When two of the same are needed: A multi-level model of intra-group party competition

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Abstract

Parties of ethno-regional minorities have been created in a large number of ethnically diverse countries, but sometimes one such party is not enough. While previous work has investigated the consequences of intra-group party competition, this study looks at the causes of internal political diversification of minority groups. Referring to multi-level models of party competition in multi-layered states, we argue that intra-group challengers emerge due to local and regional political dynamics in countries where minorities live territorially concentrated. The manifestation of intra-group party competition is, however, restricted through the national electoral system. This paper tests the model, using a unique cross-national dataset of 19 post-communist democracies in Europe, counting 123 ethnic minorities, with a Boolean algebra approach (csQCA).

Keywords: Multi-level party systems; ethnic minorities; electoral systems; post-communist politics.

Introduction[1]

The consequences of ethnic mobilisation and the formation of ethno-regional political parties have been an issue in a larger body of literature on ethnic politics in divided societies (among others, see Juberías, 2000; Grofman & Stockwell, 2003; Kostadinova, 2002; Friedman, 2005; Moser, 2005; Bochsler, 2010a). Some of this work has particularly addressed the mechanisms and consequences of intra-group party competition within ethnic groups. Ethnic outbidding is a major concern of this literature, addressing the phenomenon when two parties mutually radicalise in order to be seen as the main defendant of the group interest (Mitchell, 1995; Gormley-Heenan & Macginty, 2008). New evidence from Northern Ireland (Mitchell et al., 2006; Mitchell et al., 2001) and India (Chandra, 2005) show that multi-layered representation might, however, help to conciliate ethnic conflict.

We know fairly little about the reasons why in some countries an intra-group challenger emerges, whereas in other countries a single party appears as the monopolist in mobilising and representing a minority group. In Central and Eastern Europe, a region with a high salience of

ethnic politics and wide presence of ethnic minority parties, typical examples where a plurality of minority parties of the same minority appear in national parliaments are the Albanian minorities in Macedonia and Montenegro, several minorities in Kosovo and Serbia, and the ethnic groups in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Other, considerably larger, minority groups in other countries – Russophone minorities in the Baltic states, Hungarians in Slovakia and Romania, Turks in Bulgaria, or the Serbian minorities in Croatia and Montenegro, to name a few, have been running with a united party, or have failed to enter the national parliament with two different parties.

This study discusses the necessary and sufficient conditions for the creation of inter-ethnic party competition, relying on institutional characteristics (national electoral system) and a multi-level party system explanation. In our view, a plurality of parties of ethnic minorities is the consequence of their role in local or regional institutions. If the minority has the role of a (dominant) local majority in one region or municipality, there is a intrinsic demand for electoral competition between different parties of ethnic minorities. Otherwise, the minority will remain united. If, further, the national electoral system and party legislation allows several parties of the same minority to be represented at the national level of politics, then the local or regional electoral competition becomes reflected in a multitude of minority parties, which can be successful across all levels of the state.

Whereas the focus of this study relies specifically on ethnic minorities – because they are easier to define and measure than other potential cleavage groups, and because they often live territorially concentrated – the findings of this study might similarly apply to other forms of territorially based cleavages as well.[2]

Recently democratised countries in Central and Eastern Europe[3] are giving new salience to the question of ethnic minority integration. Many countries of the region have a rich variety of ethnic groups, and many of them have struggled with the integration of those minorities. In this study, we examine 123 minority groups in post-communist democracies in Europe, and for each of them the outcome of the latest national parliamentary elections by 2008. This allows us a broad-scale testing of this model by way of the Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) method (Ragin, 1987, 2000; Rihoux & Ragin, 2008), which is based on Boolean algebra. Despite the large number of cases (which is not common for this method), four conjunctional configurations (paths) can be identified that allow plurality among ethnic minority parties.

Party monopolies versus intra-group party competition
The consequences of intra-group party competition within ethnic minorities are hotly debated. The main concern about several parties competing for the votes of the same ethnic minority group are discussed under the ethnic outbidding hypothesis. Once several parties compete for the votes of the same ethnic group, they try to win elections by polarising on ethnic issues, which allows them to

claim that they are the more pronounced advocates of the minority group. The Albanian parties in Macedonia constitute an illustrative case. In national politics they compete among each other, each promising that it is the better protector of ethnic Albanian interests (Brunnbauer, 2007). The ethnic appeal appears to be the easiest way of mobilising voters, so that "there is no premium on moderation" (Mitchell, 1995, p. 773; see also Horowitz, 1985, pp. 291, 357-358). As long as a party has a monopoly on support among an ethnic group, it does not need to radicalise.

Recent studies have questioned the necessary logic of the ethnic outbidding process. Case studies show that intra-ethnic party competition does not necessarily need to be related to radicalisation (e.g. Caspersen, 2006, pp. 57-61 on Bosnia and Herzegovina). Drawing on the Northern Irish peace process, Mitchell and colleagues (2006; , 2001) have shown that inter-ethnic agreements can change the political landscape of each of the ethnic parties in conflict, as well as radical political parties if they are included in a framework of conciliation and political power. The incentive of guaranteed political power can help *convert hawks into doves*.

On another note, Chandra (2005) discusses crosscutting cleavage lines, which might hinder ethnic majorities' ability to take the position of permanent majorities in a polity. Rather, once there are several crosscutting cleavages, no single group can alone rely on a majority, and alliances along different lines can be used for majoritarian decision-making. Alternative divides to the ethnic conflict, such as economic or confessional cleavages, can thus allow temporary or permanent coalitions that crosscut ethnic lines and help ethnic conciliation and stability.

The relevance of intra-ethnic party competition can certainly not only be reduced to its relevance for the radicalism of ethnic claims. Rather, political monopolies of certain parties that solely address voters of an ethnic minority might create a lack of electoral accountability (Mansbridge, 1999, p. 640). For instance, the Hungarian minority organisation in Romania (UDMR) is the only representative of the Hungarians, but after holding a position in the government for a non-interrupted period since 1996, the organisation is being looked at increasingly critically (Caluser, 2008). However, the creation of an alternative is difficult, because the electoral system does not leave space for two Hungarian parties. Finally, the theory of representation suggests that a variety of views can better reflect the internal diversity of a minority group than a unique voice (Mansbridge, 1999, pp. 636-637; Young, 1997).

Necessary and sufficient conditions for intra-group party competition

The formation of several parties of ethnic minorities constitutes a theoretical puzzle per se. The common cleavage view of political issues and party systems suggests that each social divide is reflected in only one political party (Lijphart, 1984, pp. 147-149; Taagepera & Shugart, 1989, pp. 92-97). There is no reason for party competition within a social group that defines a cleavage.

Accordingly, cleavage-oriented studies of party systems argue that the number of parties in a polity is equal to the number of salient issues plus one. Indeed, minorities might believe they are better off with a united party than if they are politically split. If, however, there are voters within a minority who find a different issue dimension more salient, they might still vote for a non-ethnic party that represents this issue.

So where does intra-group party competition stem from? The literature on party systems in multi-level systems of governance has stressed that there are strong links between elections at different levels of administration, and political parties tend to organise across levels (Abedi & Siaroff, 1999; Chandler & Chandler, 1987; Deschouwer, 2006; Thorlakson, 2007, 2009; Hopkin, 2009, etc.). The cleavage view neglects the importance that multi-level systems of administration and elections at the local and regional level might play for the formation of party systems. Especially in the case of territorially based cleavages, we often find cases where a social group that is nationally in the position of a minority forms a majority in certain municipalities or regions. For concentrated ethnic groups, decentralisation of power towards lower state levels is an important means of giving them more autonomy. Elections to regional or municipal institutions might create their own political dynamics in those regions or municipalities where the minority dominates. This again drives intra-ethnic political plurality.

Once there is space for municipal or regional self-governance and elections, then – similar to the national level among the majority group – internal divides will become relevant at the local or regional level. Such divides might be based on economic interests (including economic control over the minority-inhabited territory) or ideological issues over differences in the radicalism of the type of claims for minority rights. Without the emergence of an electoral challenger within the minority group, the minority party system would also lack electoral accountability, as well as lacking credible opposition at the local or regional level where the minority overwhelmingly lives. Therefore, we expect that minority groups which live concentrated enough to form the majority of the population in certain municipalities or regions are the basis for the creation of intra-ethnic party competition. An ethnic minority that is a majority locally, coinciding with relevant local or regional political institutions and local or regional elections, creates a sufficient condition to create intra-group electoral competition in local or regional elections. Once the minority is present in overwhelming numbers, intra-ethnic party competition no longer endangers the political dominance of the ethnic group. Conversely, minorities with no dominant situation might prefer to stand together, in order to keep control over their self-governed municipalities or regions.[4]

This does not necessarily mean that the subnational competition needs to be organised in the form of minority parties, let alone of such parties that also compete at the national level. Intra-group local competition can be achieved through other means, especially if the national electoral law or

party legislation sets up obstacles to the emergence of (a plurality of) minority parties. Instead, diverging minority interests at the local or regional level can also be represented by non-partisan local citizens' groups, or by mainstream political parties which change their face in the minority region and are controlled there by the minority group (Zollinger & Bochsler, 2009).

We further argue that there are strong organisational links throughout the party system across levels of administration. Sub-national party systems shape the party system at the national level, and vice versa. If the national legislation allows a plurality of minority parties to run in national elections, and it also promises they can convert their votes into seats, then the *necessary condition* is fulfilled for local or regional intra-group competition also to manifest itself at the national level of politics.

A broad literature has discussed the obstacles that electoral systems might impose on minorities in their attempts to become represented in national parliament. The electoral system can limit the chances of minority parties or, conversely, give minorities advantageous conditions to access parliaments with their own parties. It is no accident that scholars who study the integration of ethnic groups into politics recognise electoral systems as an important institution that sets out how minorities are to be dealt with (Lijphart, 1994; Horowitz, 1985; Reilly, 2001). Many speak of "electoral engineering", the design of electoral institutions in order to have a desired outcome.

Often, the distinction between different electoral systems relies on the duality of *proportional representation* (PR) versus *plurality or majority vote*, where PR allows the representation even of small groups, whereas plurality or majority systems concentrate the electoral race on the largest competitors. Many studies of electoral system effects end at the one-dimensional distinction between restrictive and permissive laws, while other mechanisms are considered irrelevant, or rather, "complicated features" (Benoit, 2002, p. 11), and left aside. However, we need to be more precise to define the necessary conditions that allow the emergence of a plurality of parties of minority groups.

First, considering that minority groups are sometimes territorially concentrated, we need to distinguish district-based systems from those that rely on the logic of a nationwide competition with national thresholds. While small parties do not usually get elected in small electoral districts, parties of territorially concentrated minorities do not need to mind such electoral systems. Their potential voters are all concentrated in a small stronghold, where the parties are strong enough win the elections (Bochsler, 2010a).

Minorities that live concentrated on a small territory,[5] in an electoral district of m seats, need a local population share of $p_L \geq 2/m$, in order to win at least two seats. In the long run, a plurality of parties of these minorities might only survive at the national level of politics if it can win at least two seats in an average electoral district. In a country with d electoral districts, the national

population share would be *d* times smaller than the local population share ($p=p_L/d$), which means that the minority needs a population share that is *d* times smaller than that of a non-concentrated minority *[p≥2/(m*d)]*. Or, considering that *m*d* is equal to the number of seats in the national parliament *s*, we can simplify and state the necessary condition *m*s≥2* for intra-ethnic party competition at the national level of politics – if these minorities are concentrated.[6] We also control for the possibility of *non-concentrated* ethnic minorities becoming represented in parliament. In such case, a minority would rely on larger districts in order to get represented: in PR systems, the average district magnitude *m* would need to be larger than *2/p*.

If, however, a minority with a population share *p* of the countrywide population lives spread throughout the country, its size in each district will be approximately *p*. If the vote share of a minority corresponds to its share of the population, then in PR systems the average district magnitude *m* would need to be larger than *2/p*.

Some countries further include *national legal thresholds* in their electoral laws, allowing only parties with a vote share above a defined percentage (often 5% of the national vote) representation in parliament. As a consequence, only the national vote share counts to decide the party's success, whereas the territorial distribution of voters does not make any difference. This puts small groups in trouble if they want to get representation, and usually it rules out intra-ethnic party competition completely. An example of the impossibility of the formation of minority parties is Moldova, where the Gagauz minority (4.4% of the country's population), living in an autonomous region in Southern Moldova, can not form its own party because the national electoral law puts up a national 6% threshold. An example of impossible intra-group plurality is Romania, whereby the Hungarian minority (8.5%) is represented by its own party, which comfortably passes the 5% threshold. If the ethnic Hungarians split into two competing parties, they risk that the smaller of the two parties wastes their votes because it does not pass the threshold.

For larger minorities (10–15% of the population), it would theoretically be possible to organise several parties that pass a threshold of about 5%. However, usually one of both parties is smaller, so that it might fail in elections, even if the overall population share of the minority is more than double the threshold. Furthermore, some voters might continue to vote for mainstream parties (parties of the ethnic majority or non-ethnically defined parties) or for minor parties that fail to pass the threshold. In the end, it is implausible to have a plurality among minorities when a national threshold applies, unless, perhaps, it is for very large minorities.

Some parties try to outsmart the legislature. In the 1994 elections in Slovakia, three ethnic Hungarian parties formed a coalition to jointly pass the 5% threshold (International Republican Institute, 1999, p. 35). And in Serbia's 2003 elections, parties from the Bosniak minority formed a coalition with a mainstream Serb-dominated party, and together they won enough votes to pass the

threshold. The coalition resulted in two Bosniaks gaining seats in Parliament. (In the same election, other minority parties failed with a similar strategy.) Four years later, after the threshold was lifted for minorities, one Bosniak party passed the threshold, while the other one got elected in a coalition. Other electoral laws impede such coalitions through open party lists (preference votes for single candidates from the lists), which means that minority candidates from joint lists have difficulties being elected to parliament (Friedman, 2005, pp. 384-385). Elsewhere (Czech Republic, Hungary, Moldova, Romania, Slovakia), legislation rules out the back door for minority parties through the application of higher thresholds for multiparty alliances.

Country/Province	Electoral system	Special rules for ethnic minorities
Albania	Mixed system, 100 single-member districts and 1 countrywide PR district with 40 mandates (compensatory rule).	Ethnically defined parties prohibited; the ethnically Greek Human Rights Party is tolerated.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	PR with 2 large districts (21 mandates on average).	A quota guarantees that candidates of all ethnic groups are elected; however, there is no special protection of ethnic minority parties.
Bulgaria	PR with a 4% national threshold.	Ethnically defined parties prohibited; the ethnically Turkish minority party is tolerated.
Croatia	PR with 10 districts (15.2 mandates on average).	3 Serbian deputies are elected in an ethnically multi-member district by plurality rule; 5 special districts for other minority groups elect 1 deputy each.
Czech Republic	PR with a 5% national threshold, 14 districts (on average 14 mandates).	-
Estonia	PR with 11 districts (on average 9 mandates), 5% national threshold (or 3 direct district mandates).	-
Hungary	Mixed system, with 176 single-member districts, 20 PR districts (on average 8 mandates) with a 5% national threshold. 58 compensatory PR mandates in a nationwide constituency.	-
Kosovo	PR, nationwide constituency with 100 mandates.	20 seats for ethnic minorities in special PR districts for each minority.
Latvia	PR, 5 districts (20 seats on average), 5% national threshold.	-
Lithuania	Mixed system; 71 single-member districts (plurality rule), countrywide PR constituency with 70 mandates and a 5% threshold.	-
Macedonia	PR in 6 districts (20 mandates each).	-
Moldova	PR in a countrywide district with a 6% threshold.	-
Montenegro	PR in a countrywide district with a 3% threshold.	The predominantly Albanian localities vote in a multi-seat PR district with no threshold requirement.
Poland	PR with 5% national threshold, 41 districts (11 mandates on average).	Ethnic minorities are exempt from the threshold.
Romania	PR with 5% national threshold, 42 districts (8 mandates on average).	The largest parties of 18 ethnic minorities each win a special ethnic minority seat; only 1 party per minority.
Serbia	PR with a countrywide constituency and a 5% threshold.	Threshold for ethnic minority parties at 0.4%.
Slovakia	PR with a countrywide constituency and a 5% threshold.	-
Slovenia	PR with 11 districts (8 mandates each); 4% national threshold only for the remaining seats that are accorded at the national level.	2 special districts for national minorities; alternative vote.
Ukraine	PR with a countrywide constituency and a 3% threshold.	

Table 1: Electoral systems in Central and Eastern Europe, latest elections by 2008. (Sources listed in Bochsler, 2009)

It is worthwhile to note that certain electoral systems apply *special rules* that positively discriminate in favour of ethnic minorities, exempting them from legal thresholds (Poland), lowering thresholds for minority groups (Serbia), or providing special, non-territorial electoral districts for them (Croatia, Slovenia, Kosovo, Montenegro[7]). Romania allows each minority to be represented by just one party (and one seat), while in Slovenia and Croatia, and for some smaller minorities in Kosovo, the non-territorial districts count for only one seat or are elected by a majoritarian vote in a multi-member constituency (Serbs in Croatia). Multiple minority parties can only emerge if those districts count for more than two seats, and if PR rules are applied. In such a "protected area", and with PR rules, a challenger within the minority group can emerge without risking parts of the minority vote and reducing the strength of minority representation. On the contrary, two post-communist countries ban ethnic minority parties in their party laws, although legislation is enforced for all minority parties. (See Cesid, 2002; Jovanović, 2004; Bochsler, 2010a for details.)

Hence, the successful emergence of intra-group plurality at the national level happens if the local or regional party competition encourages it – if there is a stronghold where the minority holds an overwhelming majority of the voters in at least one municipality or region with directly elected representative institutions – and if the national electoral laws allows for it. The effect of the electoral system depends further on the structure of the minority population. This brings to mind a path model with three different possible paths that lead to the discussed outcome.

Hypotheses

Intra-group party competition amongst minority groups may exist if one of the following jointly necessary and sufficient conditions applies (cf. Figure 1 below):

The minority is a majority locally, and ...

1. ... the electoral system does not include any national legal threshold, and the share of the minority at the national population equals at least the share of two seats in an (average) electoral district.

2. ... it is concentrated in a small region of the country, the electoral system does not include any national legal threshold, and the minority population counts for at least the equivalent of two seats in parliament.

3. ... the minority votes in a special non-territorial constituency with a PR electoral system, and the minority population counts for at least the equivalent of two seats in parliament.

Intra-group party competition among ethnic minorities in Central and Eastern Europe

Ethnic parties have gained importance in many political systems in post-communist countries in Europe, but the conditions for their development vary dramatically. After democratisation in the 1990s, many of the countries of the region struggled with ethnic conflicts. This is what makes the region a particularly important case study to investigate the links between ethnicity and party systems.

The test of the hypotheses was carried out based on the author's novel database on elections, parties and ethnic minorities in Central and Eastern Europe. For this study, each ethnic minority in each of the investigated countries was coded as a single case. After excluding Belarus and Russia,[8] the database counts 123 units of analysis (ethnic groups in the 19 countries or provinces). Serbia, Montenegro and Kosovo are each counted as individual entity, because there were no more common elections to parliament from 19967 onward.

According to this model, there are three causal paths leading to a positive outcome, each consisting of conjunctional terms with up to four variables. Hence, it is a typical example of "multiple conjunctional causality" (Ragin, 1987; Rihoux & Ragin, 2008). In addition, some independent variables in the conjunctional terms are theoretically and empirically interdependent on each other (see below), implying high levels of collinearity and making analyses with regression models problematic.

Crisp-set Qualitative Comparative Analysis (csQCA) is well-suited for the identification of multiple conjunctional paths, allowing a systematic investigation of the causal paths and a simplification of the multiple causal explanations using Boolean algebra (Ragin, 1987, 2000; Rihoux & Ragin, 2008). It identifies one or several conditions or combinations of conditions that explain the outcome for the investigated cases. We favour csQCA as a promising method for the problem under study, even compared to the fuzzy-set application of the method. The dataset comprises only a few positive outcomes, and this might limit the number of contradictory cases. Moreover, the model does not lose information if the variables are kept binary, since most of the variables are binary by nature, and/or there is a clear theory-based cut-off point. Some other variables might possibly be interval-scaled, such as the variables on territorial concentration of the minority groups, but no systematic data is available for a more fine-grained measure.

Variables in the model

In the QCA notation, every variable is identified with a letter or a combination of letters. Variables usually are binary, and capital letters symbolise the presence of a phenomenon, while lower-case letters stand for the absence of it. To explain the notation, we use two variables as examples: "MAJORITY" symbolises that an ethnic minority is a majority in at least one region or

municipality, whereas "majority" means it is nowhere a majority. "THRESHOLD" stands for electoral systems with legal national thresholds, whereas "thresholds" means those without. Table 2 lists all the variables and how they are dichotomised.

Name	Description and importance	Categories
Outcome/dependent variable		
BIPARTY	Measures whether several political parties representing the same ethnic minority exist in the national parliament.	Existence of several parties: 1; other cases: 0. (Where the parliament consists of two houses, the lower house is taken into account, being the more important house and always directly elected by the people; latest parliamentary election before end 2005.)
Condition/explanatory variables regarding the **electoral law**		
THRESHOLD	Electoral laws that provide national electoral thresholds.	Coded 1 if a threshold of at least 3% of the countrywide vote applies; in mixed electoral systems, the PR threshold is relevant. Where all ethnic minority parties (meaning not just 1 per ethnicity) are exempted from the threshold (as in Poland), or where minorities vote mostly in territorial districts that are exempted from the threshold (Albanians in Montenegro), the variable is coded 0.
SPECIAL	Ethnic minorities that elect their parliamentary representatives in special, non-territorial constituencies by PR.	Coded 1 for those ethnic minorities that vote in special ethic districts by PR.
Condition/explanatory variables regarding the **ethnic minority population**		
MAJORITY	Minority group forms a majority at the local or regional level.	If at least in one municipality or region the minority group amounts to more than 50% of the population, the variable is coded 1. Coding based on latest available census data or alternative sources.
CONC	Territorial concentration of the minority group.	Coded positive if the larger part of the ethnic minority group lives in a small part of the country.
Interactive condition/explanatory variables regarding the **ethnic minority size** and the **electoral system**		
PARLIA_S (seats in parliament)	Number of seats in parliament in relation to the (countrywide) population share of the minority group.	Coded positively if the population share of the minority corresponds to two or more seats* in parliament. * Indicator: Total number of seats in parliament times population share of the minority. (In the cases of Estonia and Latvia, countries where large parts of the ethnic minorities have no citizenship and voting rights, the share of the ethnic minorities among the voters instead of among the population is used.)
DISTRICT_S (seats in district)	Number of seats in an average electoral district in relation to the (countrywide) population share of the minority group.	Coded positively if the minority population share equals two or more seats* in an average district. * Indicator: Total number of seats in parliament times population share of the minority, divided by the number of electoral districts.

Table 2: Operationalisation of the variables, notation and dichotomisation. (Sources listed in Bochsler, 2009)

Formalisation of the hypotheses

Boolean algebra uses both signs + (addition) and * (multiplication) in order to show how different variables (conditions) are linked. The addition sign (+) stands for the logical "or", while the

multiplication sign (*) means the logical "and". The notation "MAJORITY + threshold" thus means that a minority lives concentrated or that no national legal threshold applies – at least one of the two conditions applies. The notation "MAJORITY * threshold", however, would mean that both conditions apply, i.e. that an ethnic group lives concentrated and no national legal threshold applies.

This notification allows us to formulate the hypotheses (formulated above in sentences) in formal terms:

```
BIPARTY = MAJORTY * threshold * DISTRICT_S
        + MAJORITY * CONC * PARLIA_S * threshold
        + MAJORITY * SPECIAL * PARLIA_S * threshold
```

Accordingly, negative outcomes can be expected if there is no locally concentrated majority of the ethnic minority group. The electoral system hinders intra-ethnic party competition if the minority group is so small that it does proportionally not account for at least two seats in parliament or – if it is not territorially concentrated and does not vote in special PR districts – if it is too small to count for at least two seats in an average electoral district. Finally, we expect that high national legal thresholds hinder intra-ethnic party competition.

```
biparty = majority
        + parlia_s
        + conc * special * district_s
        + THRESHOLD
```

Empirical analysis

As a first step, the empirical cases analysed are classified according to the independent variables. Altogether we count 25 groups of cases, each one of which represents a combination of the independent variables. Five of these groups of cases are coded positively; they lead to a positive outcome for all the investigated cases (existence of several ethnic minority parties). One further configuration is contradictory – in most cases there is intra-party competition, but not always (see below). The remaining 19 groups are coded negatively (no or only one ethnic minority party) (cf. table 3).

The results can be simplified by building groups of categories where the representation of ethnic minority parties is possible. Analysis by means of Boolean algebra identifies three "paths" which describe configurations with intra-ethnic party competition, or contradictory configurations, where only parts of the outcomes are positive.[9]

```
BIPARTY =  MAJORTY * PARLIA_S * threshold * DISTRICT_S * special
        + MAJORITY * CONC * PARLIA_S * threshold * SPECIAL
        + SPECIAL * PARLIA_S * threshold * district_s * majority
```

Condition variables						Outcome	Cases
CONC	SPECIAL	THRESHOLD	MAJORITY	DISTRICT_S	PARLIA_S	BIPARTY	
0	0	0	1	1	1	1	*BiH-BO,BiH-SE*
1	1	0	1	0	1	1	*CG-AL*
1	1	0	1	1	1	1	*KO-SE*
1	1	0	0	0	1	1	*KO-BO*
0	1	0	0	0	1	1	*KO-RO*
1	0	0	1	1	1	C	*BiH-HR,MA-AL,*SE-AL,*SE-BO,*SE-HU
1	0	0	0	0	0	0	AL-GR,AL-MA,AL-SLA,MA-BO,SLO-SE,SLO-BO,SLO-YU,SLO-IT,SE-BC,SE-VL,SE-GO,SE-MO,SE-RM,SE-RT,SE-UK,SE-CZ,PL-BE
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	AL-RO,AL-VL,MA-VL,SLO-RO,SE-MA,SE-GE,SE-RU,SE-SLO,PL-UK
0	0	1	1	1	1	0	BG-TU,LV-RU,CG-SE,UK-MD
0	0	1	0	1	1	0	BG-VL,BG-RO,BG-SLA,MD-RU,MD-UK,MD-RO,RO-RO,SK-RO
1	0	1	0	1	1	0	BG-MA,LI-RU,LI-PO,RO-GE,UK-CT
1	0	1	0	0	1	0	HR-SE,CZ-MO,CZ-SK,CG-MU
0	0	1	0	0	0	0	HR-MU,HR-SLO,HR-RO,CZ-GE,CZ-RO,CZ-HU,CZ-UK,ES-BE,ES-FI,HU-GE,HU-SK,LV-LI,SK-CZ,SK-GE,SK-PO,CG-RO,UK-JE,UK-BE,UK-PL,UK-AR,UK-TA
1	0	1	0	0	0	0	HR-HU,CZ-PO,CZ-SI,HU-JE,HU-SLA,LV-BE,LV-UK,LI-BE,LI-UK,RO-UK,RO-TU,RO-SE,RO-TA,RO-SK,SK-RT,CG-HR,UK-RM,UK-GR
0	0	1	1	0	1	0	ES-RU
0	0	1	0	0	1	0	ES-UK,HU-RO,LV-PO
0	0	0	1	0	1	0	MA-TU,MA-RO
0	0	0	0	0	1	0	MA-SE,SLO-HR
1	0	1	1	1	1	0	MD-GA,RO-HU,SK-HU,CG-BO,UK-RU
1	0	1	1	0	0	0	MD-BG,UK-BG,UK-HU
1	0	0	1	0	0	0	SLO-HU,SE-BG,SE-SK
0	0	0	0	1	1	0	SE-CG,SE-YU,SE-RO
1	0	0	0	1	1	0	SE-HR
1	1	0	0	0	0	0	KO-TU,KO-GO
1	0	0	0	0	1	0	PL-GE

Table 3: QCA "Truth Table", variables determining the electoral success of ethnic minority parties ("BIPARTY"). 123 ethnic minority cases are arranged in 25 groups. All of the cases in a single group have identical configurations of independent variables. (For the abbreviations of the cases, see appendix A.) *Cases in italics: positive outcome (representation of several minority parties in parliament).*

The resulting formula looks slightly more complex than our hypothesis. Terms included in the hypothesis are presented in bold, whereas the additional empirical conditions, making the outcome formula more complex, are printed in regular type. The increased complexity is solely due to *limited empirical diversity*. After simplification through inclusion of logical remainders in a *theoretically informed* way (Stokke, 2007, p. 509; Rihoux & Ragin, 2008, pp. 135-136; Ragin, 2008, pp. 160-172),[10] it can be simplified so that it becomes similar to our hypothesis. In order to cover all imaginable combinations of the six explanatory variables, we would need 2^6, or 64, different configurations. Some of these are logically impossible or implausible, and others just

lacking. For instance, configurations including special electoral rules are rare, because they occur only in Kosovo and for ethnic Albanians in Montenegro, and these minorities do not cover all imaginable configurations with the other five variables. *DISTRICT_S* is theoretically a subset of *PARLIA_S*,[11] which excludes any configurations with *DISTRICT_S * parlia_s*. And finally, MAJORITY is correlated to CONC, since often minorities that are concentrated in a small area are also a majority in at least one municipality.

Following the csQCA methodology (Rihoux & Ragin, 2008, pp. 59-65), the formula can be slightly simplified, adding counterfactuals (non-occurring "logical remainders") with their plausible empirical outcome. We include them on a theoretical basis, as explained in Appendix B.

Particular attention should be paid to two of the minorities, which fulfil these necessary and sufficient conditions but do not fit according to their outcome, because only one of their electoral competitors made it into parliament in the last parliamentary elections by 2008 – the Albanians and Hungarians in Serbia. Both are characterised by a plurality of parties at the local level. The Hungarian parties in Serbia have usually run separately in national elections, but in 2008 they formed an electoral alliance at the national level. On another note, the Albanians in Serbia boycotted the national elections for a long period; recently a few of the parties started to participate again, so that turnout among ethnic Albanians is low, and therefore they win just one seat in parliament. At the local level, both in the Albanian and Hungarian municipalities in Serbia, intra-group competition is effective (Bochsler, 2010b).

Finally, we also find a substantial difference from our hypothesis. We expected that any minority group could only develop intra-ethnic plurality if it were in the position of a local majority. This was too strongly formulated. While the expectation empirically holds for all cases with no special electoral rules, it is violated by two minorities in Kosovo, where special PR rules facilitate the entry of several parties of these minorities (Bosniaks, Roma) to parliament. Apparently, special electoral rules and PR are so attractive for intra-ethnic party competition that even in difficult conditions (no local majority), intra-ethnic plurality emerges. Further research might have a deeper look at these cases.

Similarly, we can explain *negative outcomes*, where no party of ethnic minorities runs (see also Bochsler, 2006), or where only one such party exists.

```
biparty = special * majority * (district_s + PARLIA_S + CONC * THRESHOLD)
        + parlia_s * district_s * (special * CONC
                                    + SPECIAL * threshold * CONC * majority)
        + conc * special * district_s * PARLIA_S
        + THRESHOLD * special * MAJORITY * DISTRICT_S
```

A path model explaining plurality among ethnic minority parties

From the results of the theoretical and empirical analysis, we can draw a path model that shows the ways to achieve plurality among ethnic minority parties (Figure 1). Each of the four paths identified by the hypotheses and confirmed by the csQCA analysis ends with a positive outcome (marked "+"). Between one and three empirical cases correspond to each hypothesised path. The four other paths lead to a negative outcome (marked "–"). According to this analysis, two main reasons explain negative outcomes (the most frequent negative outcomes). In 91 out of 123 cases, we do not have a plurality of ethnic minority parties because there is no local or regional entity where the minority group would count as a majority of the population, and elections are not held in special, non-territorial constituencies with PR. In 13 cases, national legal thresholds appear as a key factor for the lack of multiple ethnic minority parties. Only strategic coalitions would allow them to pass, but the legislation either impedes such coalitions or parties fail to form them. The process chart shows that all the 123 cases (shown with small letters next to the outcomes) fit within one of the paths and have the expected outcome.
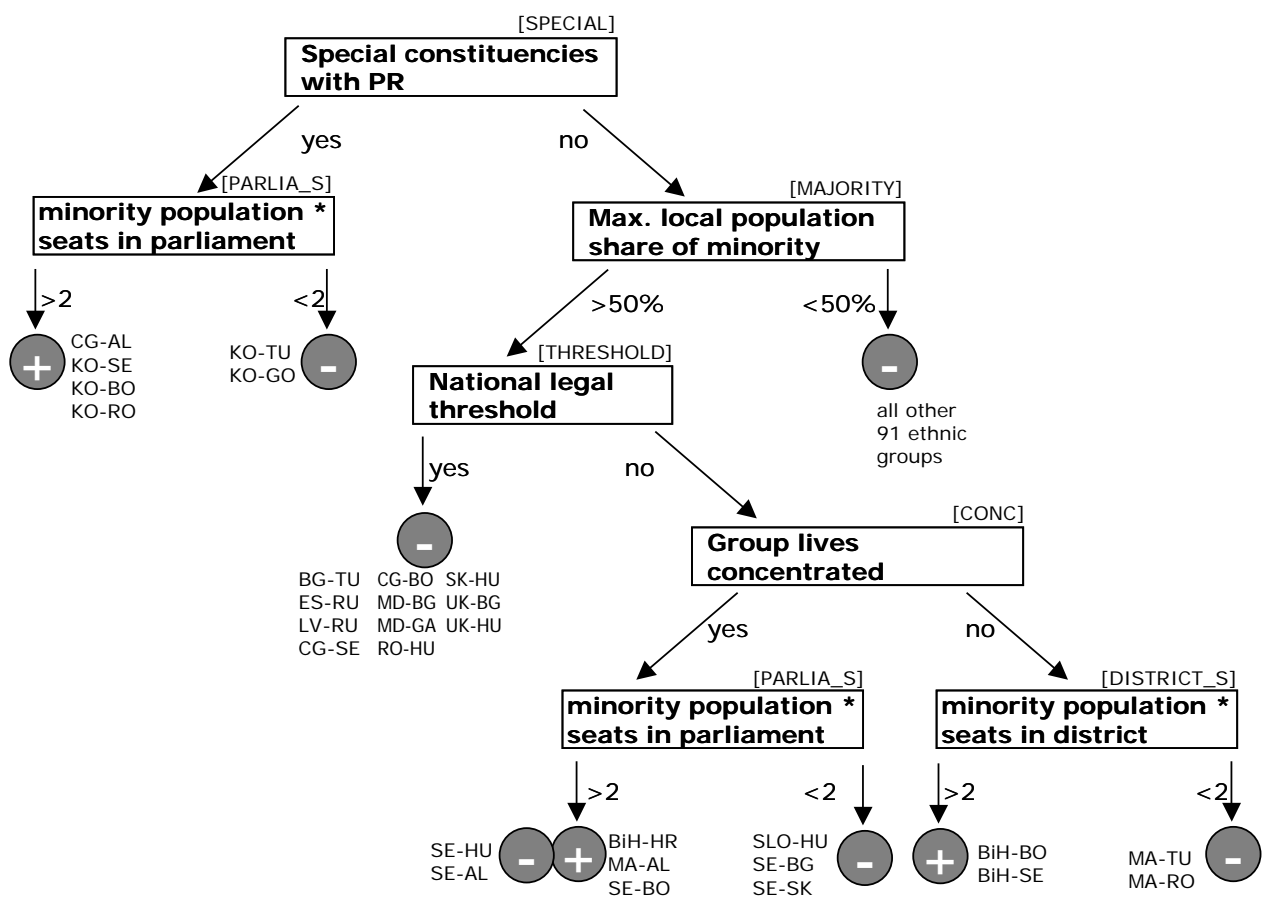

Figure 1: Path model explaining plurality among ethnic minority parties in Central and Eastern Europe and empirical cases. (The variable names of the QCA analysis are stated in angle brackets. For the abbreviations of the cases, see Appendix A.)

Discussing the results by territorial configuration of ethnic minority groups

The results reveal that plurality among ethnic minority parties is a phenomenon that is not linked to a single electoral system. Instead, depending on the structure of the ethnic minority group, electoral systems might have different consequences. Generally, the rather trivial condition demonstrates that in order to be represented by two or more own political parties, an ethnic minority must weigh the population share of two or more mandates in parliament. Furthermore:

- Territorially concentrated minority groups that are a majority locally are represented by several parties if the electoral system does not have any national legal threshold. In the electoral districts where they live, they have sufficient votes to guarantee a plurality of political parties.

- Territorially non-concentrated minority groups must be much larger in order to gain representation in parliament. In order to gain access with a plurality of parties, their population share needs to count for at least the equivalent of two seats in an average district. Small countrywide minorities might be represented only when the number of seats per district is very high, or if there is just a single countrywide electoral constituency. Still, high national legal thresholds restrict them to one party at maximum.

- Minority groups that do not have a municipality or region where they are a majority locally will probably not have intra-ethnic party competition. Intra-group challengers emerge only in two exceptions – Bosniaks and Roma in Kosovo – which are both large enough to have several guaranteed seats in parliament. This, indeed, appears as an exception to the rule that a local majority is needed for an intra-group challenger to emerge. Special electoral rules with PR and several seats for the minorities make it particularly easy for an intra-group electoral challenger to come up.

Top-down or bottom-up? Party systems in a multi-level setting

The variable of the local majority appears to be a key variable for intra-group party competition. Our model has explained the emergence of an intra-group challenger party in a *bottom-up* approach, focusing on the needs of local or regional electoral competition, if minority groups have their own homeland where they hold an overwhelming majority, and if there are self-governing institutions. An electoral challenger will appear as a second political party at the national level, provided that the national electoral system allows it.

Although the territorial structure of the population is a given variable (with the absence of ethnic cleansing), the institutional division of a country is a politically decided variable. Changing municipal borders can allow the creation of new units where the ethnic minority is in the majority,

and the transfer of political power to sub-national entities to give more autonomy to concentrated minority groups, as was the case for the 2001 Ohrid Framework Agreement in Macedonia.

The same story might, however, also be told in a *top-down* direction. If the electoral law at the national level makes political plurality among ethnic minorities impossible, then this might affect the local level as well, since organisational party structures get lost and parties that run national elections jointly might have difficulty competing locally against each other. Local politics in municipalities or regions dominated by ethnic minorities might not automatically create an intra-ethnic multi-party system at the local level. Instead, we would expect other forms of electoral alternatives to emerge at the local level, such as civic groups, independent candidates, or local committees of mainstream national parties that are controlled by the locally dominant group (see also Zollinger & Bochsler, 2009).

Conclusions: Local politics and electoral systems shaping intra-group party competition

What explains the emergence of an electoral challenger within a minority group? The cleavage view of party systems has largely neglected the different territorial structure of social divides, as well as the relevance of multi-level elections for the creation of party systems. This exploratory study has assessed intra-group party competition among ethnic minorities in Central and Eastern Europe, and explained plurality within a minority group by the dynamics of local or regional politics. Ethnic divides often fall within territorial cleavages, and this implies that oftentimes ethnic minorities are local majorities in some municipalities or regions. Where a minority is locally a majority, intra-group divisions about political issues or political or economic interests in the minority region are likely, and these are reflected by a plurality of political players. If the electoral system allows it, these divisions also become manifest in the national party system.

In Central and Eastern European countries, adequate conditions were present for the development of bi-party or multi-party systems among ethnic minorities only for 9 out of 123 ethnic minority groups. Multi-party systems among ethnic minorities show that politics is a game on several stages with different levels of government (central state and its electoral system, regional and local units, their population structure and party systems), each having an impact on one another.

Both the ethnic structure of the sub-national entities and national electoral rules have an important impact on ethnic party systems at the national level. Which of these allow intra-ethnic party competition among ethnic minorities?

Researchers often view electoral systems as a simple dimension of proportionality versus majority/plurality systems in order to determine their impacts. When tests of such simple linear influences have been applied to Central and Eastern European countries, they have often led to the

conclusion that electoral systems do not matter in this region, or have come to surprising or contradictory results (Golder, 2002, p. 24; Moraski & Loewenberg, 1999; Moser, 2001).

In its consideration of electoral system effects, this study goes beyond the often-seen simplified binary distinction in PR and plurality/majority vote, or the distinction according to district magnitude. Rather, the effect of electoral systems is conditioned by the territorial structure of the voter basis of a political party, and some electoral systems imply more complex rules, such as national legal thresholds, or special provisions for minority representation. Our path model (cf. Figure 1 above) takes these aspects into account, linking different features of electoral systems to the size of minority groups and to the territorial structure of their population. This has important implications for electoral engineering. Empirically, the establishment of national legal thresholds – even if requiring just 4%–6% of the national vote – appears to be a major obstacle for the emergence of intra-group challengers at the national level of elections. While these thresholds appear fairly moderate, minority parties usually rely on a too limited potential electorate to be able to pass such a threshold.

Our findings are not only for electoral engineering in ethnically divided countries. While our analysis focused on the easily comparable set of parties of ethnic minorities in Central and Eastern Europe, its theoretical baseline addresses a more general puzzle – why does intra-group party competition emerge? – and the multi-level explanation on which we rely might apply to other cleavages as well. Once a social divide has a territorial character, local or regional electoral dynamics might explain why a cleavage-based minority party is challenged by an alternative electoral competitor.

Online appendices

Appendix A: Abbreviations for the ethnic groups

AL-GR	Albania, Greeks	MA-BO	Macedonia (Former Yug Rep), Bosniak
AL-MA	Albania, Macedonians	MA-RO	Macedonia (Former Yug Rep), Roma
AL-RO	Albania, Roma	MA-SE	Macedonia (Former Yug Rep), Serb
AL-SLA	Albania, South Slavs	MA-TU	Macedonia (Former Yug Rep), Turkish
AL-VL	Albania, Vlachs	MA-VL	Macedonia (Former Yug Rep), Vlachs
BG-MA	Bulgaria, Macedonians	MD-BG	Moldova, Bulgarian
BG-RO	Bulgaria, Roma	MD-GA	Moldova, Gagauz
BG-SLA	Bulgaria, Slav-speaking minorities	MD-RO	Moldova, Romanian
BG-TU	Bulgaria, Turks	MD-RU	Moldova, Russian
BG-VL	Bulgaria, Vlachs	MD-UK	Moldova, Ukrainian
BiH-BO	Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bosniak	PL-BE	Poland, Belarussians
BiH-HR	Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croat	PL-GE	Poland, Germans
BiH-SE	Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serb	PL-UK	Poland, Ukrainians
CG-AL	Montenegro, Albanians	RO-GE	Romania, Germans
CG-BO	Montenegro, Bosniaks	RO-HU	Romania, Hungarians
CG-HR	Montenegro, Croats	RO-RO	Romania, Roma
CG-MU	Montenegro, Muslims	RO-SE	Romania, Serbs
CG-RO	Montenegro, Roma	RO-SK	Romania, Slovaks
CG-SE	Montenegro, Serbs	RO-TA	Romania, Tartars
CZ-GE	Czech Republic, German	RO-TU	Romania, Turks
CZ-HU	Czech Republic, Hungarians	RO-UK	Romania, Ukrainians
CZ-MO	Czech Republic, Moravian	SE-AL	Romania, Albanians
CZ-PO	Czech Republic, Polish	SE-BC	Serbia, Bunjevac
CZ-RO	Czech Republic, Gypsy	SE-BG	Serbia, Bulgarians
CZ-SI	Czech Republic, Silesian	SE-BO	Serbia, Bosniaks
CZ-SK	Czech Republic, Slovak	SE-CG	Serbia, Montenegrins
CZ-UK	Czech Republic, Ukrainian	SE-CZ	Serbia, Czechs
ES-BE	Estonia, Belarusian	SE-GE	Serbia, Germans
ES-FI	Estonia, Finnish	SE-GO	Serbia, Goranci
ES-RU	Estonia, Russian	SE-HR	Serbia, Croats
ES-UK	Estonia, Ukrainian	SE-HU	Serbia, Hungarians
HR-HU	Croatia, Hungarians	SE-MA	Serbia, Macedonians
HR-MU	Croatia, Muslim	SE-MO	Serbia, Moslems
HR-RO	Croatia, Roma	SE-RM	Serbia, Romanians
HR-SE	Croatia, Serb	SE-RO	Serbia, Romanies
HR-SLO	Croatia, Slovene	SE-RT	Serbia, Ruthenians
HU-GE	Hungary, German	SE-RU	Serbia, Russians
HU-JE	Hungary, Jewish	SE-SK	Serbia, Slovaks
HU-RO	Hungary, Romany	SE-SLO	Serbia, Slovenes
HU-SK	Hungary, Slovak	SE-UK	Serbia, Ukraines
HU-SLA	Hungary, Southern Slav	SE-VL	Serbia, Vlachs
KO-BO	Kosovo, Bosniaks	SE-YU	Serbia, Yugoslavs
KO-GO	Kosovo, Gorani	SK-CZ	Slovak Republic, Czech
KO-RO	Kosovo, Roma	SK-GE	Slovak Republic, German
KO-SE	Kosovo, Serbs	SK-HU	Slovak Republic, Hungarian
KO-TU	Kosovo, Turks	SK-PO	Slovak Republic, Polish
LI-BE	Lithuania, Belorusian	SK-RO	Slovak Republic, Roma
LI-PO	Lithuania, Polish	SK-RT	Slovak Republic, Ruthenian
LI-RU	Lithuania, Russian	SLO-BO	Slovenia, Bosniak
LI-UK	Lithuania, Ukrainian	SLO-HR	Slovenia, Croat
LV-BE	Latvia, Belarusian	SLO-HU	Slovenia, Hungarian
LV-LI	Latvia, Lithuanian	SLO-IT	Slovenia, Italians
LV-PO	Latvia, Polish	SLO-RO	Slovenia, Roma
LV-RU	Latvia, Russian	SLO-SE	Slovenia, Serb
LV-UK	Latvia, Ukrainian	SLO-YU	Slovenia, Yugoslav
MA-AL	Macedonia (Former Yug Rep), Albanian		

Appendix B: Inclusion of logical remainders

Our inclusion of logical remainders is theoretically driven. We slightly simplify the explanation of positive (and contradictory) cases, through the inclusion of theoretically plausible, but empirically inexistent case configurations. In this appendix, we list the lacking configurations that – if included as logical remainders – would simplify our formula.

Positive outcomes
BIPARTY = MAJORTY * PARLIA_S * threshold * DISTRICT_S * special

            + **MAJORITY * CONC * PARLIA_S * threshold** * SPECIAL

            + **SPECIAL * PARLIA_S * threshold** * district_s * majority

First line of the formula: Further, if there would be a positive case for **MAJORTY * PARLIA_S * threshold * DISTRICT_S** * CONC * SPECIAL, then the first line could be simplified to **MAJORTY * PARLIA_S * threshold * DISTRICT_S.** There is no reason to believe that changing from non-concentration to concentration – even under the presence of special electoral districts –, or due to the introduction of special districts - no party competition should emerge.

Second line: Empirically, all minorities that are concentrated, and sufficiently large to enter parliament with several parties in the electoral district(s) where they are concentrated, are also large enough to be represented if they are not concentrated. If we could add this case – with the expected positive outcome -, the second line of the formula could be simplified to **MAJORITY * CONC * PARLIA_S * threshold.**

Third line: All cases with the combination SPECIAL * PARLIA_S lead to positive outcomes. However, these cases are restricted to Kosovo & Montenegro. We lack any case with the configuration of SPECIAL * threshold * district_s * PARLIA_S * conc * MAJORITY, otherwise the formula might be simplified to SPECIAL * threshold * district_s * PARLIA_S.

Negative outcomes

```
biparty = special * majority * (district_s + PARLIA_S + CONC * THRESHOLD)
        + parlia_s * district_s * (special * CONC
                                  + SPECIAL * threshold * CONC * majority)
        + conc * special * district_s * PARLIA_S
        + THRESHOLD * special * MAJORITY * DISTRICT_S
```

First line: The empirical complexity is solely due to the lacking cases with a variable combination *DISTRICT_S * parlia_s*. The only hypothesised cases not covered are *special * majority * parlia_s * DISTRICT_S*, and these cases are theoretically not possible.

Second line: The condition *district_s* comes as *parlia_s* has been hypothesised. Due to rare cases of the combination *parlia_s * SPECIAL,* we need to distinguish between cases *parlia_s * special* and *parlia_s * SPECIAL.* All possible configurations with *parlia_s * special * CONC* exist empirically, and as expected they all lead to negative outcomes. However, configurations *parlia_s * special * CONC* only exist in conjunction with *MAJORITY,* since *CONC* is correlated with *MAJORITY.* These cases are already covered by the first line of the formula. The second line could be simplified through the inclusion of these cases as logical remainders, with the plausible reasoning that cases with *parlia_s * special * CONC * MAJORITY* would not suddenly become positive if they would not rely on a local majority any more.

Further, the combination *parlia_s * SPECIAL* is rare, because only exceptionally, a minority that does not count the equivalent of two parliamentary seats can elect several members of parliament according to special rules. The two empirical cases that fit are both concentrated, lack an electoral threshold, and lack of a municipality where they are in a majority.

Third line: For a more parsimonious formula, we lack any configuration *conc * special * district_s * parlia_s * MAJORITY.* However, this resembles several larger existing groups with *PARLIA_S,* and these cases all lead to negative outcomes.

Fourth line: No country with a legal threshold for minority parties employed special electoral rules at the same time. Hence, *special* is introduced as a necessary condition in this path. The introduction of *THRESHOLD * special * MAJORITY * conc * parlia_s* would further help to simplify the formula. They should not lead to positive outcomes if similar, but larger groups (with *PARLIA_S*) lead to negative outcomes. Further, we face the problem that for groups with a concentrated structure of the population and a local majority, *DISTRICT_S* correlates perfectly with *PARLIA_S.* Introducing logical cases *THRESHOLD * special * MAJORITY * CONC * (DISTRICT_S * parlia_s + PARLIA_S * district_s)* would lead to a parsimonious formula, but such cases are theoretically rare or inexistent.

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[2] Caramani (2004) distinguishes functional from territorial cleavages. The latter are characterised by substantial territorial differences in the vote share of the parties that organise around these cleavages. This often implies that in their strongholds, these parties become politically dominant.

[3] Defined here as all post-communist countries in Europe, including the de facto autonomous entities of Kosovo and – at the time the investigation refers to – Montenegro.

[4] See also Horowitz (1985, p. 352).

[5] We simplify, assuming that all their members live in the same district.

[6] For non-PR systems, things are more complicated, but the formulas remain similar. However, they do not have to worry us since all of the countries in Central and Eastern Europe currently elect their national parliaments at least partly by PR (cf. table 1 below). In the mixed electoral systems, none of the minorities is concentrated is predominant in a sufficiently large area, so that it might control a large number of single-seat districts. Single-seat districts where the minority is a majority exist in Lithuania (Polish minority) and in Albania (Greek minority), but they result only in one or very few seats for minority parties. Therefore, we assume that the PR part of the electoral system might be indicative for intra-ethnic party competition.

[7] Special constituency for mainly Albanian-settled areas, where the 3% national threshold does not apply.

[8] Elections in these countries have been lacking democratic standards recently.

[9] The analysis was performed with the software Tosmana. The terms were rearranged in order to make the formulas better comparable to the hypotheses.

[10] Logical remainders might be useful if they are applied for rather empirically thriven applications of QCA, or if such simplifications are theoretically reasonable. I first restrict the minimisation of the formula to empirically observed configurations (Rihoux & Ragin, 2008, p. 63; Ragin, 2008, pp. 163-172). This avoids that configurations that were not expected to belong to the hypothesised solution are included, resulting in a formula that might seemingly contradict the hypotheses, bare any empirical proof. Thereafter, I include counterfactuals chosen on a theoretical basis, that lead to slightly more parsimonious results.

[11] The number of seats allocated in an average district is always smaller or equal to the number of seats in the whole parliament.