# Killing and Voting in the Basque Country: An Exploration of the Electoral Link between ETA and its Political Branch

Luis de la Calle (corresponding author)
lcalle@march.es
Junior Research Fellow
Center for Advanced Study in the Social Sciences
Juan March Institute
Castelló 77
28006 Madrid (Spain)
Phone: 34 91 435 42 40
Fax: 34 91 431 51 35


Ignacio Sánchez-Cuenca
isc@march.es
Professor of Political Science
Center for Advanced Study in the Social Sciences
Juan March Institute
Castelló 77
28006 Madrid (Spain)
Phone: 34 91 435 42 40
Fax: 34 91 431 51 35
February 23, 2011

LUIS DE LA CALLE is a Research Fellow at the Juan March Institute (Madrid). His research interests are sub-state nationalism and political violence. His recent work has been published in journals such as the *Annual Review of Political Science*, *Journal of Peace Research* and *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics.*

IGNACIO SÁNCHEZ-CUENCA is the Research Director of the Center for Advanced Study in the Social Sciences of the Juan March Institute (Madrid) and Associate Professor of Sociology at Complutense University (Madrid). His research areas are terrorism and comparative politics. His last articles on terrorism have appeared in the *Journal of Peace Research*, the *Annual Review of Political Science*, *Politics & Society* and *Terrorism and Political Violence*. He is also the author of two books in Spanish on ETA.

STATEMENT: This article has not been submitted or published elsewhere.

**Abstract**

We deal in this paper with the relationship between ETA attacks and electoral support for Batasuna, its political wing. We show that the relationship is twofold, since the geographical distribution of electoral support for the terrorists affects the location of ETA attacks, but violence also influences electoral support for the terrorist cause. On the one hand, when ETA chooses a location for its attacks, it takes into account the electoral strength of Batasuna. Our results show that the higher the vote for Batasuna in a municipality, the more likely members of the security forces will be killed there. With regard to the targeting of civilians, the relationship is curvilinear. ETA kills civilians in municipalities that are polarized, where support for Batasuna falls short of being hegemonic. On the other hand, our results also show that ETA attacks have an effect on the size of its support community. When ETA kills members of the security forces, voters punish the Batasuna party electorally. In the case of civilians, it depends on the specifics of the various campaigns. We find that when ETA kills informers and drug-dealers, the vote for Batasuna increases. ETA's killing of non-nationalist politicians, however, decreases Batasuna's vote share.

**Introduction**

All insurgent groups need some degree of popular support in order to sustain their violent campaigns. It may be suggested that the connection between the insurgents and their support community is particularly sensitive in the case of terrorist groups, because they are underground organizations as opposed to traditional guerrillas that are able to control part of the territory belonging to the state they fight against.[1] Whereas guerrillas gain some territorial control, acting as rulers of the local population (imparting justice, extracting rents, providing some basic welfare services), terrorists, precisely because they have to act in secrecy, tend to have more superficial contact with the population.

More importantly, guerrillas can coerce the local population, forcing them to take sides with the insurgents even if they are widely unpopular. In the case of terrorists, however, their coercive capacity is much lower. The terrorists, therefore, have to act in such a way that their behaviour does not alienate the support of the constituency on whose behalf they kill. If the terrorists do not have some popular backing that gives political meaning to their deeds, their activity looks simply criminal.

The relationship between the terrorists and their supporters is fragile and it depends very much upon what strategies and tactics the terrorists adopt. This relationship can fall under any of the following three categories.[2] First, we have the rather exceptional case in which the constituency is almost non-existent and therefore plays a marginal role in the calculations made by the terrorist group. This is particularly so when the terrorists are not interested in creating a social base. An example here is that of the fascist terrorists in Italy during the 1970s.[3] These terrorists were unpopular and did not seek to create a social movement, for they already had the support of the secret services and some members of the state apparatus. This may help to explain why they acted in a fully unrestrained way, killing civilians indiscriminately. The explosion

of bombs in public places was their infamous signature at that time. In 1980, these fascist terrorists killed 85 civilians with a bomb in the train station of Bologna.

Second, we may find cases in which there is a wide community that fully supports the terrorists. The terrorists, therefore, do not fear the consequences of their deeds in this community and, again, act without any kind of restraint. There is survey evidence that shows, for example, that at some point during the second Intifada, about 70 percent of Palestinians in the occupied territories agreed with the killing of Israeli civilians.[4] Suicide missions were indeed popular, as attested to by the many attacks that had multiple authorship claims.

Finally, we have the most common case in which the terrorists are backed by a support community, but supporters are in some ways more moderate than the activists and do not approve of certain actions. In this situation, the terrorists face a trade-off between popular support and offensive capacity. If the terrorist group tries to maximize its levels of violence, it may find that some supporters defect. On the other hand, if it tries to maximize social support, it may well be that certain forms of violence have to be abandoned. This was obvious, for instance, in the letter from al-Zawahiri, number two in command of Al Qaeda, to al-Zarqawi, Al Qaeda's chief of operations in Iraq, in which the former makes clear that "the mujahedeen movement must avoid any action that the masses do not understand or approve of" in his complaint about indiscriminate attacks in Iraq that alienated the population.[5]

Similar statements can be found in other groups. Sean MacStofain, who was Chief of Staff in the Provisional IRA in the early 1970s, wrote in his memoirs that "no resistance movement in history has ever succeeded in fighting a struggle for national freedom without some accidental casualties, but the Republican interest in retaining popular support clearly lay in causing as few as possible."[6] Likewise, Eamon Collins, a

former PIRA militant who was later killed by his previous colleagues, said that "the IRA tried to act in a way that would avoid severe censure from within the nationalist community; they knew they were operating within a sophisticated set of informal restrictions on their behavior, no less powerful for being largely unspoken."[7]

We deal in this article with the case of ETA (*Euskadi ta Askatasuna*, Basque Homeland and Freedom), which clearly falls under the category of a terrorist group with a significant number of supporters who are more moderate than the activists. ETA's main goal is the independence of the Basque Country. After Franco's death in 1975, Spain underwent a profound process of decentralization. In the case of the Basque Country, this has meant a Basque Parliament, a Basque Government with its own police force, fiscal system, broadcasting network, power over education and health, and a large list of other administrative and political responsibilities. This, however, has not prevented the violence of ETA.[8] ETA and its various splinters have killed almost 860 people.

The political branch of ETA (which has adopted several names and we will hereafter refer to as Batasuna – Unity), first contested the Spanish elections in 1979. For almost two decades, electoral support for Batasuna amounted to 10-12 percent of the census. Since 2001, however, the party's electoral support has been significantly eroded (see Figure 2 in the next section). After a new law was passed in 2002 banning political parties affiliated with a terrorist group, Batasuna has not been able to contest elections normally. This has forced the party to run under the guise of other marginal parties in order to prevent its electorate from switching sides.

Despite a large literature on ETA, both in Spanish and English, the connection between ballots and bullets has not been adequately explored. In fact, there is, as far as we know, very little existing work on the electoral link between a terrorist group and its

political branch. There is some emerging work on the electoral consequences of terrorism. Charles Berrebi and Esteban Klor, for instance, have looked into the effects of Palestinian terrorism not on its support community, but rather on the electoral results of Israeli parties; also, Arzu Kibris has conducted a similar analysis for the case of Turkey.[9] This, however, is a different endeavor from the one we pursue here, which focuses more on the connection between a terrorist organization's use of violence and its support base than on the effects of terrorist violence on electoral competition countrywide.

We look at the interaction between the actions of the terrorist group and the level of support for its political branch from two vantage points. The first question is this: does the level of local support for the political branch, Batasuna, somehow affect ETA's decision as to where to carry out an attack? Does ETA attack in municipalities where support for Batasuna is high or is the reverse true? And, if there is an effect, is it mediated by the choice of target? That is, does the level of local support for Batasuna have the same effect when ETA is planning to kill a member of the security forces versus a civilian?

The second question that we examine inverts the order of the variables. Now we are interested in the audience costs of terrorist attacks. Do supporters reward or punish their political branch depending on the kind of victim targeted by the terrorists? Even if it sounds crude, we want to know if some killings yield positive electoral returns for the movement, and if others have a negative impact.

The first question refers to the calculus made by ETA about how given levels of support for Batasuna in the municipalities affect the choice of location for the attack. The second question deals with the audience costs of target selection. The questions are obviously complementary, but not circular. In one case we study the choice of

municipality; in the other one, the audience costs of the choice of target. The analysis can be thought of as a partial equilibrium analysis, so to speak. In the first question, level of support is given and we observe its effect on choice of attack location. In the second one, the attacks and their location are given and we observe their effect on local levels of support. We elaborate below on the methodological requirements that this kind of analysis demands.

In order to carry out the analysis, we have created a panel of all municipalities in the Basque Autonomous Community (circa 250) for regional elections held during the period 1980-2005.[10] The first election was held in 1980. We have collected information about electoral results in each municipality, as well as data about population size and percentage of Basque speakers. We then combined all these data with the Victims of ETA dataset, which contains detailed information about each killing perpetrated by the terrorist group.[11]

The panel structure of the data allows for a systematic analysis of the questions we have formulated, namely how electoral results may affect ETA's decisions on where to kill, and how ETA's killings affect the electoral performance of Batasuna. The statistical analysis is applied to a single terrorist group with variation occurring at the local level. Thanks to our intimate knowledge of the Basque terrorist group, which allows us to go quite deep in the codification of ETA's campaigns against different types of targets, the statistical analysis generates findings that may not have been reached either in large-*n* designs or in qualitative case studies.

The paper is divided into three sections. The first section provides background information about ETA and Batasuna. The second investigates how electoral results affect the location of ETA's attacks. The third section analyzes how various types of

killings affect the electoral record of Batasuna. Finally, the paper ends with a brief discussion on how the main findings might be reproduced in the case of the IRA.

**ETA and Batasuna**

ETA is one of the most resilient terrorist groups in the world. Founded in 1959, its first killing took place in 1968. In October 2011 it announced the end of the campaign of violence. Its long resiliency has been related to the division of labor between the terrorist group and its political branch. ETA has held an uncontested leadership within the so-called "abertzale" (patriotic) movement.[12] The roots of this dominance come from the traumatic split of ETA in 1974. That year, the organization was divided into two groups, military ETA (ETA-m) and political-military ETA (ETA-pm). The bigger faction at the time was ETA-pm, which claimed that armed struggle should be complemented with popular mobilization, such as demonstrations and electoral participation. ETA-m, then in the minority, rightly predicted that this strategy would lead terrorism to a dead-end, since the constraints of institutional politics would force the political representatives of the movement to call off attacks to avoid electoral disaffection. For ETA-m, armed struggle should be run autonomously, with a social movement articulated around the defence of its goals. ETA-pm was disbanded in 1982. The ETA we know today is ETA-m.

Three strategic periods can be distinguished in ETA's history.[13] In the first period, from ETA's creation in 1959 to 1977, ETA thought that violence would trigger a popular uprising, following the path of anti-colonial movements. When this was proven unrealistic with the arrival of democracy, ETA switched to a strategy of a war of attrition against the state, in which the terrorist group killed members of the security forces and the state arrested terrorists to prevent them from killing.[14] ETA theorized that

the state would not be able to withstand a regular flow of killings amidst popular pressure to negotiate and deliver some concessions. The war of attrition period covers the central part of ETA's existence, between 1978 and 1994.

In March 1992, the longest-serving ETA leadership was arrested in France. This blow was so severe that it forced ETA to rethink its strategy. In the third period, which runs from 1995 to the present, ETA abandoned the possibility of forcing the state to make concessions solely through violent tactics. ETA sought unity between all of the Basque nationalist parties in the hopes of taking unilateral steps towards independence. The organization also started to target politicians from the non-nationalist parties, mainly the PSOE (Spanish Workers Socialist Party) and the PP (Popular Party), because they opposed the nationalist front.

When the PNV (Basque Nationalist Party) showed its willingness to be part of the nationalist front, ETA declared an "indefinite truce" in September 1998. The truce was broken one year later, due to the reluctance of the PNV to follow through on some of the more ambitious plans of ETA. The last campaign of violence, which lasted from 2000 to 2003, focused heavily on the targeting of local non-nationalist politicians and was eventually halted by security forces. The state, moreover, reacted by passing the law on political parties that banned Batasuna from electoral participation. ETA did not kill anyone between June 2003 and March 2006, when it declared a new ceasefire that would open a peace process. The process ultimately failed because ETA did not accept the agreement that Batasuna politicians had crafted with the PSOE and the PNV about the creation of a supra-regional institution linking Navarre and the Basque Country. Twelve killings occurred after the 2006 peace process. These killings do not fit an obvious strategic intent by ETA and appear to be a form of residual violence.

Figure 1 traces the yearly evolution of ETA's killings in the Basque Country and Spain since 1968. Deaths in the Basque Country represent 67 percent of all victims of ETA violence. There is a clearly discernable pattern of decline through time, with some peaks in 1979, 1987, 1991 and 2000.

FIGURE 1

Table 1 shows the status of ETA victims in the Basque Country during the three strategic periods: 1959-77, 1978-95, and 1995-2010. The data are restricted to killings in the Basque Country whose authorship corresponds to ETA before 1974 and to ETA-m since then. Victim status is classified into three categories: state killings, non-state killings of civilians, and killings of politicians. During the first two periods, ETA mainly focused on security forces (state killings), which represent over 60 percent of all killings. This is consistent with the organization's noted fight against the state. The percentage of civilians killed is particularly high (34 percent) during the war of attrition, when ETA tried to maximize pressure on the state using devices such as car bombs. In the last period, that of the nationalist front, ETA changed its pattern of targeting, choosing mainly non-nationalist politicians, who represent 32 percent of all victims in this period. This fits with ETA's mentioned goal of dividing Basque society into two blocs, nationalists and non-nationalists.

TABLE 1

Figure 2 depicts the evolution of Batasuna's vote share (in relation to the census) in regional elections. The figure includes information for the 2005 election, because Batasuna circumvented the banning by calling its supporters to vote for a previously

unknown party called the PCTV-EHAK (the Communist Party of the Basque Homelands) whose representatives adopted thoroughly the Batasuna ideological platform. In 2009, however, Batasuna was not so successful in evading the law, and it could not run.

Support for Batasuna varies in the small range of 10-12 percent of the census. We have superimposed a fit line that shows the declining trend of Batasuna over the elections. Volatility is greater in the last two elections. In 1998 there were elections immediately after ETA's truce declaration. Batasuna obtained its maximum vote, showing that support is higher when ETA stops violence, a clear indicator that there is some trade-off between violence and popular support.[15] Then in 2001 there was a dramatic fall, due in part to the breakdown of the truce, which generated widespread frustration among secessionist voters, and in part defection in favor of the PNV, which, for the first time, faced a strong challenge from the non-nationalist parties. Although some voters came back in 2005, the illegalization of Batasuna and the increasing appeal of a legal pro-secession competitor that condemns violence (*Aralar*) seem to have forced ETA to call a unilateral truce, which was announced in January 2011. The recent wave of electoral successes triggered by the creation of a pro-secession coalition (Bildu for the 2011 municipal election and Amaiur for the 2011 general election) wherein Batasuna has found accommodation is further proof of the trade-off between violence and support.

FIGURE 2

**How electoral results affect terrorist violence**

When the terrorists decide to kill, they have to make a number of choices: whom to kill, how to kill, and when and where to kill.[16] In this section we focus on the last decision. We argue that Batasuna's electoral results are a relevant factor for understanding the choice of location.

Once the terrorist leadership gives the order to attack a particular target, the specific location of the victim will be selected by considering the risks and consequences of carrying out the action in the alternative places. The crucial assumption we make here is that audience costs are irrelevant with regard to location simply because they are the same for all Batasuna voters, regardless of where they live. This implies that all Batasuna voters are equally radical and all have the same preferences and beliefs about the limits of armed struggle.[17] Thus, once ETA decides to attack a certain target, the audience cost (either positive, negative or null) is taken for granted and does not affect the choice of the municipality where the chosen target will be attacked. If killing a non-nationalist politician is unpopular, it is unpopular in an equal way in every Basque municipality. Audience costs may be relevant in accounting for target selection, but not for attack location.

We claim that in order to understand the choice of location, we have to take into account the target choice, since the aims of the terrorists may vary depending on the target. Two broad categories can be distinguished: attacks against the state, which consist primarily of attacks against security forces, and attacks against civilians who are not state officials. In the first case, the aim of the terrorists is to put as much pressure as possible on the state, or, in the terminology developed by Gordon McCormick, to gain influence.[18] The killing of civilians, however, insofar as it is selective and not indiscriminate, has a different purpose.[19] Again, using McCormick's distinction, these attacks are aimed at security rather than influence. In the present context, security

11

means every aspect related to the survival of the terrorist group, which may include getting rid of enemies or defectors as well as increasing popular support.

Regarding state killings, the underlying logic is the following. Given that terrorist groups remain underground, their main aim is to harm the state without risking their resources. Thus, reducing the risk of being caught after carrying out an action is a basic principle. Cities, compared to towns, always facilitate this objective: the hideouts are multiple, urban dwellers are less suspicious about unknown neighbors and the number of targets is also larger. Thus, we should expect more killings against security forces and state officials in cities than in towns.

On the other hand, given the secrecy in which terrorists must live, it is less risky for them if they delegate to informal networks of supporters to single out potential targets and facilitate hideouts and other resources. As intelligence-gathering is a high-exposure task, terrorists possess a strong incentive to work closely with their tight-knit supporters. Therefore, the expectation is that most attacks against security forces will take place in cities where terrorists can count on a relevant community of supporters. By the same token, we should expect to observe the smallest number of attacks in towns where terrorists lack a support base.

Table 2 offers a first cut analysis of the location of terrorist attacks against the state by size of the municipality and size of the support constituency. We divided the sample following two simple criteria. First, "towns" denote municipalities with less than 50,000 inhabitants, whereas "cities" have more than 50,000.[20] Second, we additionally break-up the sample by looking at the average number of votes cast for Batasuna during all regional elections: those municipalities that are below average (15.3 percent of the vote) are labeled as "low support," and those that are above average are called "high support." As is evident in the table, these classifications produce four categories: towns

12

with low support (28 percent of the municipalities and 10 percent of the population),

towns with high support (67 percent of the municipalities and 30 percent of the

population), cities with low support (4 percent of the municipalities and 48 percent of

the population) and cities with high support (1 percent of the municipalities and 12

percent of the population).[21]


TABLE 2


Table 2 confirms our expectation. First, cities experience many more killings

than towns. The concentration of targets and easy hideouts may explain much of this

variation. Second, municipalities with above average support for Batasuna suffer more

deadly attacks against state targets than those with lower support, regardless of the size

of the municipality. Finally, the cities with high support have the highest absolute

number of killings on average for the whole period, whereas towns with low support

rank lowest.

Regarding civilian killings, easy hideouts and getaways and intelligence-

gathering from supporters are also very relevant. But security concerns have some

further consequences in this case, as attacks may be affected by the balance of power

between supporters and enemies in the municipality. There is a well-established body of

evidence showing that in contexts where rivals have strong pre-conflict markers,

violence will predominantly take place in polarized settings.[22] In a stylized fashion, the

logic straightforwardly applies to our case: in places where Batasuna has no support at

all, it is difficult for ETA to ascertain whether there are local people defying its

legitimacy; on the other hand, in places where Batasuna has high electoral support,

almost no one dares to complain or undermine the terrorist group, since the risk of being

punished is very high. This leaves us with the towns where Batasuna has an intermediate level of support as the most violence-prone; in polarized municipalities, Batasuna has sufficient support to detect unfriendly behavior, but not enough to deter it in the absence of violence.

We test this expected curvilinear relationship by breaking-up the sample of municipalities into six groups, as indicated in Table 3. This time, we distinguish between municipalities with low support for Batasuna (<15 percent of the vote), those with intermediate levels (15 percent to 35 percent) and finally, those with high support (>35 percent).[23] The evidence supports our expectation: regardless of the size of the municipality, the average absolute number of civilian killings is always higher when Batasuna has intermediate levels of support.

TABLE 3

The exploratory results of Tables 2 and 3 survive a more demanding statistical test in which we analyze first whether there was any killing in the municipality and then disaggregate for state killings and civilian ones. Thus, we measure how the distribution of municipal votes in a certain election may influence ETA's subsequent choice of locations for their attacks. For the first period, for instance, we analyze how the distribution of votes in the first regional elections of 1980 affects the location of ETA attacks between 1980 and 1984, the year in which the second regional election was held.[24]

The dependent variable measures whether terrorists killed at least one person in the municipality during the corresponding inter-legislative period. Although some information about the intensity of violence in each municipality is lost with the

14

dichotomization of the dependent variable, we do this because the distribution of the killings is quite skewed, with few municipalities suffering more than one killing in each legislative period.[25] We employ logit models, where the value "1" denotes that at least one person was killed in the municipality during the inter-legislative term. Given that there are several observations for each municipality, we use municipality-clustered standard errors.

The two key independent variables are the size of the municipality (in its logarithmic transformation) and the vote (over census) for Batasuna in the municipality during the previous regional election. As a non-linear relationship is expected for civilian targets, the quadratic transformation of support for Batasuna is also used.

Additionally, we incorporate several controls. Firstly, it is a well known fact about the Basque Country that support for nationalist parties correlates strongly with the number of Basque speakers in the municipality (the correlation is 0.68 in our dataset).[26] Thus, instead of relying on electoral information, it could be the case that members of ETA recognize the density of Basque speakers in a town as a rough proxy for the probability of finding collaborators and not being denounced. Accordingly, ETA would kill more in those locations where the number of Basque speakers is large.

Second, we control for time effects. ETA's lethality has dramatically declined over time. We capture this by controlling for the electoral period in the models as a measure of the general activity of the terrorist group. Third, we introduce a rough spatial control, the province of the municipality, with Alava being the base category. Territorially, ETA cells are usually limited in their activities to a single province, not attacking beyond provincial borders. In order to reduce the potential bias due to the existence of more ETA cells in some provinces than in others, we control for the province of the municipality.[27]

15

TABLE 4

The results are shown in Table 4 and move from the more general to the more specific models. We start with generic killings, making no distinction about the nature of the target (Models 1-2) and then we analyze more specific categories: state killing (Models 3-4) and non-state killing (Models 5-6). We duplicate certain models because we want to test non-linear relationships between support for Batasuna and killings.

At first glance, the location of any type of killing does not seem to be related to the amount of electoral support for Batasuna, since neither Model 1 nor Model 2 produce significant coefficients for Batasuna support. Apparently, all that matters is the size of the municipality, with larger cities suffering more violence.

However, the absence of a connection between violence and votes is driven by the existence of confounding effects within the dependent variable, which at this point is too general, with a value of "1" for any kind of killing. The key issue here is to distinguish whether or not the attack is aimed at the state.

Models 3-4 show that attacks against security forces are more likely the more support Batasuna has in the municipality and this holds regardless of the size of the municipality. Besides, the effect is clearly linear since the squared transformation of Batasuna does not have a statistically significant effect. This confirms our initial expectation. By contrast, Models 5-6, in which the dependent variable measures whether non-state civilians are killed, reveal the expected inverted U-shaped relationship between support for Batasuna and civilian killings.

In brief, security forces are targeted more in municipalities with high support for Batasuna, whereas civilians suffer more in municipalities with intermediate levels of

16

support for Batasuna, regardless of the size of the municipality. The effects of electoral support for Batasuna on attack location are not negligible. A city with 50,000 inhabitants goes from a probability of having a state killing of 0.29 if Batasuna attracts 5 percent of the votes to a probability of 0.76 if the support for the party increases to 35 percent. As for civilian killings, the same city would have a 0.50 chance of experiencing a death if support for Batasuna is around 15 percent (the cut-point of the distribution). However, the probability declines if support for Batasuna is too low (0.19 probability, with 5 percent of support for Batasuna) or too high (0.01 probability, with 35 percent of support).

Regarding controls, the period effects are quite significant. ETA's use of violence has declined dramatically since the 1980s, so that the number of municipalities experiencing attacks also decreased over this period. Our proxy for spatial effects, however, does not work so well. The province where the attack took place fails to capture the potential contagion effects due to the existence of active ETA cells in a number of municipalities. Finally, the share of Basque speakers in the municipality is only related to civilian targeting when the quadratic term of support for Batasuna is not included in the model.

**How terrorist violence affects electoral results**

We now move to the effect of violence on the electoral behaviour of Batasuna's voters. Here we are interested in estimating the magnitude of audience costs associated with different kinds of lethal attacks. The idea is to check whether the changes in the vote for Batasuna between regional elections can be partly explained by the violence of ETA at the municipal level. Given our research design, we assume that the units of observation, municipalities, are independent of each other, so that the effect of a killing in one

17

municipality has consequences on that municipality alone, with no spillover effects on others. This is indeed a restrictive assumption, but, so to speak, is the least favourable for our hypotheses, since we are only regarding the direct effects in the municipality in which the attack takes place, neglecting potential indirect effects on other municipalities.

The dependent variable is the percentage change in Batasuna's vote in two consecutive regional elections. The first observation corresponds therefore to the difference in Batasuna's vote share between the 1984 and the 1980 elections. We do not take into account the killings that occurred before the first 1980 elections because there is no variation in the party's vote share before that year. It is worth noting that here we invert the procedure of the previous section. Whereas before we measured how the distribution of votes in the municipality in a certain election affect the location of ETA attacks until the holding of the next elections (how the distribution of votes in 1980 affect ETA's choices of municipalities in which to carry out attacks during the 1980-84 period), we now measure how the change of vote for Batasuna between 1980 and 1984 is affected by the killings during that period.

The variation in Batasuna's vote share is calculated over census, as our main interest lies in counting the variation in the number of people over 18 years who decide to vote for Batasuna in the municipality. Of course, this may be driven to a great extent by levels of participation in each election. Thus, we control for the change in the percentage who abstain from voting between each two consecutive elections.

It is also necessary to control for time effects. The evolution of Batasuna's vote share follows a non-linear trend. As seen in Figure 2, there is positive growth in the 1980s; a decline in the early 1990s, halted by the strong increase in the 1998 elections, which took place just after ETA declared an "indefinite truce," boosting support for

18

Batasuna; and a deep fall in 2001, followed by a partial recovery in 2005. Given this complex evolution, we have introduced election-year dummies, the year 1984 being the base category. As we did in the previous analysis, we also control for the province of the municipality with Alava as the base category. Finally, we control again for the log of population and for the percentage of Basque speakers.

Regarding violence, we measure the number of killings in each municipality during each election period as the rate of people killed per 10,000 inhabitants in the municipality. The justification is the following: the effect of a person killed is greater in small municipalities, where the killing is a highly salient event, than in bigger ones. In a big city, the killing of a member of the security forces may go largely unnoticed, especially in times of high levels of violence. The rate of killings reflects this differential effect; a killing in a small village will have a higher value than a killing in a city.[28]

We estimate linear regression models, with clustered standard errors for municipalities. As in the previous section, we proceed from the more general measurement of violence to the more specific one. Table 5 contains the main results.

TABLE 5

The first model simply introduces the rate of all people killed (total deaths per 10,000 people) controlling for all of the aforementioned variables. The coefficient is negative and highly significant. There is some punishment to Batasuna when ETA increases its levels of violence in a municipality, holding everything else constant. The effect, however, is not big in substantive terms, as it is particularly concentrated in the less populated towns of the region.

Regarding controls, we find, as expected, a strong effect of abstention, as well as strong period effects. There is higher volatility in late elections, as can be seen in the very strong coefficients for the elections of 1998, 2001, and 2005. Regarding provinces, there is a negative effect for Biscay, compared to Alava and Guipuzcoa. In general, Batasuna tends to perform better in those municipalities with a greater percentage of Basque speakers, which does not come as a surprise. Finally, a municipality's population size is not significant.

Model 2 shows that the main result of Model 1 regarding killings is driven by lethal attacks against the state. In Model 2 we decompose total killings into state and non-state ones. The latter is not significant at all, but the former is. Electoral punishment seems to be driven by ETA's killing of members of the security forces.

This finding is largely unexpected, since it is usually assumed that non-state killings bear greater electoral costs than state ones, since the former is usually more reviled by the support community. The whole story, however, is slightly more complex. The problem with the category of non-state killings is that it is internally heterogeneous, conflating very different types of killings. We have tried to unpack this category by distinguishing various campaigns that ETA conducted against specific targets. The reactions of the support community may vary depending on the type of target of each campaign.

Based on our knowledge of ETA's violence and pragmatic considerations about sufficient number of observations, we have selected three campaigns: against informers, against drug-dealers, and against local politicians from non-nationalist parties. ETA has always considered the killing of informers (civilians who collaborate with security forces) legitimate. According to the Victims of ETA dataset, 115 civilians have been killed because ETA accused them of being informers. Most of these killings took place

20

in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Informers tend to be viewed as a threat to the movement by its support base. Thus, our expectation is that in ETA's support community, these killings will be approved of and should reinforce the vote for Batasuna.

In its campaign against drug-dealers, ETA killed 35 people mostly during the late 1980s and early 1990s. According to ETA, the introduction of drugs in the Basque Country has a demobilizing effect on the Basque youth, eroding their political consciousness and revolutionary impetus. A more plausible explanation has to do with the search for popularity: by intervening in depressed neighbourhoods in which the state is not able to control small scale drug trafficking, ETA tries to replace the state by asserting its own authority to solve problems with the final aim of gaining the approval of local inhabitants. In principle, we expect that these killings will have a positive effect on the vote for Batasuna.

Finally, we have ETA's highly controversial and dramatic campaign against local politicians who belong to non-nationalist parties (PP and PSOE). This campaign resulted in the deaths of 19 people during the period 1996-2005. These attacks were reviled as they targeted elected politicians with support at the local level and they had a clear sectarian intent. They were aimed at terrorizing non-nationalists in a period in which Batasuna tried to form a broad Basque front with non-violent nationalist parties. Since these attacks were viewed as particularly cruel we expect them to be rejected by Batasuna's voters.

Model 3 confirms that the non-state category was simply too heterogeneous, with different campaigns producing different electoral effects.[29] Thus, the coefficients for informers and drug-dealers are positive. Batasuna's vote share increased in those municipalities in which ETA killed either informers or drug-dealers. By contrast, the

coefficient for non-nationalist politicians is negative. It is only significant at a 15 percent level, but we consider this acceptable given that there are just fifteen municipalities with values greater than zero on this variable.[30]

The campaign against local politicians is worth exploring. A deeper analysis reveals the complexities and nuances of audience costs. This was a campaign very much limited in time: it only started in 1995, when ETA was experiencing a moment of weakness after the success of a March 1992 police operation, in which the whole leadership of the group was arrested in the south of France. These were highly visible attacks against "soft targets" and therefore were relatively easy for ETA to carry out. Although this campaign produced negative electoral returns, it was instrumental in the strategy of pan-nationalist unity. As a member of ETA in prison wrote to the ETA leadership, more attacks against local politicians were necessary because they had exponentially increased political polarization and forced moderate nationalists towards radical nationalists' positions on secession.[31]

It is interesting to look in greater detail at the variation in the reactions provoked by these killings of politicians. Although there are only 15 municipalities in which the killings took place, a clear pattern is discernable. When the political majority in the municipality is non-nationalist, the punishment for Batasuna is stronger than when the majority is a nationalist one. The mechanism that could explain this relationship is the following: in municipalities in which the non-nationalists are a majority, a killing of this nature brings about various acts of public protest and rejection of Batasuna. This reaction leads to the electoral punishment of Batasuna. When the municipality is a nationalist one, the reaction is milder and, hence, voters are less likely to punish the party.

Despite the very low number of observations (15), a very simple statistical analysis bears the pattern out. To avoid problems with degrees of freedom, we have created a variable that measures in the 15 municipalities the deviation of the vote share gained by Batasuna in the municipality in which a killing of a non-nationalist politician took place, from the mean change of Batasuna in the whole sample. By centering our variable on the sample mean, we do not have to control for election years. The dependent variable measures then whether the change in vote for Batasuna in a municipality in which an attack of this nature took place is higher or lower than the average change in Batasuna's vote share in that election.

We use two indicators for the political value of the dominant group in the municipality. The first one is whether the vote share of non-nationalist parties is above the median in the 15 municipalities (>42.5 percent of the vote). This is a dummy variable. The second one is whether the mayoralty of the municipality is held by a non-nationalist politician (another dummy variable). Given the extremely low number of observations, we only control for population size. Results appear in Table 6. Obviously, these results have to be interpreted with great caution, and as merely exploratory, due to the small sample size.

TABLE 6

Model 1 shows that the decrease in Batasuna's vote share is almost 4 points higher in municipalities with a strong presence of non-nationalist parties. A similar but weaker effect is found in Model 2 regarding the presence of a non-nationalist mayor in the municipality. This confirms the hypothesis that the social reaction organized by the non-nationalist parties is critical for the punishment.[32] This finding contradicts the

23

assumption we made in the previous section, since Batasuna supporters seem to punish ETA attacks against non-nationalist politicians more in the municipalities where non-nationalists are dominant. Still, there is no way out for ETA: once the group decided to target non-nationalists, the best settings to carry out this strategy were the most polarized municipalities. In this sense, ETA could somehow anticipate that its "national front" strategy would generate some negative payoffs in terms of electoral support.

**Conclusions**

The relationship between terrorist groups' use of violence and their support communities' electoral preferences is an under-researched topic. This issue is particularly interesting when the support community does not approve of specific armed attacks. In this case, the terrorists face trade-offs between their desire to use violence and retain popular support. ETA represents a typical case of a terrorist group with a considerable support community (which can be estimated to be 10-12 percent of the Basque population) that is critical of certain forms of violence. The trade-off can be analyzed empirically in the Basque conflict. We have violence and electoral results for almost thirty years, a period long enough to produce variation in the two variables, violent tactics and electoral performance.

We have studied the support for ETA's political branch in two ways. Firstly, how levels of support for Batasuna help to explain ETA's choice of location for their attacks in the Basque Country. Two findings are relevant here. On the one hand, the greater the support for Batasuna in a municipality, the more likely it will be that the terrorists kill victims associated with the state (mainly members of the security forces). In municipalities where Batasuna has a hegemonic presence, denunciation is less likely and logistical support (e.g. gathering intelligence, finding shelter, etc.) is greater. On the

other hand, ETA kills non-state victims in municipalities in which Batasuna has intermediate levels of support. Where support is very low or very high, non-state killings are less likely to occur. This inverted-U relationship is explained in terms of population control: in municipalities where Batasuna is dominant or almost non-existent, the killing of a non-state victim will not alter the balance of power. However, in divided municipalities where Batasuna has an intermediate level of power, non-state killings may help to deter opposition to ETA so that the movement can come to dominate local life. Following McCormick's tradeoff, our results indicate that ETA kills security forces in safe areas, but targets civilians in those polarized municipalities where its political movement faces more contestation.

Secondly, we have analysed the effect of ETA attacks on Batasuna's vote share. The main findings are the following. State killings have an electoral cost. However, this does not prevent ETA from killing members of the security forces. By killing them, ETA also imposes a cost on the state. It is a form of attrition, by which ETA hopes to compel the state to make territorial concessions. The bulk of ETA's violence consists of attacks against security forces. Even if there is a trade-off here between pressuring the state and losing popular support, ETA clearly opts for applying pressure to the state. With respect to non-state killings, there is no apparent electoral punishment to Batasuna when considered as a whole. However, when these campaigns are separated out, we find that ETA's killing of informers and drug dealers made Batasuna more popular, while the organization's killings of non-nationalist politicians were clearly unpopular among Batasuna's voters. In the latter case, the punishment is greater the stronger non-nationalists are in the municipality in which the attack takes place. The capacity of the non-nationalists to organize opposition to ETA and to mobilize people against these killings most likely amplifies the punishment to Batasuna.

25

Two extensions follow from our fine-grained study. Firstly, this analysis can be applied to other contexts with terrorist groups as long as a sufficient number of elections and killings exist. The IRA in Northern Ireland, the PKK in the Turkish provinces with Kurdish majorities and Hamas in Palestine are potential candidates. The IRA, however, poses a critical comparison because of the similarities between the two conflicts. Anecdotal evidence mentioned in the first section of this article indicates that the IRA relied on supporters to maintain their fight and IRA members, therefore, were careful about carrying out attacks that jeopardized their broader support community. In the absence of the data, however, we can only speculate with some potential observable implications. Thus, state killings should take place in Catholic strongholds, with civilian deaths concentrated in ethnically mixed areas. On the other hand, regarding the audience costs, IRA campaigns such as the ones against petty thieves and drug dealers should yield positive electoral returns for Sinn Féin, whereas purely sectarian killings could reduce support for the Republican cause.

Second, and more generally, our analysis points to the fact that winning support, and by extension, legitimacy, is a key asset for sub-state terrorists in their quest for independence. As a policy implication, state rulers should make sure that their writ is not overturned by the terrorists in any area of the country in order to avoid conceding to them useful political flags to mobilize recruits. In the end, short of concessions, states may only succeed if they drain terrorists' legitimacy by forcing them to act indiscriminately, which will further alienate moderate supporters.

Figure 1. The evolution of ETA's killings
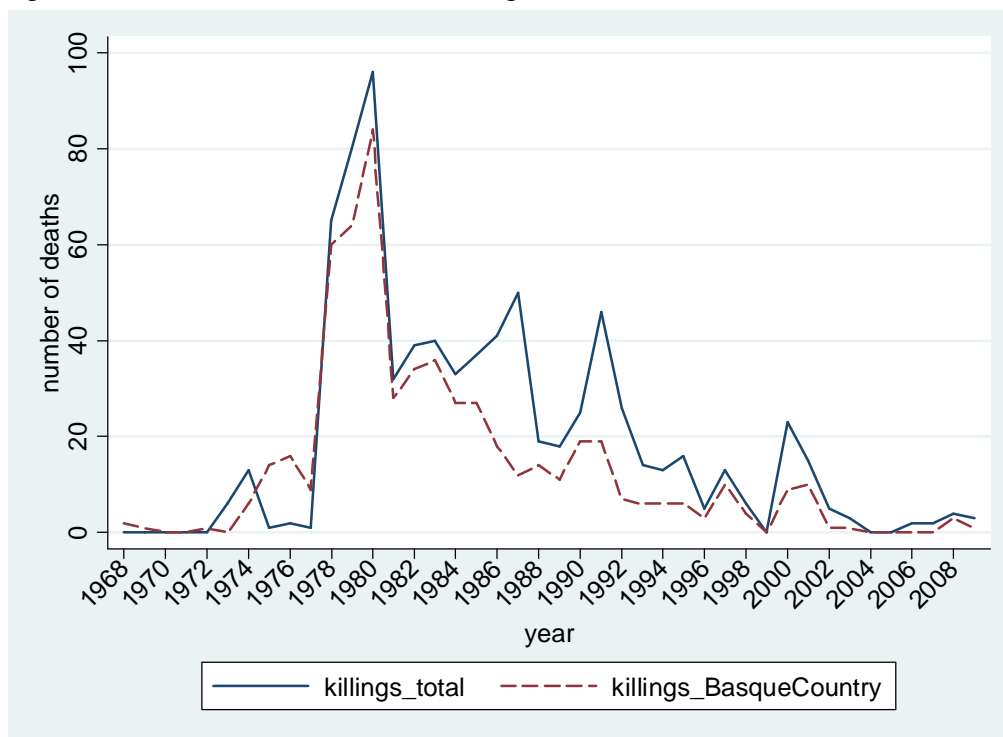


Source: Victims of ETA dataset.

Figure 2. Support for Batasuna in regional elections
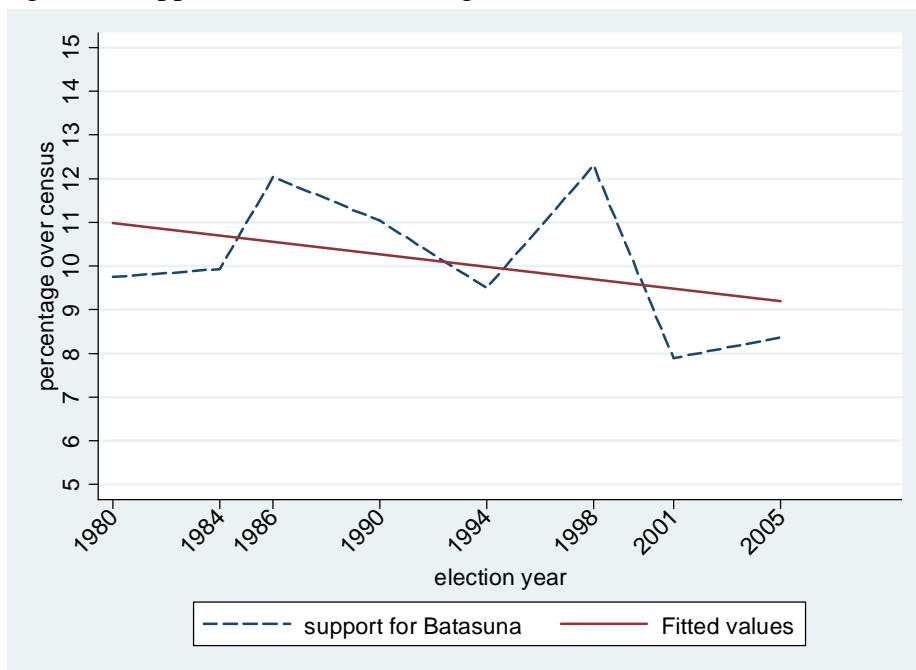


Source: Basque Government.

Table 1. Target selection and strategy in the Basque Country (vertical percentages).

| | Liberation war (1959-1976) | War of attrition (1977-1994) | Nationalist front (1995-2010) | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| State killings | 61.1% | 64.3% | 41.5% | 62.3% |
| Non-state civilians | 25.0% | 33.6% | 26.8% | 32.5% |
| Politicians | 13.9% | 2.1% | 31.7% | 5.2% |
| Total | 36 | 437 | 41 | 514 |

Source: Victims of ETA dataset.

Table 2. Average number of state killings in different municipalities.

|  | Low Support (<15.3%) | High Support (>15.3%) |
|---|---|---|
| Towns (<50,000) | 0.2 | 0.6 |
| Cities (>50,000) | 10.2 | 21.0 |

Table 3. Average number of civilian killings in different municipalities.

| | Low Support (<15%) | Intermediate Support (15%< $x$ <35%) | High Support (>35%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Towns (<50,000) | 0.16 | 0.72 | 0.24 |
| Cities (>50,000) | 6.48 | 13 | No observations |

Table 4. Logit models of the location of ETA killings, 1980-2005.

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 | Model 5 | Model 6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *All killings* | *All killings* | *State killings* | *State killings* | *Civilian killings* | *Civilian killings* |
| Batasuna | 0.03 | 0.07 | 0.07* | 0.04 | 0.00 | 0.39** |
| | (0.02) | (0.09) | (0.04) | (0.06) | (0.02) | (0.16) |
| Batasuna Sq. | | -0.00 | | 0.00 | | -0.01** |
| | | (0.00) | | (0.00) | | (0.01) |
| Population (log) | 1.31*** | 1.30*** | 1.32*** | 1.32*** | 1.22*** | 1.25*** |
| | (0.11) | (0.11) | (0.13) | (0.13) | (0.11) | (0.12) |
| Basque speakers | 0.01 | 0.01 | -0.00 | -0.00 | 0.01* | 0.01† |
| | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) |
| Guipuzcoa | -0.04 | -0.07 | -0.29 | -0.28 | 0.35 | 0.09 |
| | (0.64) | (0.64) | (0.71) | (0.71) | (0.61) | (0.63) |
| Biscay | -0.68 | -0.69 | -0.44 | -0.43 | -0.71 | -0.87 |
| | (0.61) | (0.61) | (0.65) | (0.65) | (0.57) | (0.58) |
| Year 1984 | -0.93*** | -0.94*** | -1.15*** | -1.14*** | -0.89** | -0.94** |
| | (0.32) | (0.32) | (0.39) | (0.39) | (0.42) | (0.42) |
| Year 1986 | -1.67*** | -1.70*** | -1.38*** | -1.34*** | -2.17*** | -2.34*** |
| | (0.33) | (0.34) | (0.37) | (0.38) | (0.51) | (0.52) |
| Year 1990 | -2.19*** | -2.21*** | -1.78*** | -1.76*** | -2.81*** | -2.87*** |
| | (0.37) | (0.37) | (0.42) | (0.42) | (0.52) | (0.52) |
| Year 1994 | -2.61*** | -2.61*** | -3.06*** | -3.08*** | -2.08*** | -2.06*** |
| | (0.40) | (0.40) | (0.56) | (0.55) | (0.45) | (0.44) |
| Year 1998 | -3.05*** | -3.05*** | -4.47*** | -4.46*** | -2.29*** | -2.25*** |
| | (0.52) | (0.52) | (0.93) | (0.94) | (0.56) | (0.55) |
| Year 2001 | -3.56*** | -3.52*** | -3.64*** | -3.71*** | -3.48*** | -3.25*** |
| | (0.61) | (0.58) | (0.89) | (0.89) | (0.69) | (0.67) |
| Intercept | -12.00*** | -12.22*** | -13.03*** | -12.82*** | -12.24*** | -14.82*** |
| | (0.99) | (1.12) | (1.48) | (1.50) | (1.22) | (1.66) |
| Pseudo R2 | 0.43 | 0.43 | 0.42 | 0.42 | 0.41 | 0.41 |
| chi2 | 201.41 | 201.34 | 162.83 | 173.52 | 202.59 | 185.16 |
| p | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 |
| n | 1685 | 1681 | 1685 | 1681 | 1685 | 1681 |

Municipality clustered standard errors in brackets.
*** $p < .01$; ** $p < .05$; * $p < .10$; † $p < .15$.

Table 5. Regression models of the change in support for Batasuna, 1980-2005.

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Total deaths per 10,000 people | -.043*** | | |
| | (.014) | | |
| State deaths per 10,000 people | | -.053*** | -.054*** |
| | | (.010) | (.010) |
| Non-State per 10,000 people | | .041 | |
| | | (.060) | |
| Informers killed per 10,000 people | | | .549** |
| | | | (.224) |
| Drug dealers killed per 10,000 people | | | .395* |
| | | | (.236) |
| Non-nationalist politicians killed per 10,000 people | | | -.748[†] |
| | | | (.474) |
| Abstention | -.220*** | -.220*** | -.219*** |
| | (.020) | (.020) | (.020) |
| Population (log) | .011 | .008 | -.004 |
| | (.036) | (.036) | (.036) |
| Basque speakers | .012*** | .012*** | .012*** |
| | (.002) | (.002) | (.002) |
| Guipuzcoa | .111 | .108 | .124 |
| | (.182) | (.182) | (.183) |
| Biscay | -.531*** | -.528*** | -.506*** |
| | (.135) | (.136) | (.137) |
| Year 1986 | 4.107*** | 4.125*** | 4.158*** |
| | (.349) | (.350) | (.351) |
| Year 1990 | 3.777*** | 3.811*** | 3.854*** |
| | (.461) | (.465) | (.465) |
| Year 1994 | .496 | .528 | .584[†] |
| | (.379) | (383) | (.385) |
| Year 1998 | 4.384*** | 4.413*** | 4.484*** |
| | (.297) | (.300) | (.302) |
| Year 2001 | -5.552*** | -5.525*** | -5.443*** |
| | (.325) | (.327) | (.329) |
| Year 2005 | 4.733*** | 4.767*** | 4.833*** |
| | (.481) | (.485) | (.487) |
| Intercept | -2.235*** | -2.238*** | -2.213*** |
| | (.477) | (.478) | (.020) |
| $R^2$ | .58 | .58 | .59 |
| n | 1680 | 1680 | 1678 |

Municipality clustered standard errors in brackets.
*** p < .01; ** p < .05; * p < .10; † p < .15.

33

Table 6. The electoral cost of deadly attacks against non-nationalist politicians.

| | Model 1 | Model 2 |
|---|---|---|
| Dominion of non-nationalists | -3.980*** | |
| | (1.023) | |
| Non-nationalist mayor | | -2.106† |
| | | (1.209) |
| Population (log) | 1.481* | .659 |
| | (.734) | (.674) |
| Intercept | -14.19* | -6.731 |
| | (7.082) | (6.516) |
| $R^2$ | .29 | .14 |
| n | 15 | 15 |
| Robust standard errors in brackets. *** p < .01; ** p < .05; * p < .10; † p < .15. | | |

[1] Ignacio Sánchez-Cuenca and Luis de la Calle, "Domestic Terrorism: The Hidden Side of Political Violence," *Annual Review of Political Science* 12 (2009): 31-49.

[2] See Stathis Kalyvas and Ignacio Sánchez-Cuenca, "Killing Without Dying: The Absence of Suicide Missions", in Diego Gambetta, ed., *Making Sense of Suicide Missions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 209-232.

[3] Leonard Weinberg and William Lee Eubank, *The Rise and Fall of Italian Terrorism* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1987), Ch. 3.

[4] See Alan B. Krueger, *What Makes a Terrorist. Economics and the Roots of Terrorism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 27-32.

[5] Peter Bergen, *The Osama Bin Laden I Know: An Oral History of Al Qaeda's Leader* (New York: Free Press, 2006), 366.

[6] Sean MacStiofain, *Revolutionary in Ireland* (Edinburgh: Gordon Cremonesi, 1975), 214.

[7] Eamon Collins, *Killing Rage* (London: Granta, 1997), 295. There are other examples of this trade-off. Gabriel Mouesca, a past member of Iparretarrak (IK), the French-Basque terrorist group, recognized in his memoirs that IK's low-intensity violence was driven by its constituency's rejection to killing people. See Gabriel Mouesca, *La Nuque raide* (Paris: Philippe Rey, 2006), 50-51. In her book collecting experiences of ETA terrorists, Miren Alcedo wrote that "the first thing an ETA member does after carrying out an attack is to observe its impact on Basque society; it is only considered to be a success if the man in the street approves of it. This is why the attack against Hipercor [a car bomb blown up in the parking area of a supermarket in Barcelona, killing 27 people] is considered the biggest failure of ETA: not because its military aims were not achieved or because the leaders condemned it, but because those supporting Batasuna outrageously rejected it" [Miren Alcedo, *Militar en ETA* (San Sebastián: R&B, 1996), 129-130].

[8] Three accounts of the evolution of ETA and the Basque conflict are: Jan Mansvelt Beck, *Territory and Terror: Conflicting Nationalisms in the Basque Country* (London: Routledge, 2005); Florencio Domínguez, *De la negociación a la tregua:¿el final de ETA?* (Madrid: Taurus, 1998); and Ignacio Sánchez-Cuenca, *ETA contra el Estado* (Barcelona: Tusquets, 2001).

[9] Claude Berrebi and Esteban Klor, "On Terrorism and Electoral Outcomes: Theory and Evidence from the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 50, no. 6 (2006): 899-925; and "Are Voters Sensitive to Terrorism? Direct Evidence from the Israeli Electorate," *American Political Science Review* 102, no. 3 (2008): 279-301. Arzu Kibris, "Funerals and Elections: The Effects of Terrorism on Voting Behavior in Turkey," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* (forthcoming).

[10] Nationalists claim that the Basque Country is made up of the current Basque Autonomous Community (BAC) and the Foral Community of Navarre. Given that the electoral support of Batasuna and the impact of ETA violence are substantively lower in Navarre than in the BAC, we focus our statistical analysis on the latter region. In this paper, we therefore indistinctively use the Basque Country and the BAC.

[11] The dataset is available at www.march.es/dtv. See the codebook for a full explanation.

[12] On the "abertzale" movement, see Cynthia L. Irvin, *Militant Nationalism. Between Movement and Party in Ireland and the Basque Country* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999).

[13] See Florencio Domínguez, *De la negociación a la tregua* (see note 9 above) and Ignacio Sánchez-Cuenca, *ETA contra el Estado* (see note 9 above).

[14] See Ignacio Sánchez-Cuenca, "The Dynamics of Nationalist Terrorism: ETA and the IRA," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 19, no. 3 (2007): 289-306.

[15] The recent success of a pro-independence coalition sponsored by Batasuna together with other marginal nationalist parties is further evidence of this trade-off. Coalesced in a platform called Bildu ("to meet") that reneged on the use of violence to achieve political goals, secessionists got one out of four votes cast in the 2011 local election held in the Basque Country.

[16] A number of publications have already dealt with these questions. The "whom and how to kill" has been studied by Luis de la Calle and Ignacio Sánchez-Cuenca, "La selección de víctimas en ETA", *Revista Española de Ciencia Política* 10 (2004): 57-79; and Florencio Domínguez, *ETA, estrategia organizativa y actuaciones, 1978-1992* (Bilbao: Universidad del País Vasco, 1998); the "when to kill" has also been analyzed by Ignacio Sánchez-Cuenca, "Analyzing Temporal Variation in the Lethality of ETA," *Revista Internacional de Sociología* 67, no. 3 (2009): 609-629, and Gary LaFree, Laura Dugan, Min Xie and Piyusha Singh, "Spatial and Temporal Patterns of Terrorist Attacks by ETA, 1970 to 2007," *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, forthcoming.

[17] It might be the case that audience costs change among localities. For instance, in some municipalities the terrorists' support constituency could call for retribution in reaction to sectarian attacks carried out by inimical groups. These municipalities would have a demand for retribution which is absent in other localities in which this kind of sectarian violence did not occur. However, this was not the case in the

Basque Country. Violence by para-state groups was concentrated in the first years of the transition period, with the exception of the GAL, which did not perpetrate attacks in the Spanish Basque Country. Still, we have checked this potential effect by investigating whether the number of ETA members dead in action from a particular locality influenced ETA's decision on retaliating there. We found no effect (results available on request).

[18] See Gordon McCormick, "Terrorist Decision Making", *Annual Review of Political Science*, 6 (2003): 473-507.

[19] For a fully comprehensive typology of target selection, see Luis de la Calle and Ignacio Sánchez-Cuenca, "The Quantity and Quality of Terrorism: the DTV dataset", *Journal of Peace Research* 46, no. 1 (2011): 49-58.

[20] Only twelve municipalities meet this rule and qualify as cities: Barakaldo, Basauri, Bilbao, Getxo, Portugalete, Sestao, Santurtzi (all of them in the Great Bilbao area), Donostia, Irún, Rentería (the three in the Donostia-Irún conurbation), Eibar and Vitoria-Gasteiz.

[21] The three cities that show above-average Batasuna support are all in Guipuzcoa: Donostia, Rentería and Eibar.

[22] See Laia Balcells, "Rivalry and Revenge: Violence against Civilians in Conventional Civil Wars," *International Studies Quarterly* 54, no. 2 (2010): 291-313; Mario Chacón, "Polarizacion Politica y Violencia en Colombia," in Fabio Sánchez, ed., *Las Cuentas de la Violencia* (Bogotá: Editorial Norma, 2007); Luis de la Calle, "Fighting for Local Control: Street Violence in the Basque Country," *International Studies Quarterly* 51, no. 2 (2007): 431-455; Stathis Kalyvas, "Wanton and Senseless? The Logic of Massacres in Algeria," *Rationality and Society* 11, no. 3 (1999): 243–285; and Steve Wilkinson, *Votes and Violence: Electoral Competition and Ethnic Riots in India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

[23] As the Basque electorate remains quite fragmented, a third of the local vote is usually enough to be the largest party in town and control the municipality.

[24] As the first regional elections took place in 1980, we cannot investigate the location patterns of ETA attacks before that date. Besides, we used election days in order to count the number of deadly attacks produced by ETA during each inter-legislative period.

[25] Of the municipalities with at least one state victim, 52 percent had only 1 victim, and less than 10 percent had more than 5 deaths. Numbers for civilian victims are even lower: two thirds of the municipalities where ETA killed at least one civilian had only 1 death, with 10 percent between 4 and 6 victims.

[26] See Jan Mansvelt Beck, *Territory and Terror* (see note 9 above), 192-196.

[27] A more fined-grained control would have looked at the counties, instead of the provinces. However, when counties were introduced into the models, many observations dropped because many counties remained untouched by terrorist violence.

[28] We have also run every analysis with a different measurement, in which violence is a dummy with value 1 when there has been at least one person killed in the municipality. In general, we get stronger effects with the variables in rates.

[29] Model 3 was run removing two observations from the sample, those of Ispaster in 1986 and Zegama in 1984. These two cases were, by far, the most influential ones (as measured by the DFBETA statistic) in the case of killing informers. Due to the distortion caused by these two cases, the coefficient for informers was not significant at all (the coefficients for drug-dealers and non-nationalist politicians are not affected by these two cases) and we decided to remove them.

[30] A similar problem holds for the drug-dealers variable, but it is significant at a 10 per cent level.

[31] See the Spanish newspaper *ABC*, March 9, 1998.

[32] A case in point is Ermua. In July 1997, ETA kidnapped Miguel Angel Blanco, who was a local councillor of the Popular Party in that village. The terrorists demanded that the state bring ETA's prisoners to prisons to the Basque Country in 48 hours; otherwise, they would kill Blanco. The government did not accept the terms and Blanco was killed. During the 48 hours that the kidnapping lasted, there were enormous mobilizations all around Spain. When Blanco was killed, there was a strong reaction against ETA and Batasuna. The protest was particularly strong and moving in Ermua itself, led by the major of the village, Carlos Totorica (PSOE), but it extended all over the Basque Country. Given the special circumstances of this killing, the punishment for Batasuna in Ermua was the highest in this sample of 15 municipalities in which local politicians were killed.