



ics
Universidad
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**Navarra Center for International Development,
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Oscar Barrera - Voting for war. The effect of electoral outcomes on conflict, evidence from Colombia

The Colombian conflict experienced a dramatic intensification after 2002 when the national government implemented the Democratic Security policy spearheaded by the Conservative leader Alvaro Uribe. This paper examines the direct effects of this policy on local violence towards civilians. A regression discontinuity approach shows that the number of civilian victims by Guerrilla bands increases substantially after close elections in municipalities where mayors in favor of the DS policy won, whereas no effect on the number of the civilian victims by other bands or official forces was observed. Empirical evidence suggests that the violence reflects either an anticipation strategy followed by the Guerrilla or manipulation of the scores by the local offices.