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Exclusive Societies: Minority Ethnic Group Support for Democracy

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Oral Presentation 5.3

**EXCLUSIVE SOCIETIES:
MINORITY ETHNIC GROUP SUPPORT FOR DEMOCRACY**

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The link between minority ethnic identification and support for democracy has been little explored in previous research. The opinions of minorities cannot be analyzed, however, without taking into consideration the inherent differences among minority groups. This paper tests the effects of minority status on attitudes toward democracy in two ways. First, aggregate analysis compares the minority and majority responses to a survey of popular attitudes in post-communist Europe and second, the characteristics of different minority communities are examined through a comparison of respondents from two very different minority groups: the Roma and the Russians in the Baltic states. In this study, statistical analysis discovers a positive relationship between simply being a member of a minority group and high levels of dissatisfaction with the institutions of democracy and regime performance. Survey data also reveals a linkage between a minority group's level of marginalization and its levels of support for democracy.