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Women negotiating peace: a step toward more durable peace?

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Abstract

This study investigates whether including women in peace negotiations has facilitated lasting peace. We argue that female negotiators and the action of women's civil society groups that advocate for gender-related provisions strengthen peace durability. We contend that gender-specific considerations during peace negotiations create conditions for more gender equal societies that, in turn, makes peace more stable. This study applies a new approach in its analysis by linking women's participation in peace processes with gender-related provisions and peace durability. An analysis of a series of peace agreements signed from 1989 to 2018 through a Cox regression shows a significant decrease in the recurrence of conflict when at least one woman was a signatory of the agreement. Yet, due to the limited number of nine cases with female signatories, it is not possible to generalize the results. The regression analysis also reveals that gender-related provisions that do not address changes in gender relations do not affect peace durability significantly. As the Colombian and Mindanao (Philippines) cases demonstrate, women's participation in peace negotiations is no guarantee of lasting peace, thus highlighting the relevance of contextualized studies. The cases' analysis underscores the importance of addressing gender power dynamics thoroughly and implementing gender-inclusive provisions in peace agreements.

Keywords: women; peace negotiations; gender-related provisions, conflict, peacebuilding

1 Introduction

Historically, women are underrepresented in the political sphere, especially during peace negotiations in conflict zones (Paffenholz et al. 2016). Nevertheless, women play crucial roles in civilian peace movements and reconciliation processes, pressuring the conflict parties not only to initiate negotiations but also to conclude peace negotiations with the inclusion of civil society actors (Adjei 2019; Paffenholz et al. 2016). Often, women also advocate for their political representation and for gender-sensitive legal and political reforms during the negotiation processes (Paffenholz et al. 2016). Both negotiation lines remain true even during the coronavirus pandemic in conflict zones. For instance, South Sudanese women are leading humanitarian responses to Covid-19 in their communities while refusing to remain silent against gender discrimination, Armenian women are monitoring the implementation of peace agreements, and women in Northern Ireland are drafting Feminist Recovery Plans (Global Network of Women Peace and Security 2020). Although initial studies point to the relevance of gender-inclusive measures during negotiation processes (Nagel 2020; Reid 2021) women remain conspicuously excluded from these processes.

Against the background of widespread exclusion of half of the population in formal peace processes and the achievement of only few gender-sensitive peace agreements, women's participation in peace negotiations and the impact of gender-related provisions on peace duration have barely been studied quantitatively. Thus, drawing on a dataset of the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) of 95 peace agreements from 1989 to 2018, after intra-state conflicts in Latin America, South East Asia, Africa and Europe (Therese Pettersson and Öberg 2020), this study aims to investigate the impact of women's inclusion in peace processes on the durability of peace. The key research question is: Does the participation of women in formal peace negotiations during or after intra-state conflicts have an effect on the durability of peace?

In answering the question, research on the impact of women's participation in peace negotiations is linked to research on peace durability, integrating studies that examine gender-related provisions in peace agreements. The study builds on Krause, Krause, and Bränfors (2018b), who find that peace accords with female signatories result in a significantly longer peace duration than those without a woman's signature. They assume that linkages between women civil society groups and female negotiators improve the accord's content and strengthens its implementation. Along the same line, Paffenholz et al. (2016) scrutinized the participation and inclusion of women in 40 case studies in Africa, Asia, Latin America, Europe and Oceania and found a positive correlation between influential women's groups on negotiation processes and the conclusion and implementation of peace accords, which strongly contributes to peace durability. According to Paffenholz et al. (2016), women were able to exert greater influence when an independent women-only delegation participated in the negotiations or when women coordinated and exchanged ideas across different delegations. The authors affirm that, wherever possible, women advocated for fundamental reforms, such as a halt to violence and the signing of peace agreements, or for women's representation and rights to be granted in the post-conflict state. While most of the literature on women's involvement and their impact on peace durability is based on case studies, Krause et al. (2018b) demonstrated in a Cox regression analysis with 82 peace treaties from 1989 to 2011 that the presence of female signatories has a significant positive effect on peace duration.

Our study seeks to expand the study of Krause, Krause, and Branförs by focusing on the adoption of gender-related provisions that are often demanded by female delegates with connections to different

women groups. We argue that gender-specific considerations during peace negotiations create conditions for more gender equal societies that, in turn, makes peace more stable. We propose the hypothesis that the participation of women in peace negotiations, measured by female signatories of peace treaties, has a positive effect on the duration of peace.

To test the hypothesis, we used a Cox regression model including 95 peace agreements from 1989 to 2018, of which nine were signed by at least one woman and 44 included gender-related provisions. Therefore, the study period from Krause, Krause, and Bränfors (2018a), which included only six different peace agreements with female signatories out of 82 analysed agreements between 1989 and 2011, is extended through 2018 to include three additional peace accords signed by women.

In addition, and to validate the results, a qualitative analysis of two case studies is discussed: i. the case of the Colombian peace accord between the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) and the Colombian government from 2016 and ii. the agreement signed by the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the Philippine government in 2014. Although both cases are known for their gender inclusiveness and gender sensitivity, they experienced a renewed conflict outbreak, which stands in contrast to the conclusions that peace negotiations with female participation are associated with more durable peace, as previous research suggests (Krause, Krause, and Bränfors 2018b; Adjei 2019; Paffenholz et al. 2016). The inclusion of these cases underlines the importance of understanding cultural norms, particularly the behaviour and characteristics attributed to men and women, and social contexts in which real conflicts take place. That is, the importance of analysing the influence of historical developments and political actors on the outcomes of peace negotiations, rather than generalizing women's role in peace negotiation and peace duration.

Research interest in gender-sensitive provisions in peace agreements and their connection with the participation of women in peace processes is rising (Bell 2015; Tengbjer Jobarteh 2018; True and Riveros-Morales 2019). This study contributes to this research field by analysing gender sensitive peace negotiations in relation to the durability of peace.

2 Women's inclusion in peace negotiations and the duration of peace

The affirmation that integrating women into peace negotiations have strong positive effects on achieving lasting peace is based on four arguments. First, women contribute different experiences and points of view during negotiations. For instance, men face a greater risk of death during conflict and a majority of women are forcefully displaced refugees (Buvinic et al. 2013). In order to identify and resolve underlying causes of conflict, diverse perspectives and conflict experiences must be taken into account (O'Reilly, Súilleabháin, and Paffenholz 2015).

Second, a more proportional distribution, and thus more equal participation of women and men, strengthens democratic ideals and institutions, which in turn is often associated with strengthening democracy and its development and, consequently, with the sustainability of peace (Chang et al. 2015).

Third, engaging women, particularly those with ties to civil society groups on the ground, enriches the peace process by diversifying the issues addressed and the provisions adopted, compared to those negotiations where only men participate. The more different policy domains the agreement addresses, the lower the probability that individual reforms are entirely blocked and thus, the greater the

commitment of the conflict parties. This lowers the probability of a new conflict outbreak (Joshi and Quinn 2015). In addition, treaties whose provisions are spread across different sectors are more likely to address different concerns of civil society, which increases the public support for peace (Joshi and Quinn 2015).

Fourth, gender dynamics are recreated and transformed in times of conflict, when most men go to war and women increasingly engage in community and public life (Thompson 1991). While conflict can militarize everyday life and thereby exacerbate patriarchal practices by enabling men to enforce their will through the military, paramilitaries, and militias (Enloe 2000), conflict can also disrupt existing gender power structures when women take over roles left vacant by men who went to war. Webster, Chen, and Beardsley (2019) affirm, based on cross-national data from 1900 to 2015, that the disruption of social practices and stereotypes can lead to short- and medium-term increase in women's empowerment, such as women taking over leading roles and having their voices heard in social, political and economic realms. Various feminist scholars have shown that more gender equal societies are less prone to violent conflict (Caprioli 2005; Melander 2005). Nevertheless, improvements in women's rights in post-conflict scenarios take place only if deliberate steps are taken to maintain and formalize women's empowerment (Reid 2021). Since peace agreements seek to establish new political and legal structures that incentivize and constrain the behaviour of agreement signatories (Badran 2014a), gender-related provisions significantly increase women's political rights after conflict, as Reid (2021) confirms in a quantitative study of 196 peace agreements, of which 50 out of 196 peace agreements included gender-related provisions.

Generally, women tend to demand socio-political and socio-economic reforms during peace processes including human development, justice, and reconciliation, which are directly related to the causes and effects of conflict (O'Reilly, Súilleabháin, and Paffenholz 2015). As Paffenholz et al. (2016) affirmed considering 40 qualitative case studies, female negotiators and civil society activists lobbied for enhanced women's representation in the peace process as well as in the post-conflict state, and for additional gender-sensitive political and legal reforms. During peace negotiations in the Democratic Republic of Congo in 1999 and in Liberia in 2003, women activists literally blocked the doors of the negotiation room with placards calling for an end to the violence until the men inside signed the agreement (Paffenholz et al. 2016). Not only women are propositional during peaceful times and negotiations, they also contribute to reconciliation through memory centres, artistic expressions, documentation and the defence of the acquired rights. Women's work building public awareness of violent experiences contributes to change and a culture of peace; particularly, by pointing to the mark left by violence within their bodies (GIJTR 2020).

Some authors explain women's contribution to peace building by suggesting a women's natural preference for peaceful solutions, which is said to stem from their reproductive role and biological disposition (Adjei 2019). Social constructivist feminists substantiate less aggressive and more empathetic female gender roles by pointing to the different socialization of men and women (Demeritt, Nichols, and Kelly 2014). Men, particularly during conflict, are stereotypically raised as warriors and women as care-takers, which tends to create an aversion to violence in women and encourage them to adopt more peaceful conflict resolution strategies (Demeritt, Nichols, and Kelly 2014).

Effectively, gender-related provisions are more likely to be included when women participate in peace processes, are represented in national parliaments, and their participation in civil society organisations is significant (True and Riveros-Morales 2019). Gender-related provisions are understood as

“references that acknowledge the gendered experiences of conflict and the need to address such experiences as the country moves toward peace... and/or issues uniquely, predominantly or specifically affecting women in conflict and peace” (True and Riveros-Morales 2019, 27).

Since women are not a homogenous group and their interests are diverse, it is not assumed that every woman involved in the peace process is committed to advocate for gender issues. Still, despite of different political standpoints, increasing the representation of women results in more gender equal policies (Mechkova and Carlitz 2019). Accordingly, Reid (2021, 1234) found statistically significant that “women’s presence at the negotiating table, as proxied through signatures is associated with a higher probability that agreements are gender-inclusive”. The relationship between female negotiators and the introduction of gender-related provisions can partly be explained by women’s common understanding of their struggles in conflict periods. In conflict-affected societies, in which the state is fragile or not present and many men are fighting in war, women sustain their households and community life. Individuals exposed to urgent needs, severe economic problems and government abuses are primed for collective action (Ostrom 2000). Women in Burundi, Macedonia and North Ireland as well as in Colombia and in the Philippines organized around non-governmental organizations during times of violent conflict, raising economic and human rights concerns, pushing for the inclusion of women’s rights clauses in the agreements (Anderson 2016; Nylander and Salvesen 2017; Webster, Chen, and Beardsley 2019). Numerous examples show that female delegates in peace negotiations have previously been engaged in women’s organizations or movements. This includes Miriam Coronel Ferrer, who, as the chief negotiator of a peace process in the Philippines, became the first woman to sign a peace agreement in 2014 (Santiago 2015).

Women’s civil society groups with strong connections to the grassroots level provide the foundation that enables female delegates to advocate for a diverse set of socio-political reforms in a peace accord (Krause, Krause, and Bränfors 2018b). Through exchange and lobbying, civil society activists are able to persuade the negotiators to ensure specific provisions for women’s rights. For instance, female negotiators in Colombia invited a delegation of women to report about their experiences in conflict zones, this report then convinced the negotiators to make a binding pledge to pursue a gender approach in the peace treaty (Nylander and Salvesen 2017). Very often, female negotiators inform and include (local) women civil society groups in the peace talks, which constitutes a step toward greater ownership of the process by the people (Chang et al. 2015), a crucial aspect for understanding and addressing structural inequalities and violence. Women’s society groups enrich the female delegates perspectives, ensure support for the treaty’s implementation and thus strengthen the female delegates’ positions in the negotiations (Krause, Krause, and Bränfors 2018b). Consequently, female negotiators and women civil society groups and movements establish mutually reinforcing positions. Strong networks and coordinated political action, such as demonstrations, declarations, petitions, judicial demands and others, contribute to the successful implementation of peace agreements, which is a decisive factor for the durability of peace (Joshi and Quinn 2017). Moreover, including civil society groups in a peace treaty’s negotiation and implementation, such as in Liberia’s peace treaty of 2003, strengthens the legitimacy of the peace processes among the population, which also contributes to the durability of peace (Nilsson 2012).

3 Gender-related provisions and peace durability

Gender-inclusive peace accords are significantly associated with improvements in women's political rights, both in the immediate and in the longer run (Reid 2021). Stronger women's political rights create more gender equal societies which Caprioli (2005) and Melander (2005), among others, found to be less likely to engage in violent conflict. Similarly, increasing female participation in legislatures reduces the likelihood of renewed armed conflict because female legislators shift countries' priorities away from defence spending toward social welfare (Shair-Rosenfield and Wood 2017). Additionally, Bell and McNicholl (2019) found some evidence that gender related provisions focusing on constitutional change, for or by women, when included were implemented. Successfully implemented peace agreements have a positive impact on peace durability (Joshi and Quinn 2017).

Peace agreement negotiations constitute fruitful scenarios to achieve structural and political changes to gender power dynamics, since "patriarchal networks are often radically reshaped during war because women and girls take on unprecedented roles as combatants and interlocutors with authority, and [...] take on new forms of work" (Wood 2008, 553). The disruption of stereotypes during periods of violent conflict can be transposed to new norms and practices through peace agreement's provisions.

Based on different country-based examples, Reid (2021) explains the gender-related provisions' effect on women's rights through one direct and two indirect pathways. First, due to the explicit language and legal nature of peace accords, deviation of expected gender-sensitive reforms becomes more difficult for the parties to the conflict. Gender-related provisions cause a normative compliance pull, as they raise the reputation costs of non-compliance. For instance, the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement for Burundi established a commitment mechanism for the peace agreement's provisions, forcing actors to implement the accord's gender reforms, despite of previous scepticism about sufficiently qualified women to hold political office (Falch 2010). Second, civil society groups can mobilize based on the gender-inclusive language and existing legal commitments. Third, even norm shifts may be materialized or encouraged, as the deliberation process of gender-sensitive peace agreements and the accord's legal nature shape what actors view as normatively and politically necessary and right.

Furthermore, we argue that gender-related provisions reduce structural, cultural, and direct violence by making the political realm more inclusive, by improving women's legal and economic situation, and by reducing gender power asymmetries. While direct personal violence is exerted against the human body, structural violence is indirect and latent, though it often serves to motivate the application of direct violence (Galtung 1969; 1990). Intrinsic inequalities and the unequal distribution of power are breeding ground for structural violence which is in turn built into the social structure. Cultural violence, which is rooted in the system of norms and behaviours, is defined as any aspect of a culture which legitimizes structural and direct violence (Galtung 1990). In order to achieve lasting "positive" (Galtung 1969, 183) peace, peace accords must address all three forms of violence. Peace agreements addressing merely security provisions do not suffice to meet the root causes of conflict (Lee, Ginty, and Joshi 2016). Instead, factors such as the socio-economic context, the exclusion of minorities and gender inequality play a major role in predicting conflict outbreak (Lee, Ginty, and Joshi 2016; Caprioli 2005). For instance, the Colombian peace treaty specifically addresses women as beneficiaries of land redistribution; thereby acknowledging that female heads of household are often ignored when it comes to issues of land ownership (Cóbar, Bjertén-Günther, and Jung 2018).

Nagel (2020) states that the security realm has historically been shaped by traditional masculine norms and behaviours of strength and domination, which influences the state's policies, especially its reliance on violence and militarism. Problematic effects of (civil) wars include, for example, that combat soldiers' training and experiences socialize them with a violent behaviour that can persist outside military settings, meaning that practices diffuse into society and politics (Hudson, Bowen, and Nielsen 2015). Including regulations that favour women's access to services and security, and including women in peace processes allow for features such as empathy, care and collaboration to be part of the discussion (Nagel 2020).

Nagel (2020) affirms that strengthening values of equality, care, empathy, nonviolence, and respect is a key requirement for a successful peace treaty, since the end of an armed conflict is a long-term process, just as transforming patriarchal gender structures. While the author rightly argues that this comprises a feminist strategy, also women's groups that would not describe themselves as feminist, adopt the same position, fully or partially. For example, various Guatemalan women's groups with sometimes conflicting priorities engaged in a process of consensus-building to find issues that unite them (Chang et al. 2015). The shared goal of overcoming violence bound the diverse women groups together, made them rely on men supportive to their causes and enabled them to agree on recommendations for the negotiating parties on a great variety of topics, such as including women's rights to land ownership, labour rights, and increased access to education (Chang et al. 2015).

Since a State's inclination to engage in international and domestic conflict can be significantly reduced if meaningful gender-related provisions achieve to increase gender equality (Caprioli 2005; Melander 2005), it is unavoidable to consider that the militarized nature of the peace process and the armed parties dominating negotiations are major obstacles to women's participation (True and Riveros-Morales 2019). Thus, a major caveat may be a strong military focus of the peace agreement's agenda and the militarized nature of the peace process, because they strengthen patriarchal power structures and undermines its core purpose to promote women's peace and security participation.

4 Methodology

4.1 Data

This study examines women's participation in peace negotiations during and after violent intra-state conflicts, which are more prevalent than inter-state wars since the 1990s. Firstly, we apply a Cox regression analysis, and secondly, we scrutinize two case studies that contradict the hypothesis of women's participation in peace negotiations and the implementation of gender-related provisions in lasting peace.

The study period of the regression analysis begins in 1989, due to a then new paradigm in the international environment that made the establishment of market-based democracies, which should respect human rights in peace (Paris 2004; Kurtenbach 2010), the primary aim of international peace building and peace processes. The data used in the analysis belongs to the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP), which provides information on peace agreements and armed conflict from 1989 to 2018 (Therese Pettersson and Öberg 2020). The codings of the dependent and independent variables from 1989 to 2011 were adopted from Krause, Krause, and Bränfors (2018a), who also relied on the UCDP datasets. The authors implemented the codings from 2012 through the end of the study period in 2018, according to the rules of Krause, Krause, and Bränfors (2018a). Thus, "partial peace

agreements” and “full peace agreements” are included in the analysis, unless a “full peace agreement” was preceded by several partial agreements whose validity is confirmed in the last full peace agreement. In this case, previous partial agreements are censored in order to not overestimate the effect of women’s participation. If women signed a partial agreement but not the last full peace agreement, it was still coded as “signed by women” to account for their process involvement (Krause, Krause, and Bränfors 2018b, 993). All in all, the quantitative analysis considers 95 peace treaties in 42 different countries for the period from 1989 to 2018.

Following the Cox regression analysis, we tested the hypothesis that women’s participation and gender-related provisions contribute to peace durability using two case studies. We selected the peace accord between the Philippine government and the MILF in 2014 and the peace agreement between the Colombian government and the FARC-EP in 2016. Both peace processes are known for their gender inclusiveness and the accords for their gender sensitivity and yet, both experienced renewed conflicts. The analysis of these cases is based on secondary literature.

4.2 The dependent variable

The duration of peace, measured in days without armed conflict from the day the peace agreement is signed until the day the conflict breaks out again, constitutes the dependent variable in the regression model. An active armed conflict is defined as “a contested incompatibility that concerns government and/or territory where the use of armed force between two parties, of which at least one is the government of a state, results in at least 25 battle-related deaths in a calendar year” (Therese Pettersson 2020, 1; Gleditsch et al. 2002; Therése Pettersson, Högladh, and Öberg 2019). The variable considers the behaviour of all parties involved in the same conflict, even if they have not signed the peace treaty. If peace persisted after the signing of a peace agreement, we counted the number of days until the end of the observation period in 2018.

4.3 The independent variables

The central independent variable of the model is coded as the presence or absence of a female signatory of a peace treaty, thereby assuming that signatories had the means to play a significant role in previous negotiations (Krause, Krause, and Bränfors 2018b). The signatories’ names in peace treaties from 2012 to 2018 were gathered from the peace treaties stored in the UN Peacemaker Database (United Nations Peacemaker 2019) and their gender was identified through internet research on each individual.

For the first model, two more variables are considered. Firstly, a variable measuring the democratic development of a state is adopted, using values of the categorical democracy variable of Krause, Krause, and Bränfors (2018a) and extended by the democracy scores of the Political Instability Task Force Data Set (Marshall, Gurr, and Jagers 2017). The democracy variable is relevant because countries in transition from autocracy to democracy or vice versa face a higher risk of falling back into conflict than consolidated autocratic or democratic states. Furthermore, there is a curvilinear relationship between the political representation of women and the extent of democracy (Bjarnegård and Melander 2011). Secondly, the conflict duration variable measures the years in conflict before the signing of the peace treaty. On the one hand, according to the ‘war-weariness hypothesis’ (Badran 2014b, 202), the probability of falling back into conflict is lower after prolonged conflicts (Quinn, Mason, and Gurses 2007; Gurses, Rost, and McLeod 2008). Due to the conflict parties’ awareness that none of them could achieve a quick victory, their interest in renewed fighting after a peace agreement

is low (Gurses, Rost, and McLeod 2008). On the other hand, a longer conflict duration enables women civil society groups to acquire more effective lobbying skills, thus exerting more effective pressure on important decision-makers (Anderson 2016). The variable is informed by Krause, Krause, and Bränfors' (2018a) variable conflict duration and supplemented with data from the UCDP (Sundberg and Melander 2013; Therese Pettersson and Öberg 2020).

In the second model, a dummy variable which indicates the presence of gender-related provisions in the peace treaty is included, thereby verifying whether gender sensitive agreements contribute to lasting peace by improving gender equality in the country. Data was used from the PA-X Peace Agreements Database (Bell et al. 2021) and includes references to girls, widows, mothers, sexual violence (or forms thereof), gender violence, UN Security Council Resolution 1325 or the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and gender quotas. Since our variable 'gender provisions' meets the definition more suitably than 'gender quotas' by themselves, the latter are not added as another variable.

In order to ascertain that the level of gender equality at the time of the signature of a peace treaty does not precede the gender-related provisions' potential effect, a categorical variable reflecting the percentage of women in parliament is used as a proxy for gender equality in a country in a third model. Furthermore, increasing female participation in legislatures reduces the likelihood of growing defence spending as well as of the initiation of armed conflict (Shair-Rosenfield and Wood 2017). The variable is informed by Krause, Krause, and Bränfors' (2018a) female legislators variable and supplemented with data from the World Bank (The World Bank 2022).

Three variables lower the hazard ratio of Krause, Krause, and Bränfors' (2018a) female signatory variable. In order to account for these effects, the three variables, which are the number of UN troops and police forces in a country, the number of female combatants and the presence or absence of gender quotas, are considered in our models, too. A categorical variable measuring the number of female combatants is informed by data from the WARD Data set from Thomas and Wood (2017). Missing cases after 2014 were complemented by publicly available sources, such as news reports and academic accounts. Furthermore, the number of UN peacekeeping troops and police forces was added as a time-variant variable. Respective data was derived from Krause, Krause, Bränfors (2018a) model and expanded by data from the World Bank and the UN peacekeeping mission website (UN Peacekeeping 2022; The World Bank 2020). Gender quotas are included in the gender provisions variable explained above but not considered individually in order to avoid multicollinearity.

4.4 Regression analysis

This study applies a Cox proportional hazard model, which compares the risk of conflict recurrence for peace agreements with female signatories to those without. Additionally, it compares peace accords with gender-related provisions to those without. The Cox regression model is particularly useful, as it applies right-censoring, thereby ruling out the possibility that peace agreements which were adopted early in the observation period have a greater effect on peace durability than later peace agreements. Furthermore, it is preferred to a fully parametric model, such as the Weibull model, since the Cox model has less restrictive theoretical assumptions with regards to the distribution of the duration times.

With respect to independent variables, a basic model with female signatories, the duration of the conflict and the level of democratic development was built. Based on this, the variables gender-related

provisions, number of female legislators, number of female combatants as well as number of UN troops and police forces were added individually in order to determine their effect on peace durability and on the hazard ratio of female signatories (see table 1).

5 Results

5.1 Descriptive analysis

The majority – five of nine – of peace agreements with at least one female signature were followed by durable peace. In four cases – 44% - conflict recurred (see Annex 2): in two countries in the second year and in the remaining two in the fourth year (see Annex 3). In contrast, of the 86 peace treaties that were signed solely by men, 61, or 81%, fell back into war (see Annex 2): 43, or 70%, did so within the first 12 months (see Annex 2). Thus, only 29% of peace agreements without female signatories resulted in durable peace. Additionally, all peace agreements with female signatories adopted gender-related provisions.¹ In total, 44 of the considered 95 peace agreements, i.e. 46%, include gender sensitive wording.

Thus, the initial review of the distribution of the central variables supports the hypothesis: Peace accords signed by at least one woman are followed by a longer period of peace than those signed only by men.

5.2 Regression analysis

Table 1: Cox proportional hazards regression. Female signatories and peace duration

	(1) Basic model	(2) Model including gender provisions	(3) Model including female deputies	(4) Model including female combatants	(5) Model including UN Troops and Police Forces
Variables					
Female signatories	0.254** (-2.92)	0.228 ** (-2.88)	0.193*** (-3.02)	0.228** (-2.54)	0.234** (-2.82)
Conflict duration (in years)	1.036*** (3.48)	1.035*** (3.42)	1.035*** (2.95)	1.043*** (4.01)	1.036*** (3.51)
Level of democracy (Ref.: Undemocratic)					
Democratic	0.246*** (-3.49)	0.253*** (-3.46)	0.257*** (-3.52)	0.187*** (-2.46)	0.226*** (-3.51)
Gender Provisions		1.208 (0.68)	1.464 (1.42)	1.230 (0.62)	1.154 (0.52)
Female parliamentarians (Ref.: 0-5%)					

¹ See Annex 3, for more details about the nine peace accords with female signatories.

				0.988	
5-15%				(-0.03)	
				0.737	
> 15%				(-0.59)	
Female combatants					
(Ref.: 0-5%)					
				0.511	
5-15%				(-1.71)	
				0.316*	
> 15%				(-2.38)	
UN troops and police forces					1.001**
					(2.83)
Observations	677	677	645	609	677

Note:

t-statistics in parentheses; *** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05; Ref. stands for 'reference category'

To measure the level of democracy, democracy scores of the Political Instability Task Force Data Set below 5 were coded with 0 as 'non-democratic', values from 5 to 10 with 1 as 'democratic'. To avoid endogeneity problems, values of the previous year are used.

For the variable 'Female deputies in parliament' values of the previous year are used to avoid endogeneity problems.

The variable 'UN troops and police forces' shows the effect of each additional 100 soldiers or police forces on peace duration.

Table 1 shows that having at least one female signature on a peace treaty is associated with a significantly lower risk ($p < 0.01$) of falling back into conflict, when controlling for all other variables: the first model shows a 74.6% lower risk for peace treaties with female signatories of recurring conflict, compared to peace treaties with solely male signatories. Compared to the other models, the third model which includes female deputies depicts with an even 80.7% lower risk of conflict outbreak the lowest chance of conflict recurrence for treaties with female negotiators. Hence, considering the female legislators variable, the effect of female signatories is even increased. Female deputies, however, do not show a significant effect on the risk of conflict recurrence. This result confirms the hypothesis that women's participation in peace negotiations, measured by the presence of at least one female signatory of a peace treaty, positively affects the subsequent duration of peace after intra-state conflicts.

The presence of gender-related provisions in a peace agreement does not have a significant effect on the risk of conflict recurrence, taking all other variables into account. This non-significant effect can be explained by the coding of the dichotomous variable which only distinguishes between the absence or the presence of gender-related provisions. Hence, it does not differentiate between a broad set of gender-related provisions and mentioning for instance "women" or "girls" only once. Consequently, a great number of the peace treaties considered to have included gender-related provisions do not necessarily have the potential to improve gender equality and hence, the durability of peace. The level of democracy and conflict duration both show a significant effect on peace durability at the 0.001 level. Thus, democratic states have a significantly lower risk of falling back into conflict and the longer the conflict, the greater the risk of conflict outbreak, given in both cases, that all other variables remain constant. With each additional 100 UN soldiers or police officers, the risk of armed conflict increases, holding all other variables constant. However, this outcome needs to be interpreted cautiously, due to

the risk of an inverse relationship, meaning that also because of an acuter conflict, more UN personnel could be allocated in the conflict zone. Interestingly, the involvement of more than 20% of women within rebel groups are associated with a significantly ($p < 0.05$) lower risk of conflict, than those conflicts with less than 5% female combatants, all other variables hold equal.

5.3 Qualitative Analysis

While the quantitative analysis shows that female signatories of peace treaties significantly affect the chances of enduring peace, and gender-related provisions do not seem to affect peace durability, two case studies with strong female involvement in the peace negotiations contradict the findings. Colombia experienced renewed armed conflict after 15 months and Mindanao (Philippines) after 22 months.

Gender-related provisions and peace duration in the Colombian peace process

After four years of peace negotiations, which were preceded by more than 50 years of conflict, on 26 November 2016, the guerrilla group FARC and the Colombian government signed the peace treaty 'Acuerdo Final para la Terminación del Conflicto y la Construcción de una Paz Estable y Duradera'. Nevertheless, human rights violations and assassinations, exerted by different paramilitary criminal groups (bandas criminales), FARC dissidents, and other guerrilla groups persist (Maihold and Wesche 2019; Meger and Sachseder 2020). The Covid-19 pandemic has further favoured dynamics such as the expansion of influence of illegal armed groups, which have negatively impacted the efforts of rural transformation (Calderón et al. 2020). In this context, the National Agenda was focused on solving the logistical and operational difficulties derived from Covid-19, threatening the progress made and the attainment of the pending objectives of the peace agreement.

However, the peace negotiations preceding the peace accord in 2016 were shaped by a vivid women's movement and active women civil society groups, as well as by female negotiators. In response to a civil women's summit, a Gender Commission – novel in peace negotiations – with five female delegates from each of the two conflict parties, was established. After the Commission invited delegations of women, LGBTI persons, and conflict victims to share their experiences and opinions (Nylander and Salvesen 2017), the peace treaty was revised to incorporate a gender approach. Thus, the women's efforts paid off, resulting in a gender-sensitive peace treaty (Cóbar, Bjertén-Günther, and Jung 2018) that recognizes gendered impacts of the conflict, considers some gender-specific needs, and even mentions far-reaching discrimination against women in the implementation of their political participation opportunities (Gobierno Colombiano 2016), thereby touching on gendered power dynamics.

Yet, the agreement fell short in leading to the implementation of gender-specific regulations and in promoting change in gender norms and stereotypes. During 2020, the implementation of the gender-related measures continued to advance at a slower pace than the overall implementation of the Final Agreement. Of the 130 gender-specific provisions, only 10% had been fully implemented by November 2020 (Kroc Institute 2021). Similarly, by 2021 only 9 of the 51 gender commitments set out in the Framework Implementation Plan had been achieved (Kroc Institute 2021). Strikingly, even though more than 50% of the beneficiaries of land delivery, as envisioned in the peace treaty, are women, more than twice as many hectares were delivered to men (Consejería Presidencial para la Estabilización y la Consolidación 2021).

In this case, key causes of conflict are not eliminated and the population's confidence in the peace treaty declines (Kroc Institute 2020), thus reducing the chances of durable peace. The poor implementation of the peace treaty's gender-related provisions shows a lack of political will and importance given to the issue. This reluctance is exemplified by the criticism of influential Evangelical and select Catholic leaders who claim that the peace treaty's 'gender ideology' threatens the traditional family model, especially since it mentions homosexuals rights (Nylander and Salvesen 2017). Therefore, inclusion, particularly of women's and homosexuals' rights in the treaty's text, is still a controversial issue between progressive and conservative parts of the conflict. Against this background of influential political interests opposing changes in gender norms and the poor implementation of gender-related provisions, a direct positive effect of gender-sensitive regulations on lasting peace cannot be proven.

Gender-related provisions and peace duration in the peace process of Mindanao, Philippines

On the Philippine Island of Mindanao, a 42-year conflict was settled on 24 March 2014, with the 'Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro' peace treaty between the MILF and the Philippine government. Conflict on Mindanao renewed on 1 February 2016. In 2011, during peace negotiations, Miriam Coronel Ferrer was appointed by the government as the first female chief negotiator of a peace process in the modern era. Three out of six female delegates signed the peace agreement and only men on the MILF side. However, in response to pressure from the Philippine government and other international groups, the MILF appointed four women as advisors and members of the technical working group in 2011 (Santiago 2015). Additionally, different civil society groups, overwhelmingly composed of women, lobbied for gender-related provisions and supported the female negotiator's agendas (Santiago 2015).

The gender-related provisions in the Bangsamoro peace treaty addresses women's political participation and calls for attention to gender-specific needs and opportunities, including protection from all forms of violence and a finance mechanism for women's rehabilitation and reconstruction programs (Hedström and Senarathna 2015). Nonetheless, women's rights were not identified as an issue requiring long-term commitments and the involvement of local peace organizations and of the women's movement in the peace process was not acknowledged at all in the peace treaty (Cóbar, Bjertén-Günther, and Jung 2018). Hardly any of the existing provisions seek to sustainably transforming gendered power dynamics and gender roles; these provisions would challenge the conservative Islamic principles that are still widespread among MILF supporters (Hedström and Senarathna 2015). Hence, the role of Bangsamoro women still remains anchored in the domestic sphere, whereas their participation in politics as well as in 'productive' work is put aside (Hedström and Senarathna 2015). Additionally, exclusive clientelist structures in Mindanao's political circles hamper provisions to include more women in politics, since only women from a certain elite are potentially able to gain influence (Hedström and Senarathna 2015).

The implementation of gender-related provisions was hindered by a lack of transparency by MILF commanders who keep secret the number of women who were active on their behalf. This underscores the interests of those in power and/or capable of exerting pressure – primarily men – who shape the state agenda and practices, including how to deal with conflicts (Nagel 2020). Additionally, there are no monitoring mechanisms regarding how treaty provisions are implemented (Hedström and Senarathna 2015).

The pandemic poses further difficulties in the implementation of the Philippine peace agreement, including the engagement of civil society groups, thereby threatening the continuity of peace. Peacebuilding activities were temporarily suspended or reduced, due to quarantine restrictions (Leguro 2020). Even though, due to the previous armed conflict and the impact of natural disasters, the Bangsamoro region was identified as a priority intervention area during the pandemic, community residents have felt unsure about their protection from threats, not only regarding the virus but also regarding socio-economic vulnerabilities (Leguro 2020). Triggered by food scarcity, land disputes, clan feuds, and violent extremist groups, between March and June 2020 civil society organizations observed 21 armed incidents in conflict hot spots in Mindanao (Leguro 2020). This situation causes great numbers of internally displaced persons, among whom women and girls face disproportionate impacts due to traditional gender roles (Abo and Ayao 2020). For instance, women often eat less from already limited food rations in order to prioritise other family members, especially children (Leguro 2020). In conclusion, the existing gender-sensitive provisions in the peace agreement were incomplete and partially not implemented, due to several reasons, including conservative interests and attention to other priorities, such the Covid-pandemic. Therefore, they do not significantly affect gender equality and, thus, neither the durability of peace.

6 Discussion

The results of the Cox proportional-hazards model demonstrate that, as hypothesized, peace treaties with female signatories, after controlling for all other variables, decrease the risk of conflict recurrence. It is striking that in seven of the nine cases with female signatories, the conflict duration exceeds the average duration of 19 years. However, this finding does not explain the lower risk of conflict recurrence for peace agreements with female negotiators since a longer conflict duration is associated with a higher risk of renewed conflict. Instead, the result confirms Anderson's (2016) findings that the longer a conflict persists, the more that women's groups mobilize successfully, acquire more effective lobbying skills, and exert more effective pressure on important decision-makers. Besides, the significantly higher chance of lasting peace for conflicts with more than 15% of female combatants in rebel groups, may bolster the assumption that societies which support norms of gender equality to a certain degree, are less prone to recurring conflict.

This study argues that women's participation broadens the topics addressed in a peace treaty, thus leading to more diverse and often gender-sensitive provisions. However, contrarily to our previous assumption, mere referrals to gender-specific issues do not have a significant effect on the risk of conflict recurrence, as has been shown in the Cox regression model. This outcome has been further explored for the case studies of Colombia and Mindanao in the Philippines. While the assumption that diverse regulations in many different policy domains positively impact peace duration (Joshi and Quinn 2015) remains, the argument that gender-sensitive regulations reduce structural inequalities, thereby contributing to the durability of peace, cannot be confirmed for the case studies. In both cases, the regulations were insufficiently implemented which is a major caveat for lasting peace. The Kroc Institute (2019) rightly points out for the case of Colombia that unless land reforms are implemented holistically and simultaneously, unless women have institutional measures to address the impact of gender-based violence, and unless their participation in decision-making processes and political spaces is guaranteed, neither the transformation of rural areas most affected by the Colombian conflict, nor sustainable peace will be possible. In this case, key causes of conflict are not eliminated and the

population's confidence in the peace treaty declines (Kroc Institute 2020), which both reduces the chances of durable peace.

Although fighting between the respective central conflict parties has ceased in Colombia, a mutation of violence, instead of an end to conflict, has emerged. Activists are systematically murdered in Colombia (Maihold 2018), respective family members are killed in clan-based disputes in Mindanao (Hedström and Senarathna 2015), and civilians are in danger of crossing the line of fire of different extremist groups in both countries (Sundberg and Melander 2013; Therese Pettersson and Öberg 2020).

Based on the above discussion, various reasons for the missing transformative potential of gender-sensitive peace treaties can be derived. First, the dataset used includes peace agreements with a high share of partial and comprehensive peace treaties with gender-related provisions (44 of the 95). In comparison, of the 1518 inter- and intrastate peace agreements between 1990 and 2015, which Bell & McNicholl (2019) studied, only 21% included at least some provisions that addressed women, women's rights or their inclusion. Before the adoption of the United Nations Security Council Resolution on Women, Peace and Security (UNSCR 1325) in 2000, gender-related provisions were even much less frequent; if present, they merely referred to women's inclusion in peace process or to sexual violence (Bell and McNicholl 2019). Afterwards, a trend developed which included references on more different levels, including legislative quotas, or women's rights (Bell and McNicholl 2019). However, the variable "gender provisions" in our analysis cannot distinguish between agreements which engage substantively and refer frequently to women, their rights, or even to legislative quotas and those which mention, for instance, 'girls' only once. The inclusion of few or superficial gender-sensitive provisions does not indicate a gender perspective with the leverage to transform the country's gender power relations, and to contribute to lasting peace. Thus, in order to scrutinize the effect of gender-related provisions on peace durability quantitatively, future research should gather and use differentiated data which distinguishes between the number of gender-related provisions and the areas to which they refer.

Further learnings can be drawn from the case studies. First, failing to implement gender-specific provisions is an important and obvious hurdle, since the implementation of a peace treaty is extremely important for lasting peace (Joshi and Quinn 2017). A lack of political will of Colombia's Ex-President (Duque 2018-2022), whose party had originally opposed the peace treaty, or of the MILF transitional government in Mindanao, weak state structures, such as in rural former FARC territories (Maihold and Wesche 2019), missing mechanisms to monitor the accountability of the executing government, such as in Mindanao (Hedström and Senarathna 2015), as well as gender norms that contradict the provisions, such as among MILF supporters or among Evangelical and Catholic elites in Colombia, hamper the substantive realization of peace. Additionally, peace treaties with "little real 'agreement'" between the conflict parties often experience chronic implementation failure (Bell 2015, 1). This is attributable to gender-related provisions in the peace treaty of Bangsamoro that were adopted by conflicting parties pursuing deeply different visions of gender (Hedström and Senarathna 2015).

Moreover, the gender-sensitive approach within a peace treaty might only develop its pacifying effect when a democratically elected government can count on strong and legitimate institutions to increase gender equality (Bjarnegård and Melander 2011). Firstly, political violence and civil war occur more often when political institutions are informal and weak, and when the political culture is characterized by militarized masculinity. Secondly, the level of gender equality develops its pacifying effect only when the level of democracy is relatively high (Bjarnegård and Melander 2011).

None of these conditions are fulfilled in the case studies. First, as evident in clientelist political structures in Mindanao and in the successful exertion of control by armed groups in former FARC territories in Colombia (Maihold and Wesche 2019), political institutions in both contexts are weak. Second, both societies are impacted by a culture of militarized masculinity, which is, according to Meger and Sachseder (2020), reinforced by patriarchal structures and neoliberal economic interests, both of which benefit from structural and open violence against the civilian population, thus contributing to the persistence of violence. The analysis corresponds to the Colombian government from 2018 to 2022 of Duque, which announced an increased military presence in rural areas in its defence and security plan (Meger and Sachseder 2020). Additionally, it sympathized with Evangelical and Catholic elites who criticized the first draft of the peace treaty for its strong 'gender ideology' (Nylander and Salvesen 2017) and it was also responsible for very slow progress in the implementation of the peace treaty. Characteristics of militarized masculinity are also found in Mindanao, since a large number of MILF supporters stick to conservative patriarchal norms, violent clan structures shape peoples' lives (Hedström and Senarathna 2015) and 42 years of conflict have normalized armed violence. Thus, neither the conditions for a successful implementation of the peace accords per se, nor the circumstances needed for a pacifying effect of increased gender equality are given.

In order to reduce such deep-seated, structural and cultural forms of violence, as Galtung (1969; 1990) would call them, a gender-sensitive peace treaty must not just address the empowerment of women and girls but also the underlying gender-specific, historically grown power dynamics and role models, including militarized masculinities (Meger and Sachseder 2020). Thus, implementing a comprehensive gender perspective that bolsters values of equality, empathy, and nonviolence is a long-term process which cannot be reached with mainly superficial referrals to women or girls (Nagel 2020). Only under this condition will gender-related provisions bring about structural changes that improve gender equality and its subsequent, positive impact on the peacefulness of the state.

Considering the officially declared end of the internal conflicts between the FARC and the Colombian government as well as between the MILF and the Philippine government and the actual situations, which are marked by violence, the negative definition of peace with the threshold value of 25 conflict-related deaths used in the quantitative part of this study cannot grasp the complexity of peaceful coexistence. With a more differentiated understanding of peace, the high level of participation and recognition of the commitment of women in the case studies would already be interpreted as a relevant step toward more inclusive and thus potentially more peaceful societies. Although it is not possible to establish "positive" peace, free of cultural and structural violence (Galtung 1969, 183; 1990), in either case, historically marginalized groups (including for example the indigenous population) were considered in the peace negotiations and new opportunities for women to participate were created. Prospectively, the negative definition of peace that is typically applied in quantitative studies needs to be revised to allow for taking gradual and socially profound changes in norms into account when investigating the transition from conflict-ridden to peaceful societies.

Statistical results of this study should be interpreted as tendencies instead of generalizing them, since it is based on only nine peace agreements with female signatories. Furthermore, the presence of gender-related provisions could not be captured more nuanced, causing that peace treaties with only one referral to female victims of the conflict are treated just as such gender-sensitive peace treaties as the Colombian one. Due to a lack of information on the diversity of participants in the peace negotiations, the participation of civil society organizations is not accounted for in the Cox regression model. Nevertheless, civil society actors have not been solely responsible for a longer peace duration

in the considered nine cases with female signatories since female peace negotiators and, in particular, women civil society groups are closely interlinked, often supporting each other in their sphere of influence (Abo and Ayao 2020). Thus, they do not act as a confounding factor. Instead, the relevance of linkages between diverse women in peace negotiations is verified for the cases of Colombia and the Philippines.

Since female signatories in the considered nine cases of the quantitative analysis were well positioned in the negotiations and backed up by strong female civil society movements, international actors were not mainly responsible for putting women in these positions. However, with regard to Bell's (2015) finding that particularly gender-sensitive peace agreements are often facilitated and influenced by international actors, future research should examine the effects of international mediators and donors in greater detail.

The case studies of Colombia and Mindanao were chosen to examine if gender-sensitive peace agreements, negotiated by men and women, could ensure longer peace duration. Although both peace processes were shaped by female negotiators and adopted gender-sensitive provisions, they pose contradicting examples to theory and the quantitative analysis. It is clear that the participation of women must be seen in the context of overall social structures and cannot *per se* bring about lasting peace. Still, based solely on two case studies it is premature to determine whether it is not only the presence of female negotiators but also a thorough gender approach in peace treaties that positively impacts peace durability. Therefore, future research should scrutinize the gender-specific design of peace treaties quantitatively in a nuanced manner, differentiating between the number of referrals to women and girls in different areas, such as in the demobilization and reintegration process of combatants, in the reparation of victims, in gender quotas, etc., or by applying multiple case studies. The case studies also highlight the reinforcing relation between gender equality and democratic practices as well as between the persistence of conflict and militarized masculinity and patriarchal structures. These findings call for contextualised research to disentangle the historical and social constructs where conflict occurs and; therefore, the need for multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary research to better understand the context of human behaviour (Steinber 2015). Transdisciplinary research in particular is proposed by gender studies and feminists' movements for its 'politicizing, challenging, intervening attitude' (Pulkkinen 2015, 201) to frame the conversation among academic disciplines, political action and specific female lived experiences.

7 Conclusions

The aim of this study was to assess the impact of women's participation in peace negotiations on the durability of peace, thereby scrutinizing the impact of gender-related provisions.

Our regression analysis shows that the presence of female negotiators in peace talks increases peace durability after intra-state conflict significantly. However, the results should be interpreted as tendencies, due to the limited number of nine cases with female signatories. The qualitative analysis highlights the importance of considering contextual studies to understand the actual impact women and women's civil society groups as well as gender-related provisions can have when stakeholders with contradicting interests and (entrenched) patriarchal structures are taken into account.

Deeply rooted gender norms and gender power dynamics need to be addressed by adopting provisions that actively contribute toward the reduction of inequalities. It is highlighted that the successful

implementation of gender-related provisions is crucial for peace accords to fulfil its gender-transformative potential. However, as the case studies do not support the assumed link between gender-sensitive peace agreements and peace durability, future research should scrutinize their relationship more closely, thereby distinguishing between the number and area of gender-related provisions. Importantly, future studies should also focus on the provisions' implementation process.

Based on our findings, we recommend that negotiating parties, including third-party mediators should not only include individual women in their negotiation teams, but advocate for the participation of diverse civil women's groups to integrate different conflict experiences and consider varying local gender norms. Contributing to create conditions for women's groups to empower themselves, such as providing them the know-how to organize collectively during and after conflict may accelerate this process of mutual support and strengthen women's leverage.

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Annexes

Annex 1: Peace agreements with or without female signatories and peace end

Female signatories	Peace end		
	0 = no	1 = yes	Total
0 = no	25 29.07%	61 70.93%	86 100.00%
1 = yes	5 55.56%	4 44.44%	9 100.00%
Total	30 31.58%	65 68.42%	95 100.00%

Annex 2: Peace agreements with or without female signatories and peace duration

Female signatories	Peace duration in years								
	0	1	2	3	4	6	7	8	Total
0 = no	44 51.16%	6 6.98%	4 4.65%	8 9.30%	3 3.49%	1 1.16%	0 0.00%	20 23.26%	86 100.00%
1 = yes	0 0.00%	2 22.22%	0 0.00%	2 22.22%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	5 55.56%	9 100.00%
Total	44 46.32%	8 8.42%	4 4.21%	10 10.53%	3 3.16%	1 1.05%	0 0.00%	25 26.32%	95 100.00%

Annex 3: Peace Treaties with female signatories and different characteristics

Country	Peace Treaty	Year	Share of female signatories	Level of democracy ¹	Conflict duration (years)	Peace duration (years)
El Salvador	Chapultepec Agreement	1992	2/16 (12.5%)	1	20	8
Guatemala	Agreement on a Firm and Lasting Peace	1996	1/8 (12.5%)	0	47	8
Northern Ireland	Belfast Agreement	1998	.	1	28	8
Papua New Guinea	Bougainville Accord	2001	1/13 (7.7%)	0	7	8
DR Congo	Inter-Congolese Political Negotiations – The Final Act	2003	2/37 (5.4%)	0	38	3
Liberia	Accra Peace Agreement	2003	.	0	24	8
Philippines	Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro	2014	3/11 (27%)	1	34	1
Central African Republic	Republican Pact for Peace, National Reconciliation and Reconstruction	2015	.	0	15	3
Colombia	Final Agreement to End the	2016	1/18	1	53	1

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¹To measure the level of democracy, democracy scores of the Political Instability Task Force Data Set below 5 were coded with 0 as 'non-democratic', values from 5 to 10 with 1 as 'democratic'. To avoid endogeneity problems, values of the previous year are used.



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