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# Mafia, Elections and Violence against Politicians

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## Abstract

Organized crime uses political violence to influence politics in a wide set of countries. This paper exploits a novel dataset of attacks directed towards Italian local politicians to study how (and why) criminal organizations use violence against them. We test two complementary theories to predict the use of violence i) before elections, to affect the electoral outcome; and ii) after elections, to influence politicians from the beginning of their term. We provide causal evidence in favor of the latter hypothesis. The probability of being a target of violence increases in the weeks right after an election in areas with a high presence of organized crime, especially when elections result in a change of local government.

Keywords: Organized Crime, Political Violence, Elections, Rent Seeking

JEL codes: H00, D72,

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