Remnants of Civil War

Immediate and long-run effects of electoral oppression in cold war Greece

LSE - Hellenic Observatory

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19/03/24

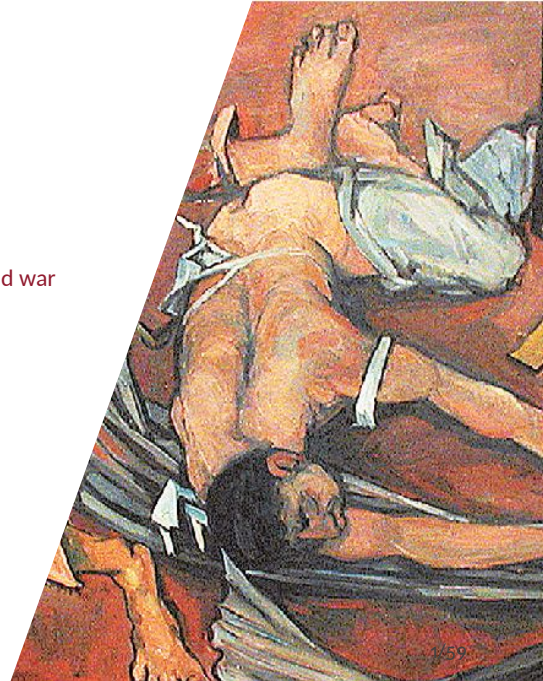


Table of Contents

1 Introduction

▶ Introduction

▶ Background

▶ Identification

▶ Measurement & Data

▶ Empirical

Introduction

We aim to (causally) investigate the state's response to communist party organisation in cold war Greece.
We focus on the 1961 elections to show that communist organisation led to violence and attempt to estimate the short-run political effects of these violent events.

In addition we investigate the effects of violence on current institutional trust, contemporary populist vote, economic activity, and public goods provision).

This presentation will go through the historical context, identification strategy, results so far, and future steps.

Summary

1 Introduction

We employ an IV to:

- Document how random variation of radio broadcasting signals in Greek Municipalities helped the organisation of the communist/left parties and boosted their electoral results in 1958 (1st stage).
- We use this source of variation to isolate state's violent response in 1961 as a response to the electoral success of UDL (2nd stage).

We find that:

- there is a causal link between electoral success of EDA in 1958 and the level/probability of electoral oppression/violence experienced in 1961.
- Violence reduced EDA electoral results by about 8%
- The historical experience of electoral suppression is associated with lower contemporary levels of political trust.

Table of Contents

2 Background

- Introduction
- Background
- Identification
- Measurement & Data
- Empirical

Motivation

2 Background

We are motivated mainly by three strands of literature in History, Economics, and Political Sciences:

[History] - Extended historical evidence that the 1958 and 1961 elections were important:

Historical Motivation

2 Background

Motivation

2 Background

We are motivated mainly by three strands of literature in History, Economics, and Political Sciences:

[History] - Extended historical evidence that the 1958 and 1961 elections were important:

- In 1958 UDL becomes major opposition few years after the end of the Greek Civil War.
- In 1961 we have an state sponsored plan to supress electoral vote across Greece (both urban and rural areas).
- The events following the 1961 electoral suppression have shaped the path of the Greek political history.

Motivation

2 Background

We are motivated mainly by a growing literature in Economics, and Political Sciences on:

- How the spread of political propaganda (broadcasting TV & radio) affects elections.
- How state and non-state actors responded to the socialist/communist threats.
- How historical events continue to shape individuals' contemporary beliefs/behaviour

Motivation: Econ Lit

A large literature on the effects of radio television broadcasts and their effects:

- Enikolopov et al.(2011) focus on electoral effects of non-state television in 1999 Russian parliamentary elections.
- Gagliarducci et al. (2018) study the role of media in coordinating and mobilising the Italian partisans in Italy during WWII.
- Wang (2021) focuses on the electoral effects of populist Father Coughlin radio shows in the USA during the 30s.
- Olken (2009) invastigates the impact of television and radio on social capital in Indonesia.

Motivation: Econ Lit

How states and non state actors responded to the socialist/communist threats:

- Acemoglu et al. (2020) document that the spread of the Mafia in Sicily at the end of the 19th century was in part caused by the rise of peasant socialist organisations threatening rural elites.
- Acemoglu et al. (2022) identify a strong link between surge of support for the Socialist Party after World War I and the subsequent emergence of fascism in Italy as measured by the presence of local fascist branches and fascist violent activities.

Motivation

2 Background

We are motivated mainly by a growing literature in Economics, and Political Sciences on:

[Political Economy] - Large literature on

- How political messages affect party organisation (i.e. Wagner and Meyer, 2014)
- How voters respond to (the threat and use of) political violence (i.e. Prilleltensky and Gonick, 1996)
- How historical events affect contemporary attitudes, beliefs and behaviour (i.e. Michalopoulos and Papaioannou, 2020)

1947

Radio "Free Greece" starts broadcasting from the HQ of the Greek Dem Army in Belgrade

1949

- End of Greek Civil war
- Following Tito-Stalin breach radio moves to Bucharest in a covert operation

1951

United Democratic Left is founded

1954

Opposition makes the first "electoral wins" in the municipal elections

1956

- Karamanlis (right) elected prime minister
- Zachariadis is ousted in the 6th wide plenary session of KKE
- Radio stops its operation

1958

- New radio "Voice of Truth" starts broadcasting from new location in Leizpig
- UDL becomes major opposition a few months later

1961

- Elections characterized by fraud and suppression
- UDL loses a significant % of votes

Clandestine Radio's Operation

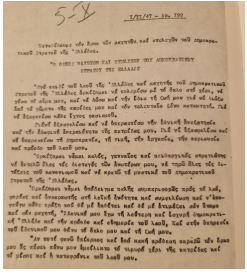
The evolution of how the clandestine ratio operated provides interesting insights for our identification

- Covert operations as hosting countries did not want to appear intervening in Greece's political situation.
- Those involved operated under secrecy and extreme isolation.
- Texts were written under the supervision of KKE's politburo in Bucharest that was hosting the KKE (venue city of Cominform until it dissolution in 1956)
- Text was then transferred in East Germany, recorded and broadcasted.
- **Content significantly changed in 1958** (crucial for our identification)

Content of station

2 Background

Democratic Army Oath (1/2/47)

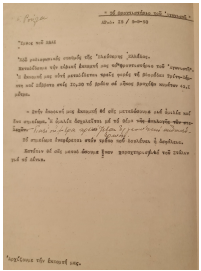


Source: ASKI in Psimouli V., (2006)

Content of station

2 Background

”Fighter’s Tutorial” (5/8/50)

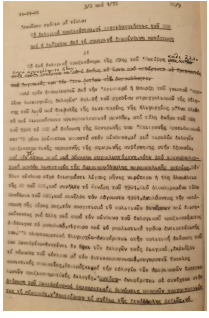


Source: ASKI in Psimouli V., (2006)

Content of station

2 Background

”Electoral Coup d’Etat” (14/11/61)

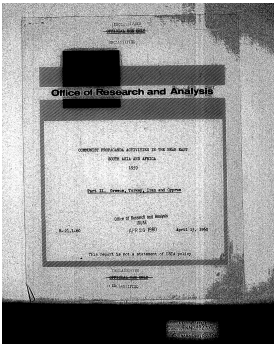


Source: ASKI in Psimouli V., (2006)

Did the state know?

2 Background

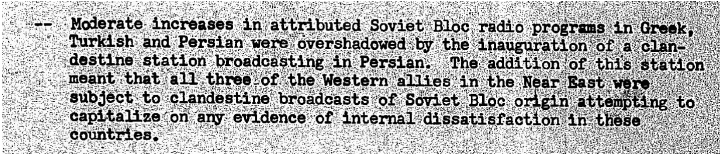
The clandestine radio operations did not go unnoticed by Western counterintelligence and information agencies.



Source: Princeton University Library, Leo P. Crespi Papers

Western Information Agencies-USIA

2 Background

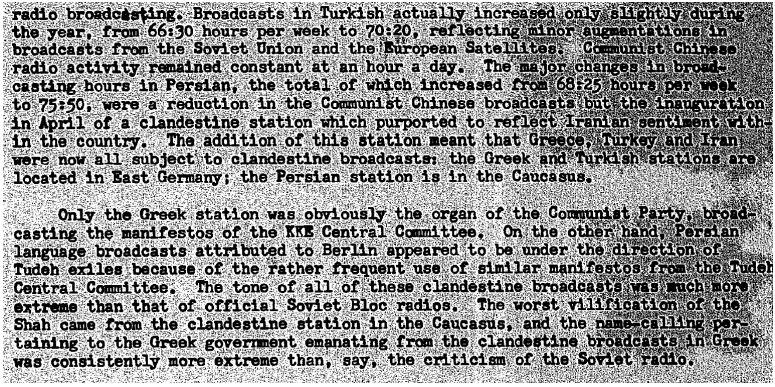


-- Moderate increases in attributed Soviet Bloc radio programs in Greek, Turkish and Persian were overshadowed by the inauguration of a clandestine station broadcasting in Persian. The addition of this station meant that all three of the Western allies in the Near East were subject to clandestine broadcasts of Soviet Bloc origin attempting to capitalize on any evidence of internal dissatisfaction in these countries.

Source: Princeton University Library, Leo P. Crespi Papers

Western Information Agencies-USIA

2 Background



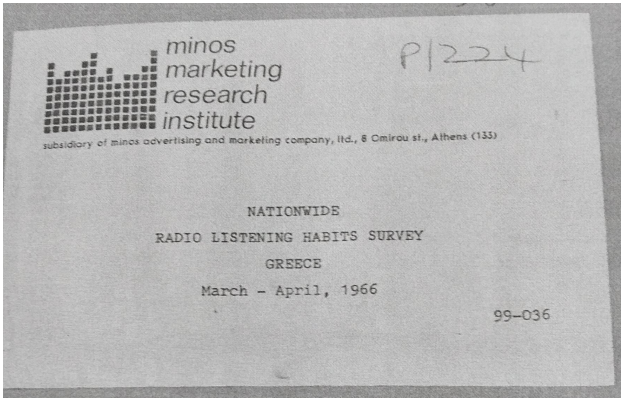
radio broadcasting. Broadcasts in Turkish actually increased only slightly during the year, from 66:30 hours per week to 70:20, reflecting minor augmentations in broadcasts from the Soviet Union and the European Satellites. Communist Chinese radio activity remained constant at an hour a day. The major changes in broadcasting hours in Persian, the total of which increased from 68:25 hours per week to 75:50, were a reduction in the Communist Chinese broadcasts but the inauguration in April of a clandestine station which purported to reflect Iranian sentiment within the country. The addition of this station meant that Greece, Turkey and Iran were now all subject to clandestine broadcasts; the Greek and Turkish stations are located in East Germany; the Persian station is in the Caucasus.

Only the Greek station was obviously the organ of the Communist Party, broadcasting the manifestos of the KKE Central Committee. On the other hand, Persian language broadcasts attributed to Berlin appeared to be under the direction of Tudeh exiles because of the rather frequent use of similar manifestos from the Tudeh Central Committee. The tone of all of these clandestine broadcasts was much more extreme than that of official Soviet Bloc radios. The worst vilification of the Shah came from the clandestine station in the Caucasus, and the name-calling pertaining to the Greek government emanating from the clandestine broadcasts in Greek was consistently more extreme than, say, the criticism of the Soviet radio.

Source: Princeton University Library, Leo P. Crespi Papers

Did anyone listen?

2 Background



Did anyone listen?

2 Background

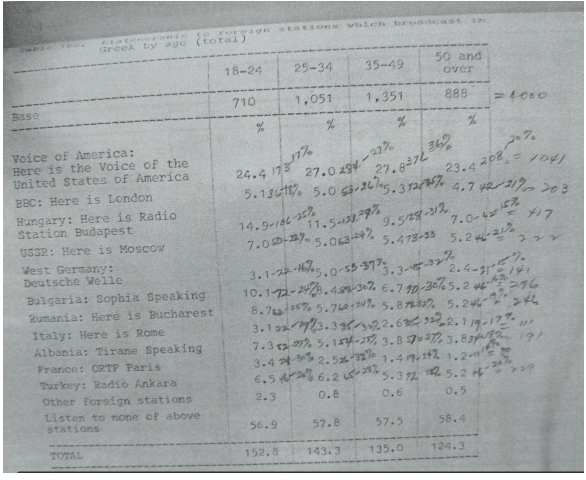


Table 7.2. Listenership to foreign stations which broadcast in Greek by age (total)

	18-24	25-34	35-49	50 and over
Base	710	1,051	1,351	888
	%	%	%	%
Voice of America: Here is the Voice of the United States of America	24.4	27.0	27.8	23.4
BBC: Here is London	5.1	5.0	5.3	4.7
Hungary: Here is Radio Station Budapest	14.9	11.5	9.5	7.0
USSR: Here is Moscow	7.0	5.0	5.4	5.2
West Germany: Deutsche Welle	3.1	5.0	3.3	2.4
Bulgaria: Sophia Speaking	10.1	8.4	6.7	5.2
Rumania: Here is Bucharest	8.7	5.7	5.8	5.2
Italy: Here is Rome	3.1	3.3	2.6	2.1
Albania: Tirane Speaking	7.3	5.1	3.8	3.8
France: ORTF Paris	3.4	2.5	1.4	1.2
Turkey: Radio Ankara	6.5	6.2	5.3	5.2
Other foreign stations	2.3	0.8	0.6	0.5
Listen to none of above stations	56.9	57.8	57.5	58.4
TOTAL	152.8	143.3	135.0	124.3

Table of Contents

3 Identification

- Introduction
- Background
- Identification
- Measurement & Data
- Empirical

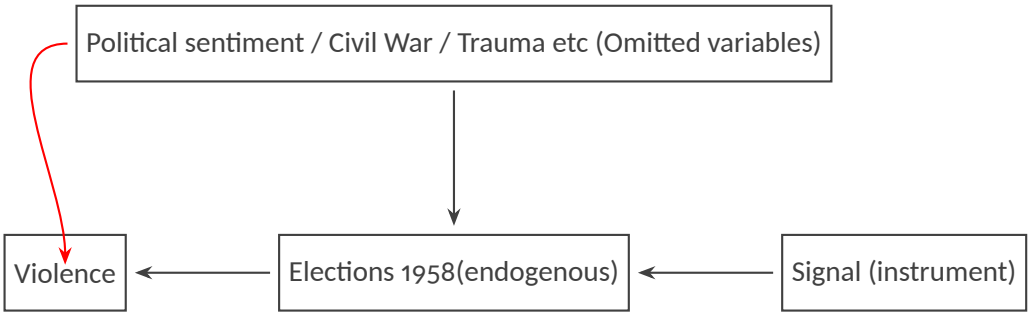
Identification Strategy

What is the state's response to communist organisation?

- Problem 1: Violence is endogenous
- Problem 2: Violence and election outcomes are highly spatially correlated

Causal Diagram

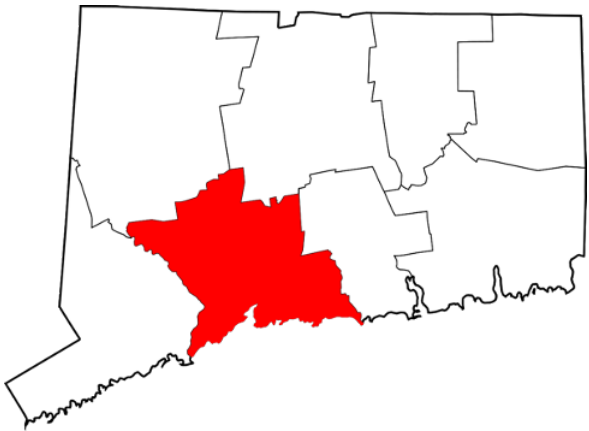
3 Identification



Spatial Spillovers

3 Identification

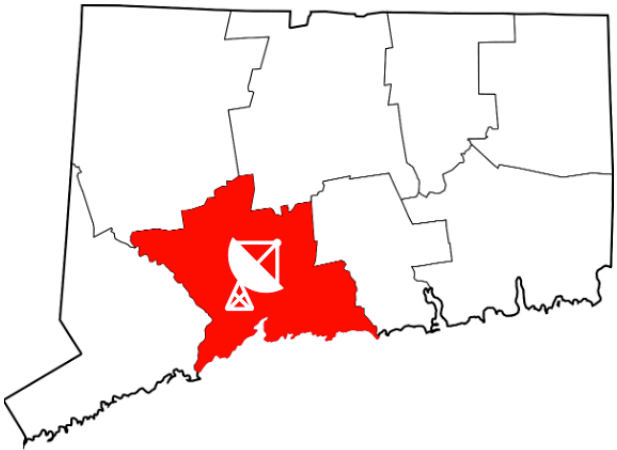
Let's take Municipality X for example to consider the spatial issue:



Spatial Spillovers

3 Identification

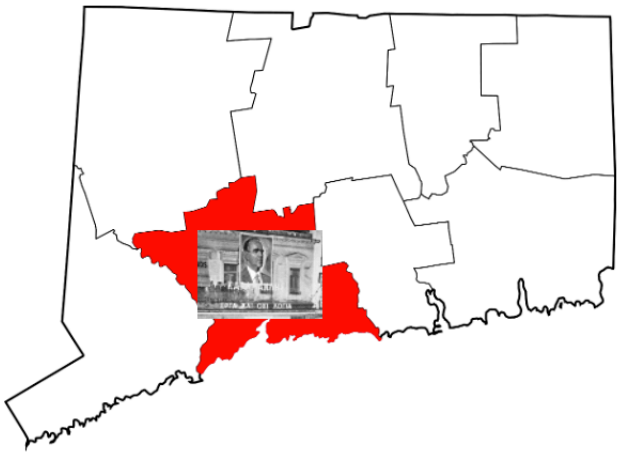
If broadcast signal in Municipality X is high:



Spatial Spillovers

3 Identification

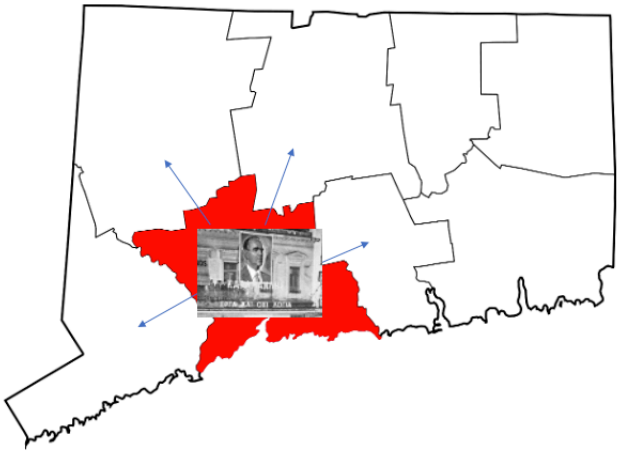
We expect higher results for EDA in 1958:



Spatial Spillovers

3 Identification

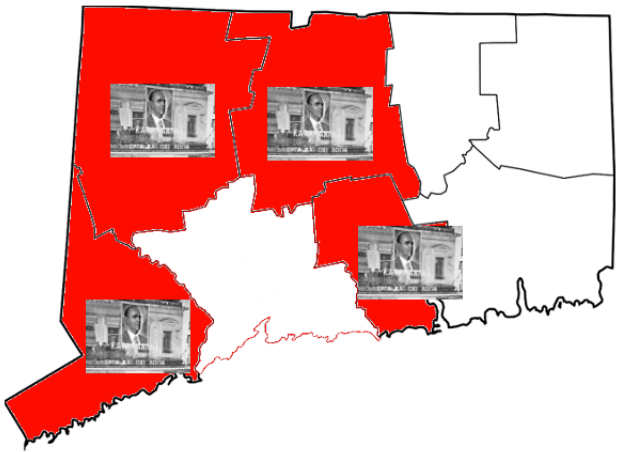
Which we expect to spread to neighbouring municipalities:



Spatial Spillovers

3 Identification

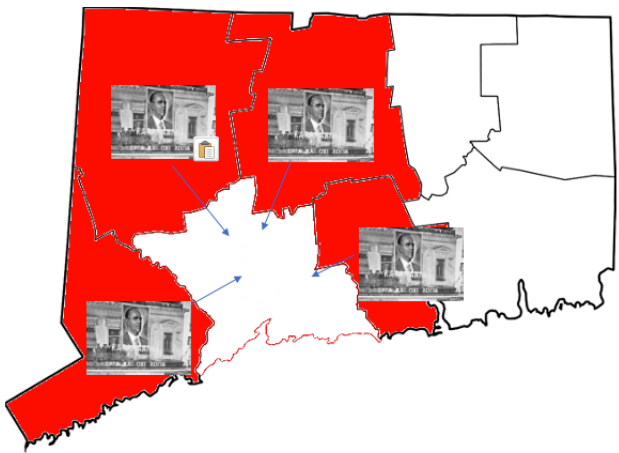
Which increases EDA results there:



Spatial Spillovers

3 Identification

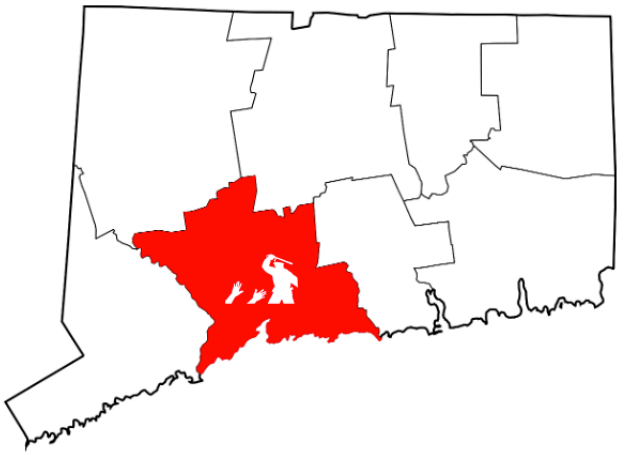
Which in turn spills back into Municipality X increasing EDA results more:



Spatial Spillovers

3 Identification

We predict a higher rate of violence:



Identification

Problem 1: Protests are endogenous

Solution: Use signal as instrument for protesting activity

- Assumption 1.1: Broadcasting of KKE radio increases share of leftists in the Municipality which in turn increases violence
- Assumption 1.2: Broadcasting does not otherwise affect violence and election outcome in 1961 (Mellon, 2021)

Problem 2: Voting behavior, violence, and broadcasting signal are spatially correlated

Violates assumption 1.2!

- Assumption 2.1: Outcomes and error terms are spatially correlated
- Assumption 2.2: Spatial dependencies depend on geographical distance between municipalities

Table of Contents

4 Measurement & Data

- ▶ Introduction
- ▶ Background
- ▶ Identification
- ▶ Measurement & Data
- ▶ Empirical

Radio Signal

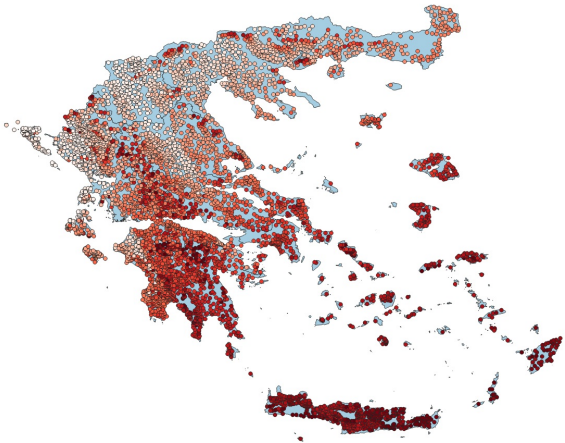
4 Measurement & Data

- We calculate signal transmission loss using the Irregular Terrain Model (Longley & Rice, 1968).
- The model is based on electromagnetic theory and on statistical analyses of both terrain features and radio measurements.
- It predicts the median attenuation of the radio signal as a function of distance and additional losses due to refractions at intermediate terrain obstacles.
- We deduct the transmission loss from the power of the transmitter to obtain the predicted signal strength for each location of interest.
- Data on transmitters location, strength & technical characteristics come from:
  - Online historical sources on radio stations and transmitters across Europe.
  - Psimouli V. (2006)

Radio Signal across space

4 Measurement & Data

Predicted signal strength at village/city level (bins). Darker colors represent higher signal loss.



Oppression Events

4 Measurement & Data

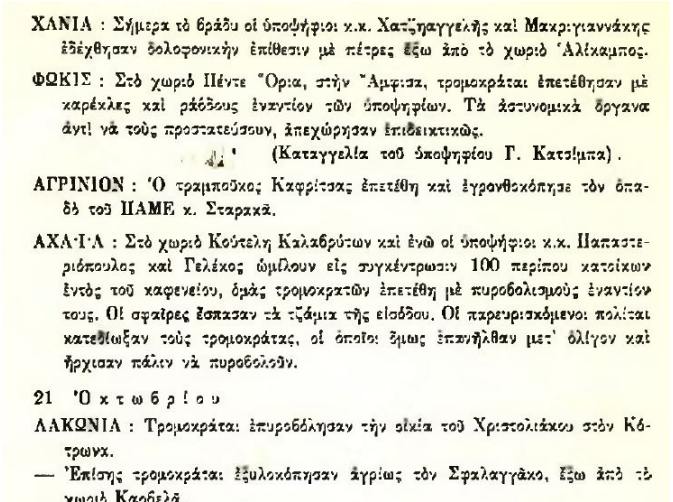
- After the election, EDA - United Democratic Left published a " Black Bible" documenting incidents of electoral oppression
- We code and geolocate all incidents reported up to the day before the elections
- Main estimation considers only verifiable events (name and place) - Robustness considers the universe of all reports

- Incidents include (often simultaneously):
  - Arrests
  - Physical Violence
  - Obstruction of electoral process
  - Intimidation
- Perpetrators are (often simultaneously):
  - Police/ Gerdamerie
  - Military & Paramilitary organisations
  - State actors (i.e. Mayors)

Black Bible

4 Measurement & Data

Data: Oppression Events



ΧΑΝΙΑ : Σήμερα τὸ βράδυ οἱ ὑποψήφιοι κ.κ. Χατζηαγγελῆς καὶ Μακριγιαννάκης ἐδέχθησαν ὁλοφονικὴν ἐπίθεσιν μὲ πέτρες ἔξω ἀπὸ τὸ χωριὸ Ἁλίκαμπος.

ΦΩΚΙΣ : Στὸ χωριὸ Πέντε Ὅρια, στὴν Ἄμφισσα, τρομοκράται ἐπετέθησαν μὲ καρέκλες καὶ ράβδους ἐναντίον τῶν ὑποψηφίων. Τὰ ἀστυνομικὰ ὄργανα ἀντὶ νὰ τοὺς προστατεύσουν, ἀπεχώρησαν ἐπιδεικτικῶς.

(Καταγγελία τοῦ ὑποψηφίου Γ. Κατσίμπα).

ΑΓΡΙΝΙΟΝ : Ὁ τραμπούκος Καφρίτσας ἐπετέθη καὶ ἐγρονθοκόπησε τὸν ὁπαδὸ τοῦ ΠΑΜΕ κ. Σταρακᾶ.

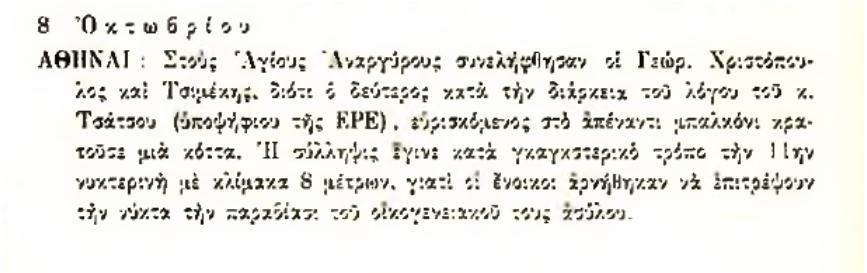
ΑΧΑΪΑ : Στὸ χωριὸ Κούτελη Καλαβρύτων καὶ ἐνῶ οἱ ὑποψήφιοι κ.κ. Παπαστεριόπουλος καὶ Γελέκος ὡμίλουν εἰς συγκέντρωσιν 100 περίπου κατοίκων ἐντὸς τοῦ καφενείου, ὁμὰς τρομοκρατῶν ἐπετέθη μὲ πυροβολισμοὺς ἐναντίον τους. Οἱ σφαῖρες ἔσπασαν τὰ τζάμια τῆς εἰσόδου. Οἱ παρευρισκόμενοι πολῖται κατεδίωξαν τοὺς τρομοκράτας, οἱ ὁποῖοι ὅμως ἐπανῆλθαν μετ' ὀλίγον καὶ ἤρχισαν πάλιν νὰ πυροβολοῦν.

21 Ὀκτωβρίου

ΛΑΚΩΝΙΑ : Τρομοκράται ἐπυροβόλησαν τὴν οἰκίαν τοῦ Χριστολιάκου στὸν Κότρωνα.

— Ἐπίσης τρομοκράται ἐξυλοκόπησαν ἀγρίως τὸν Σφαλαγγάκο, ἔξω ἀπὸ τὸ χωριὸ Καρδελᾶ.

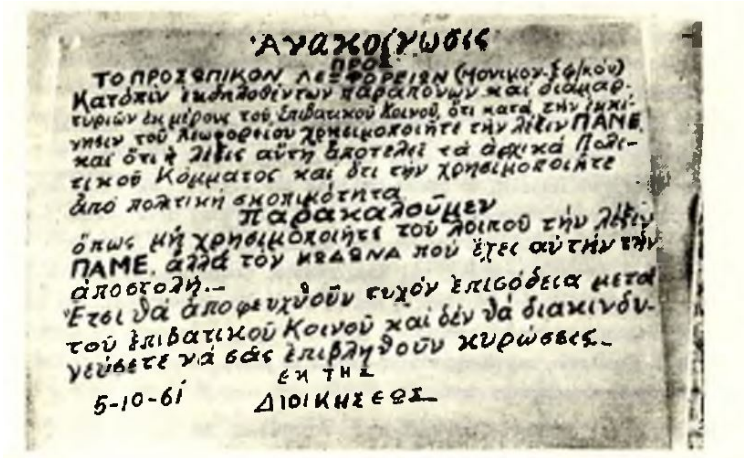
Data: Oppression Events



8 Ὀκτωβρίου

ΑΘΗΝΑΙ : Στούς Ἁγίους Ἀναργύρους συνελήφθησαν οἱ Γεώρ. Χριστόπουλος καὶ Τσιμέκης, διότι ὁ δεύτερος κατὰ τὴν διάρκεια τοῦ λόγου τοῦ κ. Τσάτσου (ὑποψήφιου τῆς EPE), εὑρισκόμενος στὸ ἀπέναντι μπαλκόνι κρατοῦσε μιὰ κόττα. Ἡ σύλληψις ἔγινε κατὰ γκαγκστερικὸ τρόπο τὴν 1 ἢ τὴν νυκτερινὴ μὲ κλίμακα 8 μέτρων, γιατὶ οἱ ἔνοικοι ἀρνήθηκαν νὰ ἐπιτρέψουν τὴν νύκτα τὴν παραβίαση τοῦ οἰκογενειακοῦ τους ἀσύλου.

Data: Oppression Events (a case not coded)



ΑΝΑΚΟΙΝΩΣΙΣ

ΠΡΟΣ

ΤΟ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΙΚΟΝ ΛΕΩΦΟΡΕΙΩΝ (Μονιμον-Εφ/κόν)

Κατόπιν ἐκδηλοθέντων παραπόνων καὶ διαμαρτυριῶν ἐκ μέρους τοῦ ἐπιβατικοῦ Κοινοῦ, ὅτι κατὰ τὴν ἐκκίνησιν τοῦ Λεωφορείου χρησιμοποιῆτε τὴν λέξιν ΠΑΜΕ, καὶ ὅτι ἡ λέξις αὕτη ἀποτελεῖ τὰ ἀρχικὰ Πολιτικοῦ Κόμματος καὶ ὅτι τὴν χρησιμοποιῆτε ἀπὸ πολιτικὴ σκοπιμότητα

Παρακαλοῦμεν

ὅπως μὴ χρησιμοποιῆτε τοῦ λοιποῦ τὴν λέξιν ΠΑΜΕ, ἀλλὰ τὸν ΚΩΔΩΝΑ ποὺ ἔχει αὐτὴν τὴν ἀποστολή.–

Ἔτσι θὰ ἀποφευχθοῦν τυχὸν ἐπιβόδεια μετὰ τοῦ ἐπιβατικοῦ Κοινοῦ καὶ δὲν θὰ διακινδυνεύσετε νὰ σᾶς ἐπιβληθοῦν κυρώσεις.–

ΕΚ ΤΗΣ

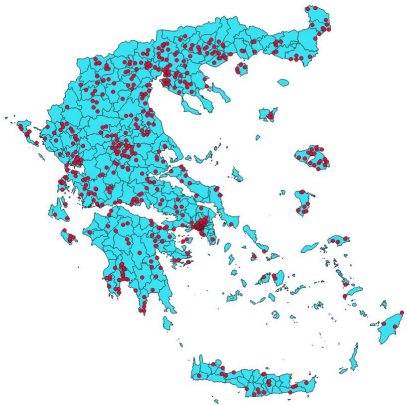
5-10-61 ΔΙΟΙΚΗΣΕΩΣ

Data: Oppression Events

Violent Events based on our coding criteria

	Number
Number of Arrests	536
Number of Abuse Cases	461
Number of Intimidation Cases	650
Number of Victims	1688

Data: Oppression Events



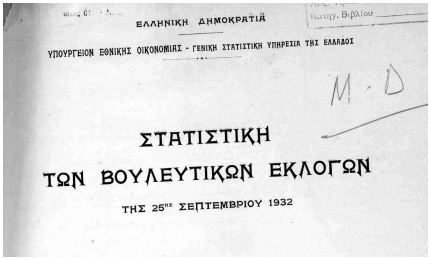
Distribution of Oppression Events (at least one). Source:EDA's Black Bible, authors calculations

Data: Electoral Results

- We digitize and geolocate the following electoral results available at the digital library of Hellenic Statistical Authority:
  - 1932 (Hellenic Statistical Authority)
  - 1958 (Ministry of the Interiors)
  - 1961 (Ministry of the Interiors)
- For robustness purposes we also geolocate the 2004 electoral results (Ministry of the Interiors).

Data: Electoral Results

4 Measurement & Data



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ

ΥΠΟΥΡΓΕΙΟΝ ΕΘΝΙΚΗΣ ΟΙΚΟΝΟΜΙΑΣ - ΓΕΝΙΚΗ ΣΤΑΤΙΣΤΙΚΗ ΥΠΗΡΕΣΙΑ ΤΗΣ ΕΛΛΑΔΟΣ

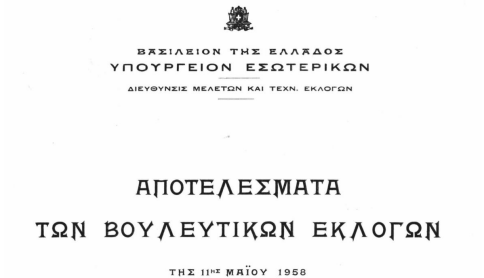
M · D

ΣΤΑΤΙΣΤΙΚΗ

ΤΩΝ ΒΟΥΛΕΥΤΙΚΩΝ ΕΚΛΟΓΩΝ

ΤΗΣ 25ΗΣ ΣΕΠΤΕΜΒΡΙΟΥ 1932

1932 Electoral results. Source: ELSTAT.



ΒΑΣΙΛΕΙΟΝ ΤΗΣ ΕΛΛΑΔΟΣ

ΥΠΟΥΡΓΕΙΟΝ ΕΣΩΤΕΡΙΚΩΝ

ΔΙΕΥΘΥΝΣΙΣ ΜΕΛΕΤΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΤΕΧΝ. ΕΚΛΟΓΩΝ

ΑΠΟΤΕΛΕΣΜΑΤΑ

ΤΩΝ ΒΟΥΛΕΥΤΙΚΩΝ ΕΚΛΟΓΩΝ

ΤΗΣ 11ΗΣ ΜΑΪΟΥ 1958

1958 Electoral results. Source: Ministry of the Interions

Table of Contents

5 Empirical

- Introduction
- Background
- Identification
- Measurement & Data
- Empirical

Radio Activity and Support for EDA

- The first step is to analyze the relation between radio signal strength and EDA support in 1958. This is also the first stage when investigating the threat of left on electoral suppression.

$$\mathrm{EDAShare}_{\mathrm{i}}^{1958} = \beta \mathrm{SignalFree}_{\mathrm{i}} + \gamma \mathrm{Signal}_{\mathrm{i}} + \delta \mathrm{X}_{\mathrm{i}}' + \epsilon_{\mathrm{i}}^{\mathrm{firststage}} \quad (1)$$

  - $\mathrm{EDAShare}_{\mathrm{i}}^{1958}$: EDA vote share in 1958 at municipality i.
  - $\mathrm{SignalFree}_{\mathrm{i}}$ The hypothetical signal strength in free space. Controls for a municipality's proximity to the transmitter.
  - $\mathrm{Signal}_{\mathrm{i}}$: Actual signal strength.
- Once controlling for $\mathrm{SignalFree}_{\mathrm{i}}$, identification of the coefficient of $\mathrm{Signal}_{\mathrm{i}}$ comes from variation in diffraction patterns caused by topographic obstacles along the signal transmission route.

- The set of covariates includes X_i':
  - Prefecture (Nomos) fixed effects: We compare municipalities within the same prefecture.
  - Local geographic characteristics of the municipality (elevation).
  - Communist vote share in 1932 to control for the communist presence before the 1958 elections.
  - log registered voters.

The effect of EDA Vote share in 1958 on 1961 electoral suppression

- Our main results analyze the effect of EDA's success in 1958 on the voting suppression just before 1961 elections.

$$\mathrm{y}_{\mathrm{i}}^{1961} = \beta \mathrm{EDAShare}_{\mathrm{i}}^{1958} + \gamma_{\mathrm{y}}^{\mathrm{IV}} \mathrm{X}_{\mathrm{i}}' + \epsilon_{\mathrm{i}}^{\mathrm{IV}} \tag{2}$$

- Dependent vars: We use 5 measures of electoral suppression:
  - If any type of event occurred (dummy).
  - If at least one arrest occurred (dummy).
  - If at least one abuse event occurred (dummy).
  - Sum of events.
  - Number of victims per registered voters.
- Excluded instrument: Signal strength
- Covariates: as before.

Results

5 Empirical

Baseline IV Regression

	Event	Arrest	Abuse	Tot. Events	Number of Victims
Eda share 1958	0.861**	0.292	0.948***	0.004***	0.004**
	(0.430)	(0.272)	(0.318)	(0.001)	(0.010)
Nomos FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Controls Geo	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
N	4.230	4.230	4.230	4.230	4.230
F-Stat	24.627	24.627	24.627	24.627	24.627
Free Space loss	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

1 st. dev increase in EDA share in 1958% (0.14) increases the probability of having an event in 1961 by 12%

Results

5 Empirical

Controlling for past KKE

	Event	Arrest	Abuse	Tot. Events	Number of Victims
Eda share 1958	1.642***	0.441	1.534***	0.004***	0.005**
	(0.4949)	(0.3862)	(0.3865)	(0.0014)	(0.0023)
Nomos FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Controls Geo	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Controls 1932	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
N	1.727	1.727	1.727	1.727	1.727
F-Stat	31.598	31.598	31.598	31.598	31.598
Free Space loss	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

1 st. dev increase in EDA share in 1958 (0.14) increases the probability of having an event in 1961 by 22.4%

First Stage

5 Empirical

First Stage results

	EDA 1958	ERE 1958	EDA 1958	ERE 1958
Signal	0.001**	-0.0004	0.0016**	-0.0005
	(0.0002)	(0.0003)	(0.0003)	(0.0005)
Nomos FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Controls 1932	No	No	Yes	Yes
Controls Geo	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
N	4.230	4.230	1.727	1.727
R^2	0.026	0.019	0.40	0.30

The effect of EDA Vote share in 1958 on 1961 electoral suppression

- The *exclusion restriction* is based on two premises:
  - Signal strength should be uncorrelated with municipality characteristics (conditional on covariates) impacting voting patterns. **->***Our instrument is exogenous.*
  - The effect of signal strength should be fully captured by the vote share of UDL in 1958. **->***We examine the reduced form relationship between signal strength and electoral oppresion and we find no evidence when restricting our sample to where UDL received no votes at all (both if 1958 and 1932 elections are considered).*

Robustness Checks

5 Empirical

Results remain significant even when we check for:

- Spatial autocorrelation (Druker et al. 2017)
- Placebo Elections (1932, 2004)
- Placebo signals (Ficticious Signal from Turkey/Moscow)

Long term trust

5 Empirical

We use data from the European Quality of Government Index at LAU 2 (zipcodes) level between 2010-2021 (4 waves):

- 2.000 individuals per wave
- 2010, 2013, 2017, 2021 (pooled)
- Perceptions about institutions (Scale 1-10):
  - Local Government
  - National Government
  - Corruption
  - Police
  - Army

Results

5 Empirical

Long term Trust

	Local Gov	National	Police	Army	Corruption
Violence 1961	-0.0617***	-0.0810***	-0.091**	-0.00002	-0.0000
	(0.0002)	(0.0002)	(0.0002)	(0.0002)	(0.0002)
Nomos FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Wave FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
N	7420	7420	5360	6298	7420

- Effect is only driven by people on the left
- Effect is stronger for >55 years old

Future Steps

5 Empirical

Currently working on:

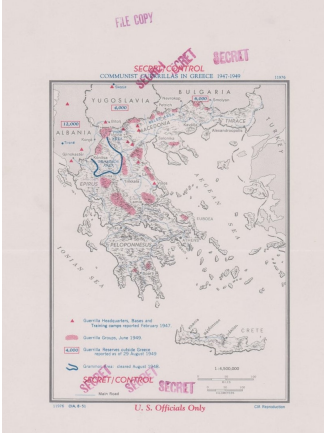
- Public goods provision (*Road construction–> Michelin Maps*)
- Licensing (*licences to do business were administered by local police*)
- Digitising census data for controls

Future Steps

5 Empirical

Currently working on:

- Control for civil war experience (*digitize CIA map depicting guerilla activities*)



Remnants of Civil War *Thanks*