

## Power-sharing: row summary

### **Power-sharing has a small positive effect on government performance, but may have an adverse effect on violence**

Power-sharing is any attempt to guarantee the participation of representatives of significant groups in political decision making in order to reduce the danger that one group will become dominant as a new governmental process is specified. This includes power-sharing among groups previously in violent conflict, but also marginalised groups. In the included studies, power-sharing took forms such as ethnic or group quotas, proportional representation rules, guaranteed positions in executive coalitions, institutionalized veto rights, and consociational or other arrangements that allocate political authority among identity-based groups. Two broad designs recur: corporate power-sharing that relies on rigid group-based quotas and liberal power-sharing that uses more flexible, electorally determined inclusion.

Power-sharing aims to reduce incentives for violence and improve governance by assuring major groups that they will participate in decision-making, lowering fears of exclusion, and creating institutions that require bargaining and compromise. In principle, inclusive executive coalitions and proportional representation can limit domination by a single group, improve the credibility of political commitments, and stabilize politics. At the same time, rigid group-based rules can reduce electoral accountability, entrench elites, and harden identity divisions, which may undermine long-term performance or increase political unrest in some settings.

Evidence from two quasi-experimental studies finds a small positive average effect ( $g = 0.09$ ) on government performance. Effects vary by design: liberal forms of power-sharing show clearer positive associations with democratic outcomes, while corporate forms show mixed findings and can trade short-term stability for risks of elite entrenchment and reduced competition. Qualitative synthesis of sixteen studies with a governance component finds that power-sharing does not consistently reduce violence. Reported findings include null effects and adverse associations in ethnically fragmented contexts, including higher levels of political unrest and ethnic violence when arrangements concentrate benefits among political elites, exclude grassroots voices, or institutionalize identity-based divisions.

Confidence in findings low overall. The quantitative evidence for government performance draws on only two studies and both are rated low confidence. Evidence on violence is based on narrative synthesis of a heterogeneous set of studies, with few clear causal estimates and mixed direction of effects across contexts. Taken together, the evidence supports cautious expectations: small average improvements in government performance are possible in some designs, but violence reduction is not reliable and adverse effects are plausible, especially where inclusion is narrow or identity divisions are reinforced.

### Summary of effect sizes

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Effect size (g)</b>	<b>Effect magnitude</b>	<b>Direction</b>	<b>Studies (n)</b>	<b>Effect sizes (k)</b>
Government performance	0.09	Small effect	Positive	2	13
Nature and scale of violence	NA	Not reported	Mixed, often null or adverse	16	0