism)

A government can make general and several directed claims simultaneously or only one type of claim.

Territorial claims on former colonies or oversea territories do not qualify as ethnic irredentist claims.

## **Documentation**

The data is collected in word format (and will be transformed to table format after verification by the project leader). Each coder works with one word document where he explains the coding decisions and indicates the type of claim of each group and start and end years. Typically, one or two pages in the word file cover one ethnic group. The beginning of the file lists information from the EPR dataset, such as relative size and political status, and the countries, where the ethnic group has transnational ethnic kin. Potential governmental claims for foreign co-ethnics are only recorded for the groups that are listed. This information is only provided to give an overview. EPR periods should not be confounded with claim periods.

The `comment` field denotes comments and explanations. Please elaborate with few phrases the coding decisions (also quotes or paraphrasing). At the end of the comment, on a new line, write the `claim` and the dates in square brackets, e.g. *[1990 - 1992, irredentism]*.

Importantly, the sources are indicated in the field `sources`, e.g. reference to article, book, newspaper article, homepage. Possible sources are:

- SDM coding notes: Sambanis et al. (2015b) and Cederman, Germann and Schädel (2015).
- Books. For example, the following authors systematically analyze or enlist separatist or irredentist movements: Carment and James (1997); Saideman (2001); Kornprobst (2008); Cunningham (2014); Roth (2015).



- Scientific articles
- Newspaper articles
- Homepages of political organizations (governments, parties etc.)
- Country reports from governmental and non-governmental organizations (e.g. International Crisis Group, U.S. State Department Country Reports)
- Ethnic Power Relations (EPR) atlas (<http://growup.ethz.ch/atlas>)
- Minorities At Risk (MAR) ([http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/mar/mar\\_data.asp](http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/mar/mar_data.asp)).

If possible, try to consult primary sources in the original language of the group or regional *linguas francas*.

If a group does not raise any claims, note “No claim” in the comment field. In this case, the comments and sources can be reduced to a minimum.

For clarification, a template and coding example are given to each coder.

## References

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