SIXTH FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME
PRIORITY 7

“Citizens and Governance in a Knowledge Based Society”

Deliverable 11
“Means and repertoires of action in community conflicts”

PEACE-COM
Peace Processes in Community Conflicts:
From Understanding the Roots of Conflicts
to Conflict Resolution
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1. GENERAL INTRODUCTION

This document is the second and last deliverable devoted to the analysis of the means of political action in community conflicts carried out within the WP4 of the PEACE COM research entitled *Peace Processes in Community Conflicts: From Understanding the Roots of Conflicts to Conflict Resolution*. The preliminary findings were presented in the D7 “Models of Action” (November 2006). However, several issues that arose in that deliverable, and others on which we have advanced in the course of these last months, are collected in this document for strengthening the understanding of the conflicts.

The presentation has been organized as follows for the purpose of making its reading easier: The first section is devoted to the establishment of a general perspective on the recent analyses of collective action, as well as on its main tools of theoretical enquiry. We include a typology that proves useful for the analysis of means of action in community conflicts and we try to establish a point of view for approaching the empirical analysis of the means. This section establishes the main guidelines of the analysis and the controversies elicited by the use of the concepts of means and repertoires of action in socio-political research during the last decades. Nevertheless, this is not a mere exercise in academic erudition, but has two clear goals. In the first place, it intends to situate both concepts within a traditional analysis of political conflict, that is, the analysis of politics of protest and collective mobilization that confer relevance to the ways through which different actors involved in specific socio-political contexts express their interests and demands. Hence, this is about linking the study of means and repertoires to the analysis of “community conflicts” along the lines of the general research framework established in D1 (‘Community Conflicts in Europe: A Review of the Literature’). The second goal of this part of the work is to define the meaning we attribute to both concepts in our analysis for the purpose of avoiding the frequent imprecision and ambiguity seen in academic literature and the media.

As a starting point and for the purpose of going back to the initial hypotheses of our work, the second section is devoted to a summary of the results of the D7 “Models of Action”, its main findings, as well as some issues that had been left pending. In this section, some of the general conclusions on the effectiveness-legitimacy binomial of the
means of action discussed in that document become reasons for a further and deeper enquiry.

In the light of the analysis limitations established in D7 and taking into consideration some of the hypotheses that could not be proved, a methodological instrument was designed for the second stage of the research for the purpose of collecting the knowledge of the experts from a qualitative perspective. The characteristics of this instrument, as well as its possibilities and methodological limitations, are extensively described in the third section.

Finally, the fourth and fifth sections are devoted exclusively to the qualitative analysis of the information provided by the experts. This analysis has been organized on two distinct levels: the first important element has to do with the set of structural and cultural elements that configure the context in which political action takes place. In the framework of community conflicts, the context in which the political, socio-economic, cultural, and international/global development are considered emerges not only as the scenario where the actions take place, but also as a determining factor in the selection of the means and the configuration of the repertoire that is characteristic of these conflicts. At the second level, and within what we have identified in this paper as complex repertoires of community conflicts, there appear certain types of actions that are characteristic of societies in conflict. Three of these means have been selected, which due to their specific characteristics, are theoretically and empirically interesting. For this reason, Section 5 performs an in-depth analysis of the following means: demonstrations as a modular means of action that is widely disseminated, shared, and accepted; murals as a means of action whose cultural uniqueness makes them especially meaningful and, finally, the analysis of violence in community conflicts.

In the light of the material and analyses presented in the course of these pages, the reader will find a few last notes that establish the main arguments and achievements of our work.
2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In the general introduction of the PEACE COM project, we highlighted the fact that the types of conflict to be studied combine so many different dimensions that a simplification for analysis purposes proves difficult. The cultural, identity, socio-economic, and political dimensions are intertwined in most of the conflicts. This gives rise to complex contexts that affect both the way they should be dealt with by political authorities seeking some kind of resolution of the conflict and the way in which they are to be analyzed from a strictly academic and research perspective.

The main object of PEACE COM is the analysis and the development of community conflicts in Europe and in some the countries that are demanding access to the EU, with a view to formulating instruments and strategies for their resolution. In short, we seek to develop a wider and more comprehensive interpretation of the conflicts.

Generally speaking, the conflict arises when different communities pursue different, or even contradictory, goals and demands therefore, the expression “community conflicts” does not refer only to armed struggle or war. It includes situations of tension in which communities with different interests oppose each other using peaceful and institutional means (Marret, 2001: 15), although with the possibility of becoming violent situations. This reasoning suggests different issues that become research challenges for us: Why do some conflicts adopt violent means, while others, in spite of the existence of opposing communities or “nations” with different cultural and political foundations, do not (the Belgian case)? Or, why are specific dynamics of confrontation adopted at the core of the conflicts through particular means of confrontation or struggle?

For the purpose of delimiting the object of our analysis, we have thought it convenient to recover Tilly’s classic definition of contention, inasmuch as it points to a sociological perspective of contentious processes and, therefore, is extremely useful for underscoring the various processes that take place at the core of social mobilization. By contentious politics, the authors mean: “episodic, public, collective interaction among makers of claims and their objects when (a) at least one government is a claimant, an object of claims, or a party to the claims and (b) the claims would, if realized, affect the interests of at least one of the claimants” (MacAdam, Tarrow, Tilly, 2003: 5).
Thus, we try to avoid a reified view of these conflicts or any other type of essentialism. Hence, it is necessary to analyze them by means of sociology of collective action geared towards the study of actors and their processes and to the highlighting of specific situations in which the actors carry our different kinds of action to reach their goals or realize their demands.

In the course of these pages, we will follow this line of work and we will focus on the mobilization processes carried out by different actors in the context of contentious processes that shape the various community conflicts included in our research. Therefore, we must place special emphasis on the need to consider the different dimensions that appear as constituent elements of these processes.

The context of the community conflict is the common link for the study of the action: a good part of the authors involved in these conflicts describe themselves as members of specific communities (in the style of Benedict Anderson’s “imagined communities” (1983). This limits the range of actors that make possible the comparison between repertoires of action (whether used or not, or conceived as legitimate or not) and the analysis of the effectiveness attributed to them.

Before delving into the object of our study, we believe it necessary to present a brief review of the pertinent academic literature. This will allow us to establish the basis of the conceptual framework of our work. For this purpose, we will now centre our attention on explaining how we address the concepts of collective action and repertoires of action. In doing so, we establish the basis for the future analysis of the repertoires of action and the dimensions that affect these repertoires in community conflicts.

2.1 The Current Relevance of the Debates on Collective Action

The appearance in 2001 of McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly's book, Dynamics of Contention (2001) presupposed a reconsideration of the problems of collective action. It was also an invitation to try out new explanatory models that imply a change in the theoretical perspective: from the linearity of the political model to the dynamics of the interactive framework; from contentious politics and collective action to contentious action.

This proposal is interesting, attractive, and thought provoking from a theoretical point of view, but it requires greater development and, above all, empirical validation. This
formulation does not rise from nowhere: over three decades of analyses of collective action and theoretical and empirical proposals, including the analysis of social movements, have contributed major theoretical advances. These advances have allowed us to consolidate a common theoretical framework, a series of premises that practically nobody disputes nowadays, which basically constitute the foundation on which the proposal of contentious action is laid down.

If we were to summaries these premises as a preliminary step to an authentic state-of-the-art recapitulation that would allow us to follow the theoretical debates and contributions on which condense has been gained, we should refer to the following:

1. Collective action is preformed by a collective subject; in other words, it is not the sum of individual actions. Therefore, the individual dimension of the action is interesting to the extent that individuals constitute collective subjects: they attribute meanings to the action, recognize each other, and carry out intentional acts. In other words, there is a necessary link between collective and individual actions; and this link is the one recognized as a potential dimension for analysis.

2. Collective action is always an interactive and communicative process: it implies other actors, resources, organizational and leadership abilities, the features of a juncture and structural conditions. These factors configure scenarios in which collective action is or is not possible and in which the form adopted by the action is conditioned if and when it takes place.

3. As a consequence of the above, the existence of grievances or structural or junctural conditions of the potential conflict, even if considered a necessary condition, is not a condition sufficient to explain collective actions.

4. The process of collective actions is a process of construction of collective identities: when actors define the identity, they define themselves and their relationships with other actors in accordance with the available resources and the opportunities and restrictions of the environment.

5. Collective actions are always rational actions; that is, rationality is shared by the actors. This implies that we could expect, in the course of history, the existence of
equivalent situations for selecting actions, and also that the actors, who are never the same individuals, behave similarly time and again.

6. An instrumental, finalist dimension is set in motion, as well as an expressive dimension. Because of the first dimension, collective actions are a means to an end; due to the second one, they are an end in themselves (the expression of values and conflicts, the construction and mobilization of a collective identity, the expression of strength, etc.). This is a key issue when analyzing the repertoires of action used in the community conflicts we are studying: to identify them and to observe the changes in repertoires and in the political meanings attributed to them.

The Concept of Repertoire in the Context of Collective Actions

The problem we are approaching can be summarized very concisely in the following three questions:

- How do the different actors become involved in the conflicts?
- Why do they participate in the conflicts in different ways, with different intensities, and through different means?
- Under what circumstances do the above questions vary; that is, the ways in which the action takes shape?

The notion of repertoire has been disseminated in the social sciences for describing a kind of “stock of available knowledge” (Schütz, 1973) where individuals and groups can seek a variety of resources. Each individual can search for a repertoire composed of disparate instruments, a fact which could contribute to offering a less homogeneous view of the individuals (in the style of Ann Swidler’s study on political cultures (1987).

In the case of collective actions, the repertoire of contention has been defined as: “The whole set of means (a group) has for making claims of different kinds on different individuals or groups”. Or as “the alternative means of acting together on shared interests” (Tilly: 1986:390).

In contemporary analysis, the repertoire concept has proved very useful when approaching the processes of collective action, especially when analyzing the way specific conflicts are shaped by certain demands. When the term “repertoire of collective
action” is taken as an analytical tool for understanding the means and types of action, it should be linked to the extensive literature on collective action.

In his original conception, the idea of repertoire of collective action formulated by Tilly is broad and has the capacity for accounting, on the one hand, for the political dimension by including the presence of authority (political power). On the other hand, it also includes a dynamic and interactive dimension; the repertoire changes as a function of a strategic rationality that is established in the interaction with the strategies of other actors. Thus, one action is resorted to, and not another, for obtaining a specific interest, depending not only on what is sought to be obtained, but also on what is possible to be done, the available resources, and the capacities and abilities of the protagonists.

In the words of the author: «A population’s repertoire of collective action generally includes only a handful of alternatives. It generally changes slowly, seems obvious and natural to people involved » (Tilly, 1978:156). And also, that «repertoires constrains collective action; (...) people tend to act within the margins of existing forms.» (Tilly, 1986: 390).

Therefore, Tilly’s formulation has the virtue of making evident that certain collective actions are recurrent, recognizable and, moreover, familiar to the participants.

Although from a less “harsh” view, repertoires are ultimately determined by the strategic and rational need in face of the possibilities opened by the structure of political opportunity, they also allow to consider that they change depending on the identities of the contenders and the cumulative history of collective struggles.

Therefore, the concept of repertoire of collective action has a structural, cultural, and historical component. In Tilly’s own words: “Roughly speaking, then, we can think of a repertoire of various forms of contention connecting real people to each other, a repertoire that comes into use and changes as a function of fluctuations in interest, opportunity, and organization” (Tilly, 1986:4)

Thus, we wish to underscore that the concept of repertoire of collective action is, just as Tarrow says, a structural concept and a cultural concept: «actions are not only what people do when they are engaged in conflict with others; it is what they know how to do and what others expect them to do» (Tarrow, 1994:31).
Therefore, the repertoire alludes to a plurality of means of action and defines specific actions carried out by particular actors at the core of a conflict for the purpose of obtaining political ends. By situating ourselves in the field of political action, its two-fold dimension (structural and cultural) is perfectly adequate for analyzing the mobilization processes of community conflicts. In this analysis, we are considering both the limitations of the actions and the creative capacity that shapes the actions, and the changes in the repertoires.

2.2 The Repertoires of Action in Community Conflicts

We have faced two different issues during the analysis of the repertoires of collective action in community conflicts. On the one hand, we have had to devise tools for the analysis (the formulation of the questions to key authors in the conflicts and the development of the questionnaire for the experts). On the other hand, we have proposed a typology of repertoires of action, supported theoretically, for understanding the variations and differences among actors, conflicts, and means of action employed.

To resolve both issues, we used two basic references: the analysis of collective actions as a theoretical framework and the analysis of political participation as a methodology proposal. Beginning with this last one, for the construction of the instrument, specifically, the formulation of the questions for the key actors, we adopted a variation of the questions on political action used by Barnes y Kaase (1979)\(^1\).

For the selection of questions, we used the distinction between conventional and non-conventional political action that was posed by Barnes and Kaase in the above-mentioned work. We worked with the frequency variable for non-conventional actions (in other words, how frequently does an organization perform a specific action?) (Question D6) and we asked about the same battery of actions that these actors do (press conferences, press releases, manifestoes, mailings, organization of meetings, and book publication). For the second, non-conventional actions, we included a specific type associated to the introduction of the NTIC (New Technologies of Information and Communication) in the mobilization. In this case, we worked with the same variables the

\(^1\) Annexe 1: see questions on actions included in the questionnaire.
authors used: approval, behavior (or intention of acting: has done or would do), and effectiveness (D7, D8 and D9, respectively)

*Typology of Repertoires and Actions:* of Barnes and Kaase’s “classical” distinction between conventional and non-conventional action in the analysis of the repertoires of action.

Although currently, and just as we will now formulate, we consider this distinction between conventional and non-convention insufficient, we decided to use it as a reference due to the contributions made by this approach to the analysis of political action. If we stop briefly and evoke the analysis of political participation of the seventies, we will acknowledge that, at the time, this work introduced the novel consideration of political action as a dynamic process inserted in a context of social transformation and change. This made it possible to understand direct political action not as threats against the destabilization of the political system (as was the case until that time), but simply as possibilities of an *amplified repertoire of political action.*

Thus, this approach made two important contributions to the analysis of political participation. In the first place, it presumed the empirical demonstration that conventional and non-conventional activities are not two separate universes that correspond to different kinks of logic; on the contrary, the prevailing tendency among large sectors of the population is to combine traditional political activities with direct political action. In the second place, it confirmed that social protest cannot be interpreted as a more or less disruptive response to public order by social groups that feel frustrated in their aspirations, but rather as an expression of changes in the attitudes and values of western democracies and, for that reason, have been built into the habitual repertoire of citizens political action.

This is why we believe the distinction is insufficient; it does not acknowledge the differences within the non-conventional. This is where the analysis of collective action makes great sense. For example, in *Power in movement* (1994: 152), Sydney Tarrow posits that there are basic types of collective action related to violence, the disturbance of public order, and the conventional. In other words, according to our analysis of the findings, it is necessary to distinguish between well-known and accepted means (regardless of whether the repertoire is employed in an electoral competition or not), the
means that entail the risk of disturbing public order, and the means that intentionally exert violence against people.

Table 1

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<td>2. Repertoire of contention</td>
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<tr>
<td>- with a high risk of violence and/or disturbing public order</td>
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<td>3. Repertoire of violence</td>
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1. Repertoire of “contained” collective action

Following McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly, we define this repertoire as any “episodic, public, collective interaction among makers of claims and their objects when (a) at least one government is a claimant, an object of claims, or a party to the claims, (b) the claims would, if realised, affect the interests of at least one of the claimants, and (c) all parties to the conflict were previously established as constituted political actors”. (McAdam, Tarrow, Tilly. 2001:7)

Therefore, it is generally a known, understood, and accepted repertoire whose actions do not imply great commitment and entail little risk during their execution. It is based on routines the people know and they are accepted by the authorities, who may even facilitate them. This is why they prevail numerically and how their institutionalization and lack of enthusiasm are explained. 152).

The specific actions we included in this repertoire are the following:
- All actions considered “conventional political actions” in the work of Barnes and Kaase, including electoral politics (meetings, campaigns, propaganda, manifestoes, etc.).
- Petitions
- Demonstrations and marches, to which we must add the ones indicated by the experts, which in spite of their different symbolism imply the same type of action. Parades and symbolic gatherings
- Strikes

In this repertoire we did not include actions such as seminars, press conferences, publications, or public conferences and debates because they are not political participation, nor collective action; they are communication strategies. If we had, why not include letters to members or answers to the director’s letters?

2. Repertoire of confrontation

In this case, and again following the same authors, we maintain parts a) and b) of the above definition, but we change part c) and add part d): “…c) at least some parties to the conflict are newly self-identified political actors, and/or d) at least some parties employ innovative collective action. (Action qualifies as innovative if it incorporates claims, selects objects of claims, includes collective self-representations, and or adopts means that are either unprecedented or forbidden within the regime in question)” (McAdam, Tarrow, Tilly. 2001: 7-8).

In other words, these are actions that entail the risk of disturbing public order and/or violence (specifically, damage to property) and imply organization, benefits, and specific costs. They are actions that break routines, surprise observers, and may confuse rulers, at least for a while. The disturbance of public order constitutes the origin of a good part of the changes in the repertoires and in the power of the actors; nevertheless, it is unstable and may easily degenerate into violence or become “sclerotised (Tarrow, 1994: 152).

- Repertoire of confrontation with a low risk of violence and/or disturbing public order: the risk is low because there is practically no physical interaction. The following actions are included:
- Hunger strikes
- Civil disobedience campaigns
- Boycotts

- Repertoire of confrontation with a high risk of violence and/or disturbing public order: the risk is high because of the “staging” of the conflict with physical interaction and with transgression. The actions included here are:
  - Occupation of buildings
  - Blocking traffic, chaining to bilingual signposts
  - Paintings, murals
  - Damage to property (for example, stealing town signposts)

3. Repertoire of violence

The key to separating violence in a specific repertoire is found in what we understand as “one more step in the escalation”. Violence against people. It is no longer possible here to distinguish among armed struggle, armed conflict, terrorism, and guerrilla warfare (as long as we are referring to the actor, not the repertoire of action). This is why we only talk about the “use of violence against people as a means of collective action”, which implies distinguishing it from the use of violence without political ends; that is,

as Tarrow wisely points out, sometimes violence becomes habitual in certain groups and in certain ritual relationships between groups ((Tarrow, 2004: 140). Indeed, we find this feature in community conflicts in which some actors resort to this repertoire of violence.

2.3 The Current Analysis of the Repertoires of Action

Of all the studies that contain novelties in the analysis of current repertoires of collective action, we have given special attention to two inter-related characteristics on which the more specialized authors on the subject concentrate: Sydney Tarrow and Donatella Della Porta (1999).
1. **Towards a Greater Prevalence of Contained Actions:** At present there are conditions for the development of an even greater frequency of contained collective action. It is interesting that it is available to a greater variety of organizations and for the participation of a greater number of people (Tarrow, 2004). In a certain way, just as one author has already suggested, we could be witnessing a *democratization* of collective actions (Van Aelst and Walgrave, 2001).

2. **The Normalization of some Means of Action:** this characteristic is related directly to the above; that is, the growing acceptance of some media as opposed to the greater rejection of others. In this case, it is necessary to point out that we are witnessing (as an effect of diverse causes and intertwined dimensions) an increasing loss of legitimacy of the use of violence. On the other hand, the diversification of the social groups implied in collective actions is included in the thesis of normalization, especially concerning the addition of a growing number of women and the middle classes. (Della Porta, 1999; Van Aelst and Walgrave, 2001).

It is important to explain that, given the characteristics of the instruments employed in this analysis and the focus on the analysis of collective actors, we cannot take a deeper look into the proposals concerning individual actions. Consequently, we cannot prove that participation involves a greater number of people, nor that there has been a diversification of the participating social groups that leads to greater representativity by reason of gender or social status.

The other theses, namely, the one that posits the predominance of contained action and the one that posits the normalization of some repertoires, constitute the core of our analysis.

Finally, we will now present some hypotheses that we will use during the analysis of the repertoires:

a. There is a certain degree of homogeneity in the levels of frequency, effectiveness, and legitimacy conferred to the conventional means of action that take place in community conflicts.

b. The variations that may be observed in this homogeneity are associated to the repertoires of action that entail risks of disturbing public order and/or violence.
c. Both the resources available to the actors (economic, political, organizational, and cultural) and the strategies of other actors or the perception of the legitimacy of the actors influence the selection of repertoires.

d. The legitimacy attributed to the repertoires is associated to the stand of the actor concerning the interpretation of the conflict (radical – moderate):

e. The influence of episodes of political violence with international repercussions is influencing the normalization of the repertoires that do not entail the disturbance of public order and/or violence.
3. STARTING POINT – DELIVERABLE 7

Due to the fact that this document is the second deliverable devoted to the analysis of the means and repertoires of action in the framework of community conflicts, we consider it convenient to include a brief summary of the first deliverable (D 7) for the purpose of recovering parts of its content that will allow us to broaden the present analysis. However, we must clarify, as we did in the course of D 7, that we were fully aware of the difficulties and limitations of analyzing the means and repertoires of action in “community conflicts” on the basis of the data provided by an opinion questionnaire. This task was the relevant starting point for a line of work that will incorporate another type of source, mainly qualitative data, during a later stage of the analysis.

In the first place, we must remember that in Deliverable 7 we refer to the debate surrounding two traditional concepts used in the analysis of political conflicts: the analysis of protest and collective action. These concepts are especially relevant when analyzing the means of action to which the actors involved in the conflicts resort to in socio-political contexts to express their interests and demands. Therefore, we include a summary of the main lines of analysis and the controversies concerning the use of the concept of means and repertoire of action generated in socio-political research during recent decades. Additionally, we present a brief review of the academic literature on the different dimensions – cultural, socio-economic, geographical, and political – that are pertinent when explaining the origins, developments, and possible evolutions of community conflicts.

In the second place, we present a preliminary analysis of the frequency, legitimacy, and effectiveness conferred to the different means of action by a significant range of actors in the nine cases selected for study. The analysis was based on the information gathered from the questionnaire designed by the researchers responsible for D 2. Although we encountered certain methodological difficulties during the analysis process, mainly in regard to the instrument and the representativeness of the sample, we offer some preliminary results on certain tendencies observed in the frequency, legitimacy, and effectiveness of the means selected.

We could include the following among the methodological limitations:
- The complexity of the field of research, which resulted in a complex and extensive questionnaire.
- The questionnaire included a considerable number of open and semi-open questions.
- We found a disparate distribution of actors in each case, and we even had to face a lack of information about certain types of actor.
- The original language of the questionnaire, the complex translation of certain key terms, and the simplification of the points of view of the interviewees.
- Significant changes in certain community conflicts (for example the Basque conflict) whose impact on the use of certain means of action could not be considered.
- Difficulties in contacting certain actors.
- A greater willingness to participate among the representatives of social or political organizations that advocate more radical stands.

In view of these limitations, we adopted certain measures for advancing in our analysis, such as simplifying the classification of authors and answer categories.\(^3\)

The D 7 analysis was based on a section of the questionnaire devoted entirely to the means and repertoires of action, particularly Section D, questions C1, D6, D7, D8, and D). However, the answers to question D 8 were not included in the analysis. Additionally, in view of the methodological difficulties stated, the analysis was structured on three levels:
- During the general analysis of each question, the general distribution of the frequencies obtained in the answer categories indicated in each one was taken into account.
- A cross analysis of three questions was performed and only two independent variables were considered: the type of actor and the case being studied.
- We attempted a comparative analysis of the three dimensions: frequency, legitimacy, and effectiveness. We also sought to establish some relevant relationships among them.

\(^3\) See D7 “Models of Action” WP4. PEACE COM.
Some basic hypotheses can be presented in a very abridged way:
- Although our research deals with very different types of community conflicts and takes
  into consideration their causes, their development, the kind of actors involved, the
duration of the conflict, and their levels of violence, it should be borne in mind that there
are some fundamental similarities that must not be ignored. In the first place, we are
studying community conflicts that take place in a European context, in the broad sense
of the term (obviously including the North and South Cyprus cases). In the second place,
these conflicts occur and develop in the frame of “Western” democratic political systems,
even if a number of specifications should be made regarding the particular features of
their political systems or even of their political cultures (specially in the cases of Kosovo,
Sandzak, and Vojvodina). All these differences will be stressed when comparing
different cases throughout our analysis, but nonetheless, we should avoid the tendency
to overemphasize diversity, while ignoring the existence of important common features.
In other words, when studying means and repertoires of action, reference to a common
broad institutional political framework and consideration of a number of shared cultural
features should not be minimized. The diffusion of means of action, for example, should
be much easier among actors that belong to a broad common political and cultural
world. This fact needs to be taken into account when explaining important coincidences
in the legitimacy and effectiveness that different actors confer to different means of
action.

To sum up, our starting hypotheses were:
I. We can expect a certain degree of homogeneity in the levels of frequency,
effectiveness, and legitimacy conferred to the conventional means of action that
take place in community conflicts.
II. We can expect differences when estimating the scores obtained in the means of
action that entail a risk of disturbing public order and/or violence.
III. The probability of the actors using certain means of action is associated to the
availability of the political resources relied on by the organizations to which they
belong; that is, the proximity to or the distance from the centers of political power.
IV. The resources available to the actor influence the use of the means of action
(economic, organizational, and political resources).
V. The volume of the resources is not the only influencing factor. What other actors do and what other actors expect to achieve are also elements that play a role, as well as the perceptions on the legitimacy of those means.

VI. We can expect the degree of legitimacy conferred by the actors to a means of action to be associated to:
   a. The author’s perception of his role, as well as the role attributed to the actor in the public sphere.
   b. The stand of the author in the interpretation of the conflict (radical versus moderate).

VII. At least two phenomena seem to influence the change in the repertoires of action:
   a. The impact of globalization
   b. The influence of certain events in the field of political violence at the global level

3.1 Preliminary Results of the Analysis

3.1.1 Results of the Analysis of Section D of the Survey

In this section, we will attempt to account for some of the preliminary conclusions related to the means and repertoires of action used in community conflicts based on the information provided by relevant actors in the communities studied. Nevertheless, it is necessary to take into account the interference of the methodological limitations we have reported and highlighted in the course of these pages and which are detailed in the Methodological Appendix.

In spite of the above, at this level of analysis, we can offer the following contributions:

- **Regarding the authors.**

- In the framework of community conflicts, there is evidence of important variations in the frequency with which actors employ different means and repertoires of action to express their positions and demands. These differences may be due to diverse factors, such as:
The level of organization available to perform a specific type of action. Briefly, it should not be forgotten that certain types of action require the backing of a formal organic structure, in addition to having available the necessary economic resources for covering the costs demanded by their realization.

By way of illustration, we may recall the case of publication of books or essays. Most probably, in the case of small and informal groups, this type of action is beyond their reach, not only because they lack an organic structure to back them, but also due to the absence of the necessary means for publishing the material and making it known.

The degree of access (proximity or remoteness) with respect to certain centers of power or decision-making also seems to have an influence on the frequency with which certain actors resort to some means of action. In a word, it may be considered that means such as petitions, and even press conferences, entail higher costs and, probably, less effectiveness to those groups and organizations that are more marginal when compared to the centers of political decision-making and even the media.

On the other hand, the use of certain kinds of action seems to be related to key political ‘moments’. For example, during electoral campaigns, mailings and posters are more frequent than during the post-electoral period.

Likewise, we see differences between the frequency of some “fashionable” means of action and those that seem to have gone out of fashion. The present relevance of the media in a globalised world, for example, has brought about the consideration of press conferences as being more effective means of action for making a bigger impact. Likewise, posters and pamphlets seem to have lost a good part of the popularity they enjoyed a few decades ago.

Unfortunately, the study did not include the means of action related to ‘the new information and communication technologies’ which could have aided us in the corroboration of some of the above hypotheses.

In this first dimension, we believe we have partially verified the following hypotheses:

- We believe there are different levels of activism between the types of organization we worked with: political parties and CSOs.

- This means that at the centre of every conflict there are different means of action perceived as ‘means to make our own voices heard’. This diversity is related to the diversity of means through which the need for seeking backing and making positions
known is expressed. In this sense, the same objectives may be sought and, possibly, achieved by the use of different means of action.

- Nevertheless, this first statement should be tempered by two other statements, also partially proved by our analysis.

Just as we have shown in the first paragraphs of this section, the different means of action seem to retain certain connotations that render them more adequate or less adequate for obtaining concrete objectives in a given context. Thus, posters seem to be clearly linked to moments of electoral contests, press conferences seem to be more effective in a context of great diffusion of ‘mediatic politics’, and the publication of books implies considerable economic resources for the organizations.

In the second place, in spite of the limitations of the two categories of actors with which we worked, political parties and CSOs, we do find some differences between the frequency with which they resort to different means of action to express their demands or establish their positions.

Summing up:

a) Political parties: In comparison to other groups of actors, a high level of activity can be observed in political parties in relation to means of action that could be described as ‘more institutionalized’ or, at least, as seeming to have a distinct political meaning or a clearly defined goal for the actors.

- Likewise, high levels of activism are evident when we take into account the rest of the actors. For example, political parties exhibit a higher frequency of activity when carrying out actions such as press conferences, meetings, publishing and mailing promotional material, posters, and demonstrations. On the contrary, the frequency of CSOs exceeds the activity rate of political parties when performing activities characterized by low access to the power structures. After all, these means of action could be considered by the actors as less politically charged.

b) CSOs show a marked tendency towards using different types of actions, such as publication of books and essays and organization of petitions.
Finally, in regard to demonstrations, it must be mentioned that, even though political parties as well as CSOs exhibit high levels of activity, the level of political parties is higher.

### 3.1.2 General Action Approval Dimension: The Legitimacy of Means and Repertoires of Action

At this stage of the analysis, it is not possible to contribute final and generalisable conclusions. Nevertheless, we can infer general information on the levels of approval and disapproval expressed by actors regarding the use of diverse means of action in their communities. Also, we can reveal certain peculiarities that suggest interesting concerns to be explored in depth later.

To begin with, we must not forget that it was decided to group the different actions as follows for the purpose of strengthening the analysis:

**Conventional means of action**

Here we have the types of action associated with conventional means of protest that are absolutely related to the institutional channels of political participation. The following are included in this category: *demonstrations, petitions, walks and marches* (these last two associated to civic initiatives and the “new social movements”), and *strikes*. Although the analysis shows medium levels (between 35% and 50%) of favorability (“approve very much” or “approve”) and low levels of rejection (less than 10% in each case) it is disquieting to observe that in the case of strikes, the situation seems different; they obtain the lowest indices of favorability and the highest level of rejection (“disapprove very much” plus “disapprove”) Additionally, the approval percentage achieved is the lowest in the group (15 points below). These results suggest the need for a more profound analysis of this type of action.

**Non-conventional means not entailing risks or threat of violence**

These are considered alternative actions. They are located outside the institutional channels of the strife and their objective is not the disturbance of public order or causing damage to the property of opponents. Indeed, these actions do not entail any threat of violence. The following actions are included in this group: *hunger strikes, civil disobedience campaigns*, and *boycotts*. Favorability towards these means of action in
terms of approval ("approve very much" or "approve") is below that of the actions in the first group; nevertheless, their level of approval reaches 35%. Just as in the previous group, we find here a type of action whose results suggest the need for further in-depth study: boycotts.

**Non-conventional means entailing risks or threat of violence**
Actions that imply risk or threat of violence belong in this group due to the possibility of disturbing public order and/or causing damage to people or property. Occupation of buildings, blocking traffic, painting slogan, and damaging property are included here. They are all evaluated more severely than the ones in the other groups, that is, the percentage of responses in the simplified category ("approve very much" plus "approve") reaches 30%, while disapproval hovers close to 42%, with damage to property obtaining the highest level of disapproval (72.4%).

In regard to conventional media, the following points are worth pointing out:
- There is evidence of a tendency to value favorably certain types of actions associated to "a new way of understanding politics" (citizen initiatives, new forms of political involvement in the public sphere, and actors such as new social movements).
- It is disquieting to find that demonstrations and strikes, two means of action traditionally associated to political protest, do not obtain a very high level of legitimacy.

Whatever the case, a more detailed analysis of the peculiarities mentioned above renders itself indispensable.

In the case of non-conventional means not entailing risks or threat of violence:
When considering non-conventional actions (not involving risk of violence), once again, boycotts must be highlighted, in so far as they reach an acceptance level of 52.7%. Although disapproval ratings exceed approval ratings for all these actions, with the exception of hunger strikes, all of them seem to be legitimate for roughly over 40% of the actors. They obtained the lowest rating due perhaps to their association with conventional strikes; in fact, both seem to have lost the support they enjoyed in the past.

Finally, we may state the following conclusions regarding the analysis of non-conventional means of action entailing risks or threat of violence:
Almost every means of action is evaluated positively by fewer than 30% of the interviewees, with the exception of slogan painting, which obtained a 42.5% approval. For this kind of actions, disapproval levels are clearly higher than the levels of legitimacy. Furthermore, rejection reaches 96.3% in the case of damage to property and similar levels for blocking traffic and occupation of buildings (79.2% and 69.4% respectively). Once more, only slogan painting obtains a disapproval rating below 60%.

Summing up, at this point it is not possible to contribute final and broader conclusions without taking into account the authors and the contexts in which the actions are carried out. In spite of this, based on the current state of the analysis, we can infer general information on the levels of acceptance and disapproval associated with the diverse means of action studied, as well as reveal some peculiarities that suggest interesting concerns for a more in-depth study.

If we now consider the differences in legitimacy in relation to the actors, the main conclusions may be summarized as follows:

a) Political Parties vs. the Degree of Approval of Actors on the Use of Different Means of Action: Political parties express considerable degrees of tolerance towards conventional means of action, albeit with slight variations; the highest level of approval is given to demonstrations (38.1%) and descends for actions associated with more conventional means (petitions, walks, strikes). For the non-conventional actions not entailing risk of violence, we must mention that the degrees of disapproval are similar or slightly lower (2 or 3 points) than those of approval. This fact is quite meaningful; it seems that the representatives of political parties express a stronger inclination, compared to other actors, to approve a wide range of means of action for the purpose of reaching goals, even actions such as hunger strikes. Upon analyzing the data on non-conventional means of action entailing risks or threat of violence, disapproval is noticeably higher than approval; only 16.7% of the actors legitimate the damage of property. Nevertheless, painting slogans, and surprisingly, blocking traffic, revealed themselves as widely approved means of action.

a) CSOs vs. the Degree of Approval of Actors on the Use of Different Means of Action: Regarding conventional means, CSOs expressed very similar levels of approval when
compared to political parties, except in the case of strikes (54.7% disapproval versus 18.9% in the case of political parties).

Similar results may be seen in the case of non-conventional means of action not entailing risk of violence, that is, the percentages of legitimacy are slightly higher than those found in political parties. Hunger strikes are accepted by 35.4% of the CSOs, while 29.2% of the representatives of political parties accept them.

Lastly, when analyzing the data obtained for non-conventional means of action entailing risk of violence, CSOs express levels of legitimacy that exceed the level of rejections. Indeed, the occupation of buildings is approved by 43.8% and rejected by only 35.1%, the same as the case of blocking traffic (approved by 40% and rejected by 35.3%). Yet a surprising fact is that 66.7% of the interviewees of CSOs approve the use of means such as damage to property, in comparison to 16.7% of the interviewees of political parties. At the same time, it is worth mentioning that the maximum levels of disapproval are expressed by 35.4% of the CSOs.

The above may be explained by the heterogeneity of the organizations grouped under the CSO category; nevertheless, this preliminary explanation merits a deeper analysis further on. Whatever the case, there is evidence of a tendency towards increasing legitimation of non-conventional means of action (including disturbing public order and even entailing violence) on the part of those actors (CSOs).

3.1.3 Analyzing the Effectiveness of Means of Action

Traditionally, the effectiveness dimension of the means and repertoires of action has occupied a prominent place in studies on political action and political conflict (Barnes and Kaase, 1979). Thus, the last question in the means and repertoires section aims to identify the interviewees’ opinions on the effectiveness of the means of action employed in their communities; that is, it seeks to enquire how different actors perceive the relationship between the use of a certain type of action and the probability of obtaining the expected results in terms of interests and demands.

To make the analysis easier, the previously proposed taxonomy of means of action was employed; that is: 1. Conventional/institutionalized means of action: petitions, demonstrations, walks and marches, and strikes. 2. Non-conventional/non-potentially violent (against property or people) means of action: hunger strikes, civil disobedience...
campaigns, and boycotts. 3. Non-conventional/potentially violent (against property or people) means of action: occupation of buildings, blocking traffic, painting slogans, and damaging property.

Regarding the effectiveness of the means of action, we may conclude the following at a general and preliminary level:

**Conventional means of action**
The actions belonging to the first set (conventional institutionalized actions) obtain the highest position with respect to effectiveness. The maximum percentage is obtained by demonstrations (70.9%). This result reveals the need for further analysis. The remaining actions obtain low, yet significant, percentages: walks and marches (66.1%), petitions (53.1%), and strikes (48.6%). It is interesting to observe that the percentage obtained by strikes suggests a lower degree of effectiveness in comparison to the rest of the actions in this group.

Nevertheless, the data show that, with the exception of demonstrations, the effectiveness attributed to this type of actions is quite moderate; the number of actors who regard these actions as non-effective is significant.

**Non-conventional means not entailing risks or threat of violence**
The actions classified in this typology obtain a low or null degree of effectiveness. In the three cases, more than half the interviewees (between 55.3% and 72.5%) share this opinion with minimal differences among them.

Nevertheless, it is important to bear in mind that a significant percentage of interviewees consider some means to be effective, particularly disobedience campaigns, boycotts (37.7%) and, to a lesser degree, hunger strikes (27.5%).

**Non-conventional means entailing risks or threat of violence**
The most outstanding feature of the percentages obtained is that they suggest a low or null effectiveness of different means of action. Between 67.9% and 85.9% of the actors consider they are not effective to obtain what they demand or a response to their interests. Nevertheless, we must mention that approximately one third of the interviewees consider that blocking traffic and painting slogans could be very or somewhat effective. To a certain extent, the impact on the everyday life of citizens and on the media the moderate level obtained by blocking traffic. Nevertheless, in the case
of painting slogans, it is more difficult to find an explanation for this result, more so when in previous sections of this document we have referred to this action as old-fashioned and not frequently used by the actors in the communities we studied.

Summing up, despite the fact that the data suggest a generalized rejection towards this type of actions, 14.1% of the actors believe they are highly or moderately effective. Again, it is worth recalling that in the present analysis we did not work with representative samples, or from the point of view of the general population, or from the perspective of the degree of political representativeness of the authors.

Effectiveness as Perceived by the Actors:

It is necessary to consider the following aspects of the analysis for a better understanding of the above conclusions:

- We worked only with the information supplied by two types of actors: political parties and CSOs. Other types of actors (intellectuals, members of state or institutional agencies, representatives of army and police forces, etc.) were not taken into account in the present analysis. In our opinion, in spite of the fact that their positions, voices and representations are crucial for understanding the nature and development of community conflicts, the heterogeneity of their nature (absence of typology) and the reduced number of surveys we could count on do not allow us to treat the information statistically.

- We employed the simplified categories of answers: effective and non-effective.

- The presentation is organized on the basis of the three sets of actions described previously.

**Conventional means of action**

These actions reach the maximum level of effectiveness for the types of actors taken into account (political parties and CSOs). In their opinion, demonstrations are the most effective means of action in the frame of community conflicts. It is interesting to observe that political parties confer the highest level of effectiveness (73.2%), while the level conferred by CSOs is slightly lower (67.1%).
Similarly, for political parties and CSOs, walks and marches attained significant levels of effectiveness (between 65 and 67%), a fact that suggests a considerable degree of homogeneity in their opinions.

On the other hand, the level of effectiveness perceived for petitions and strikes is clearly lower: in the case of strikes, 48.1% for political parties and 41.3% for CSOs. Petitions are the type of action that shows the largest differences between actors: 48.1% of CSOs confer a low/moderate level of effectiveness; political parties, 66.1%.

These differences could be explained by the fact that they may be perceived as associated to traditional, institutional politics, a sphere in which political parties are the most prominent actors.

**Non-conventional means not entailing risks or threat of violence**

The general evaluation of the actors on the effectiveness of these means is certainly negative. Indeed, hunger strikes obtain the least effective rating; nevertheless, 34.3% of CSOs express that it is a very or somewhat effective means. We should also point out the fact that, in the evaluation of the effectiveness of civil disobedience campaigns, there is evidence of a difference between positive and negative opinions. In fact, 42.5% of CSO actors and 41.5% of political party actors say that those campaigns are very or somewhat effective as means to reach their goals.

**Non-conventional means entailing risks or threat of violence**

As could be expected, the lowest level of effectiveness is obtained by actions of this type. Nevertheless important differences between effectiveness and non-effectiveness are found within this group when different actors are taken into account. The most extreme type of action, damaging property, is considered effective by only 10% of political parties, although it rises to 15.3% for CSOs. Something similar happens with occupation of buildings and blocking traffic: in the first case, 14.6% of political parties and 23.5% of CSOs consider this action effective; in the second case (blocking traffic), a decrease of 6 to 7 percentage points was observed between political parties and CSOs. Finally, painting slogans shows a level of effectiveness very similar to that of the actions of the second group. In this case, a certain decrease in effectiveness is evidenced according to the type of actor.
3.1.4 Final Comments

I. There seems to be a direct relation between the levels of legitimacy and effectiveness of the means of action. That is, the lower the level of legitimacy, the lower the consideration of its effectiveness.

II. In terms of legitimacy, there is a direct relation between institutionalization and risk of violence.
   a. The higher the level of institutionalization, \textit{ceteris paribus}, the higher the level of legitimacy.
   b. The lower the level of institutionalization, \textit{ceteris paribus}, the lower the level of legitimacy.

III. All the conventional means of action (petitions, demonstrations, strikes, and marches) are approved and considered effective by the majority of interviewees.

IV. With the exception of boycotts, all the non-conventional means of action are considered “non-effective” and “non-approved” by the majority (civil disobedience campaigns, occupation of buildings, blocking traffic, painting slogans, and damage to property).

V. There is a generalized polarization of the answers: Approval and legitimacy; “non-approved” and “non-effective”, with the exception of marches and demonstrations, which are considered effective means but are not approved by the majority.

VI. Boycotts, demonstrations, and marches are means of action in which certain particularities are observed:
   a. Boycotts: it is considered necessary to endow them with a new meaning in the “new politics” scenario.
   b. Demonstrations and marches (they seem to be endowed with a certain symbolic importance inasmuch as they are means that occupy public space and have the capacity to attract attention) (“telegenesis”).
   c. The “excessive institutionalization” of politics seems to be undergoing a process of displacement towards politics on the street, at least in the repertories that are more attractive for the actors.
4. BRIEF PRESENTATION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE ANSWERED BY EXPERTS ON THE MEANS OF ACTION IN COMMUNITY CONFLICTS

The first three sections of this report have been devoted to presenting a set of reflections of the frameworks of analysis of the repertoires of action in community conflicts and remembering the main conclusions of the first part of our work. At this time, before we continue with the analysis, it seems indispensable to make a brief presentation of the main instrument used during this stage: the questionnaire answered by experts on the means of action in community conflicts. This chapter will be divided in two sections. In the first one, we describe briefly the procedure followed in the design of the questionnaire, its objectives, structure and contents, as well as the way in which it was applied. In the second one, we describe part of the potential and the limitations of the instrument.

4.1 Brief Description of the Work Procedure and the Questionnaire

a) Based on the actors questionnaire we applied during the first stage of our work⁴, we were able to prove some of the hypotheses formulated on the frequency, legitimacy, and effectiveness of the means of action used in community conflicts. We were also able to define some specific aspects which required a deeper look, inasmuch as it was shown that the results of the actors questionnaire did not provide enough information and some important questions remained without answers.

After verifying that the academic literature on the use of means and repertoires of action in the community conflicts included in the PEACE COM research was not extensive, we decided to design a questionnaire to be answered by the experts on these conflicts. Thus, it must be clear that the information with which we worked has been provided by the specialists in each one of the cases: university professors and researchers selected by the people in charge of research team of the consortium under the criterion of expertise in a specific conflict.

⁴ The results of the first stage of our work are found in Deliverable 7, which was sent to the PEACE COM project coordinators in October 2006 and later presented at the Belgrade meeting of 23 and 24 of November 2006.
The procedure for the design and application of the instrument may be analysed as follows:

-A first version of the questionnaire was presented for discussion to the other members of research teams of PEACE COM during the November 2006 meeting in Belgrade. During that same meeting, a written comment on the main conclusions of the first stage of the work (Deliverable 7) was requested from the other teams.

-The final version of the questionnaire was sent to all the research teams in early December 2006. Precise instructions for filling in the questionnaire were sent with the questionnaire proper, as well as a specific example on the Basque case that could clarify doubts and make the work of the experts easier. The deadline for receiving the filled in questionnaires was the 15th of January of 2007.

-Each research team was requested to have four questionnaires on each of their cases filled in: two could be answered by members of the PEACE COM team and two by experts selected by them from among recognised experts on the specific conflict.

-We received the following questionnaires:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cases</th>
<th>Number of questionnaires received</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Northern Ireland</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Basque Country</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Walloon Flemish Belgium</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Estonia</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Kosovo, Sandzak, Vojvodina</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Slovene minority in Carinthia</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. South and North Cyprus</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- The questionnaire includes a series of specific questions on the means and repertoires of action to be answered in writing for the purpose of giving a deeper consideration to issues they considered pertinent and, above all add nuances to their responses. With this in mind, we tried to leave enough space for the answers. And space for comments or suggestions was provided at the end of each section. However, this option was used only by a Basque Country expert. All the questionnaires were written and answered in English, except for the Basque case, where the experts
answered in Spanish. The questionnaire was designed to be answered in 30 to 45 minutes, although we ascertained that several experts devoted more time.

e) The questionnaire is divided into two sections:

- Section A: whose main objective is to gather exhaustive information on the more relevant means of action in each of the conflicts analysed. For this purpose, the experts were requested to select the three most significant means of action for understanding the evolution of the conflict in the course of the past fifteen years. From then on, the following information was requested for each of the selected means:
  - Whether in terms of frequency, legitimacy, and effectiveness, the importance of this means, as an expression of the demands of the actors involved in the conflict has increased, decreased, or remained stable.
  - The causes that could help to explain the tendency towards increase, decrease or stability.
  - The meaning or meanings attributed to this means of action within each specific conflict.
  - The actors that are more associated with this means of actions, and those that are less so.
  - The unique event or events that could be associated to the change in (or the permanence of) the importance of this repertoire.

- Sección B: the purpose of this section was basically to take a deeper look at certain particularities of the cultural, socio-economic, political, and international dimensions of the context in which the conflict develops that could eventually facilitate or limit the use of certain means of action. Bearing this in mind, the experts were asked to comment briefly on the sense in which they thought each of these dimensions had operated in three sets of different actions: a) Conventional means of action, b) Non-conventional means of action not entailing any risk of violence or disturbance of public order, c) Non-conventional means of action that entail a risk of violence.

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5 The complete model of our experts questionnaire is found in Annexe 2.
6 The experts’ questionnaire used the same classification of means of action as the one in Deliverable 7. As has been proved in the first part of the report, in this second stage of the research, we opted for a new classification of the means of action, which we believe is better adapted to the objectives of our work and enables us to overcome some of the problems that we had faced previously.
-f) It is necessary to point out that some sections of the questionnaire were not answered and others obtained short responses. Despite the fact that the expected number of questionnaires was not achieved, the majority of the questionnaires received included rich and detailed information on each and all the issues formulated.

4.2 A Few Comments on the Experts Questionnaires

In the course of the next two sections of our report, in which we will attempt to analyse the questionnaires in depth, frequent references will be made about the potential and the limitations we have encountered in the instrument. However, we consider it convenient to present, once more and briefly, some points that can guide the reading and justify an important turn in our analysis.

Above all, we verified the existence of a very relevant change in the kind of sources we deal with. Let us remember once again that the first part of our research was based on the use and analysis of a questionnaire directed to the actors involved in the conflict. Based on a selection of actors, carried out by each of the research groups, we worked mainly with representatives of political parties, civil society organisations, and certain government institutions (state or regional). Additionally, at the time of answering the questionnaire, - in most cases, personal interviews were carried out – we emphasised that the actors speak “on behalf” of the organisation or institution they represented, and not from their own point of view.

When we switch to working with experts on conflicts, the changes in discourse are considerable, a fact that we cannot ignore. Let us look at some relevant differences. In the first place, the experts “represent themselves”, not an organisation. Thus, the selection of the informers during this second stage of the research has to do with the knowledge each specialist relies on concerning the development of a particular conflict and not with the fact of being involved in the conflict “in the first person”. This forces them to establish a certain distance from the phenomenon being analysed; thus, they talk from without. Perhaps this could explain their tendency to adopt a historical perspective when referring to the means of action, but above all, at the time of approaching the influence of the different dimensions on the means of action. In spite of the fact that the questionnaire made it clear that they should consider the evolution of
the means during the past fifteen years, most specialists went back to the origins of the conflict in an attempt to mark the lines of its evolution.

In the second place, when working with filled in questionnaires, it can be inferred that they are all aware of their role as experts. They adopt an academic language, somewhat distant, and there are no personal or value judgments. They do not express their opinions; they try to describe the facts and provide justified interpretations. Although in some isolated cases, the careful reading of the questionnaire makes it easy to venture an opinion on the expert’s personal stand, in most cases the language was very stark. Additionally, they all make the effort to put forth interpretations based on historical arguments and even on theoretical references from socio-political analysis. For this reason, their answers are rather elaborate instead of blunt.

All of the above allows us to assert that the knowledge provided by the experts should not be questioned. Nevertheless, we have found some common features that are worth mentioning. In some cases, there seems to be some confusion concerning the concept of means(repertoire of action, in spite of the fact that the questionnaire provided some examples for avoiding this risk. The above could be justified, inasmuch as a tendency to explain the conflict in its entirety, rather than a specific aspect, is evident. This could sometimes lead to considering as means of action, what are, strictly speaking, strategies used by actors to make visible their demands and even to invite their sympathisers to participate in a specific collective action. This is the case, for example, of press conferences and even electoral politics, posited and justified by certain experts as true means of action. Further on, we will have the chance to comment on some of the implications of this lack of differentiation for the analysis of this subject.

On the other hand, in the section devoted to the influence of the different dimensions proposed, there is a generalised perception that the conflicts are extremely complex, very difficult to resolve, and with a long historical evolution. This probably explains why the weight of all the factors is acknowledged in the questionnaire and why, once again, the focus is on the specific means of action used by the actors, rather than on the conflict itself. Nevertheless, we must acknowledge that the information contained in this section is abundant and complete. In fact, the experts highlight the multiplicity of factors
and elements in each dimension and they are able to combine broad interpretations with references to specific happenings and events.
5. ANALYSIS OF THE DIMENSIONS INVOLVED IN THE MEANS OF ACTION EMPLOYED IN COMMUNITY CONFLICTS

5.1 Introduction

We must start this section by remembering that one of the axes of the PEACE-COM research is the study of the mobilisation processes carried out by different actors in contentious processes; that is, those we have called community conflicts. At the risk of being repetitive, we have tried to point out that we are dealing with extremely diverse conflicts in terms of their origins, historical evolution, and present status. Nevertheless, the main element they have in common is the existence of at least two groups in confrontation whose demands refer to communities that are well-defined in terms of identity and ethnicity. Additionally, the fact that they take place in democratic European systems endows them with a series of shared elements.

In the first chapter of this deliverable, we favoured the convenience of using a perspective based on several recent rationales on contentious action, because, when positing an interactive framework of analysis for collective mobilisation, we were convinced that it fits well with the nature of our object of study. In fact, this approach makes it possible to fully understand the complexity of some of the ways by which a political conflict is expressed and, simultaneously, to encompass the multi-dimensionality of collective action. Specifically, the double structural and expressive character of the action, as well as the fact that its development is interpreted as a unique moment in the formation of collective identities, constitute core references in our analysis.

Using these general initial reflections as a point of departure, we must continue by stating that, above all, our work is centred on the consideration of the repertoires/means of action as structural, cultural, and historical phenomena. In the second place, we wish to confirm the fact that our work is based on three hypotheses that were partially proved in Deliverable 7.

The first one states that, at present, the conditions are given for contentious political action to be employed by a broad number of organisations of diverse natures, as well as by an increasing number of people. In good measure, the verification that a type of
“modular repertoires” is being spread fits in with this first idea, since this concept alludes to the fact that specific means of action can be employed in very different contexts and by very diverse actors. Our second hypothesis is just an extension of our first statement: in the course of recent years, in peaceful contexts as well as in conflicts, we have been witnessing a normalization and diffusion of some means of action that had been considered “non-conventional means” by the traditional literature on political participation. One of the clearest examples of this trend is street demonstrations. Thus, a very noticeable process of transformation is taking place in the means by which, in very different situations, actors of very diverse natures recover old repertoires of “protest”, attribute new meanings to them, and employ them consistently in the everyday political life of democratic systems.

Lastly, we base ourselves on a third statement, which was already proved in the previous stage of our work. The risk of violence implied by a specific means of action, whether by its very nature or by the meaning attributed to it by the actors or by general public opinion, establishes a clear-cut gap in the process of diffusion and normalization of these means of action. Even in the case of conflicts that have reached a notable degree of violence at some time during their development, resorting to violence is a subject that generates direct rejection from a good part of the actors and is difficult to discuss with others. 

Based on the above, the core objective of this deliverable is twofold. In the first place, we seek that our research contributes to an in-depth study of the complexity of the repertoire concept. In the second place, we hope to advance some verification that would allow us to prove the previous hypotheses. This is the reason why we have opted for starting our work by studying the dimensions that seem to be involved in resorting to certain means of action in the selected conflicts. Inasmuch as we take for granted that the immense majority of actors acts rationally when choosing one media over another, we are interested in beginning to take into consideration the impact of four different dimensions: socio-economic, cultural, political, and international. However, before we delve into our analysis, it is convenient to make several clarifications.

7 Evidently, enquiring about the motivations that lead certain organizations to resort to violent means of action would imply the management of methodologies different from the one employed in this research.
Above all, we must point out the sense in which we use the concept of “dimension” in this paper. As we stated before, our point of departure is that the study of the repertoires of action must be undertaken with the previous understanding that the use of one form or another for expressing demands, grievances, or interests is influenced by the specific context in which the selection takes place. This implies an effort at going beyond considering the influence of a specific juncture in the conflict, as well as trying to introduce the impact of another series of elements that undoubtedly intervene in the choices made by authors. With this in mind, we went back to the main contributions of research on political conflicts and collective mobilisation, and we opted for the four dimensions mentioned above. The influence of variables of a socio-economic nature on political action, taken in its broad sense, is one of several classic subjects in socio-political analysis, at least since the start of the second half of the 20th century. An interest in considering the socio-economic determining factors of social action, as well as the broader subject of the impact of socio-economic processes and social modernization on political change have been two constants in this field of study. Consequently, we considered it fundamental to approach the problem of the degree to which the economic and social resources available to actors may contribute to explain the primacy, as well as the change and continuity, of the use of certain means of action in the course of evolution of community conflicts.

The fact that repertoires of action undoubtedly possess a symbolic, expressive dimension has been widely accepted by students of collective mobilisation. Hence, the relevance in our work of what we have called the cultural dimension. We were interested here in building two classical issues into the socio-economic perspective. In the first place, we embraced the long tradition of studying political culture and its influence on patterns of stability and change in political systems. That is, we took into consideration the way in which the political cultures of different actors can help us explain, at least in part, the form in which the conflict is expressed within the framework of situations of conflict. Additionally, we must not forget the contributions of “framing analysis”, insofar as we must study in depth the ways in which certain actors attribute meanings not only to the specific junctures of the conflict, but also to the means that they can or cannot employ in those situations.
Additionally, the influence of the political dimension on the repertoires of action seems undoubtable, above all, and even if it seems superfluous to bring this up at this stage of our research, because we are dealing with conflicts of a political nature. And not only in the sense conferred by Tilly to the concept of political conflict, to the extent that one of the parties involved is a government, but also because in every case, some of the demands expressed by the actors imply an alteration of the established political order. They seek a change in the distribution of political power, whether in terms of the opening up of the political system, acknowledgement of new rights, inclusion in certain social groups, or even demands of a territorial nature. The political resources available to the actors, the flexibility or rigidity of the political system to accept these types of demands, the role of the elites, and even the nature of the established channels of political participation, are all aspects that weigh not only upon the evolution of the conflict, but also upon the types of means by which they are expressed. Lastly, we have taken into account the role of the international dimension, which is one of the main points of interest of PEACE-COM research. The studies on repertoires of action have always admonished us that repertoires are invented, copied, and disseminated, and disappear in accordance with complex temporal and spatial kinds of logic, but that they can and should be understood. In an increasingly globalised world and in the contexts of processes of normalization of certain means of action that we have already mentioned, we could not put this factor aside. Neither could we forget that several of the conflicts on which we are working have clearly become international, to the extent that their development and the efforts to solve them have involved international actors of very diverse natures (diasporas, mother-states, international organisations, etc.).

Consequently, in this chapter we will undertake the analysis of the way we understand that these four dimensions allow us to better apprehend the manner in which they have expressed themselves in the course of the past fifteen years of the community conflicts under study. Nevertheless, we consider it pertinent to point out some limitations that have restricted the possibility of carrying out a deeper and more detailed analysis.

To begin with, we have to admit that academic studies on the use of repertoires of action in selected community conflicts are very scarce and that, as is logical due to the nature of our technique, the questionnaire employed during the first part of our work does not provide relevant information on this specific subject. Thus, as we have previously
mentioned, our main source for this stage is the questionnaires directed to experts. Even though the information provided by experts on different aspects related to the means of action is broad, in some cases, it is limited regarding the influence of the dimensions.

In the first place, a good number of the experts tend to confuse the influence of the different dimensions on the means and repertoires of action with their impact during the development of the conflict. This may be understood if we consider two more difficulties we faced when working with the experts’ questionnaires. The first one is that, for the most part, specialists seem inclined to provide historical and very general explanations on the evolution of conflicts. Although it is true that conflicts with a long evolution are being dealt with, it is also possible to infer that specialists tend to go back a long time in their history to explain them. Likewise, there is evidence of serious difficulties in separating means of action, in the strict sense of the term, from a much wider narrative on the factors involved in their development, the increase or decrease of the relevance of certain actors, and the escalation or decrease in violence.

The second issue is that, in spite of working with experts on political conflict, we perceived that several of them encounter difficulties in distinguishing between repertoires of action in the strict sense of the term and the whole set of strategies used by the actors to disseminate their positions. For this reason, among other examples, references to the use of communications media or the way in which electoral results influence the position of the actors frequently show up in their answers.

Additionally, in the course of these pages, the reader will not find a systematic study of the way in which the means of collective action in the recent history of community conflicts have evolved. Neither will he or she find an analysis of the differences in the ways different actors resort to or reject specific repertoires. Even so, we believe we have reached a good number of the objectives we had set out to accomplish during this stage. On the one hand, to continue contributing to the two fields of work that, at least to the present, seems to have cooperated poorly with each other: studies on political conflict and studies on collective mobilisation. In addition, on the other hand, to continue advancing towards an understanding of the manner in which repertoires of action operate in the evolution and possible resolution of the conflicts.
5.2 The Socio-economic Dimension

It is possible to present several preliminary reflections about the role played in recent decades by the socio-economic dimension in the employment of the means of actions that appear in our experts’ questionnaires. In the first place, and using the analysis of this information as a starting point, we notice that specialists employ this dimension in a twofold sense. On the one hand, they appeal to the particular circumstances of the economic and social structure underlying a specific conflict and its evolution. On the other, they also allude to the social resources (social milieu, networks, and social stratification) and economic resources (material goods) associated with the use of a specific means of action.

5.2.1 The Influence of the Economic and Social Structure

Concerning the economic structure, it is useful to point out that in the majority of experts there prevails an economist vision of this dimension, which refers mainly to some of the main indicators of social inclusion and exclusion, such as income levels, unemployment rates, and education levels. Nevertheless, they do not mention, except in one or two cases, certain socio-demographic characteristics like gender, age, and social class. Thus, we find ourselves in the face of a continuum that has, on one extreme, cases in which the state of marginality of certain social groups seems to be a determining factor on the demands of actors and, on the other, cases that do not express a clear relationship with conditioning factors of this nature.

In the cases where demands of an economic nature are openly expressed, they refer to contexts where the poorest and most excluded sectors of society have claimed access to better living conditions, as is the case of the ethnic minorities of Kosovo and Estonia and certain Catholic sectors in Northern Ireland that turned these demands into a powerful incentive for political mobilisation in the seventies and eighties.

“Nevertheless, there are other origins about which suspicion is possible; it is clear that the existence of structural discrimination against Catholics and a general context of economic recession that place the opportunities of young people at risk have played an important role in the explosion of the problems of the seventies”
(Expert, Northern Ireland).
Therefore, it is about actions that are organized around discrimination and in which the role of claims surrounding the definition of citizenship and overcoming conditions of poverty and exclusion act as constituent elements of the actions.

In regard to this issue, it is worth remembering the studies that correlate material needs and political action. In this type of readings, which Edward P. Thomson (1995) called “the spasmodic vision of popular history”, the political practices of marginal sectors are presented as, paraphrasing the author, compulsive, rather than self-conscious or self-activated; simple responses to economic stimuli. However, a situation of poverty does not seem to be the direct cause that some groups with fewer resources come together as a political organisation: if this were the case, all excluded sectors (in conditions of poverty, unemployment, etc.) would participate in some way in vindictive actions. In any case, we must not forget that the link between the socio-economic characteristics of a specific population or social group and its political behaviour is one of the most debated classical subjects in socio-political analysis. Ever since the classical works on political participation, starting with the decade of the sixties of the last century (Parry, 1992; Milbrath, 1977), and advancing to more recent research in this field (Norris, 2002, Cinzlos, 2006), notable advances have been made in the knowledge of what are usually called “individual determinants” of political action. Nevertheless, the study of the specific forms in which the actions are expressed has hardly been studied. Therefore, the importance of considering other dimensions and contexts (cultural, political, international, etc.) is evident if we are to understand the participation of the actors and, furthermore, to explain the complexity of the conflict and its evolution. Nevertheless, an exhaustive analysis of the evolution of the conflicts is beyond the claims of this paper.

In other cases, such as the one of the Slovak minority in Carinthia, whose members have the same rights as Austrian citizens - to the point that more Slovaks than Germans hold a university degree - or, for example, an expert suggests that it would be highly improbable for the Slovaks to be denied access to a home or a job on account of their ethnic origin – the influence of socio-economic factors does not seem relevant within the entire set of demands, as opposed to the factors related to linguistic and cultural aspects.
The situation in the Basque country is quite different. In spite of the fact that the region boasts one of the highest income levels in Spain, one expert asserts, “in the Basque country a climate of discontent and conflictivity subsists”. Let us take a look at some of the particularities of this case that suggest how economic development alone is not sufficient to explain the impact of the processes of “modernisation” in the evolution of a conflict; cultural factors and the social structure proper need to be taken into consideration to better understand it (Inglehart, 1998).8

*Given the old industrial specialisation of the Basque country, the recent de-industrialization of the economic fabric during the eighties has produced an intense “de-classing” of vast social sectors, without the recent outsourcing of the Basque economy, now globalised, being able to stabilise a new class structure as yet.*

*To these economic factors must be added the high unemployment rate of the baby boomers (Basque fertility, nowadays at a minimum rate, was the highest in Europe during the sixties) and the high cost of housing (the highest in Spain), both making it extremely difficult for youths to become independent.*

*Consequently, in spite of the fact that income levels are higher than in the rest of Spain, a climate of discontent and conflictivity subsists, which raises the rate of political affiliation and participation in conventional forms of collective protest above the Spanish average*.  
(Expert, Basque Country)

It is evident that the process of industrial reconversion that took place in the eighties entailed important changes in the social structure of Basque society. In a context of increased urbanization, of strengthening of organisational networks (a stronger trend towards associationism has been observed in the Basque Country compared with the rest of Spain, with the exception of Cataluña), and of greater occupational specialisation, which makes it easy for members of the specialized labour force to move towards the tertiary sector, a certain homogenisation in income and educational levels has taken place in comparison to the rest of Spanish regions. Nevertheless, this speedy process has brought about another series of consequences that range from loss of jobs in the traditional industrial sector to high levels of environmental pollution to social consequences like a marked decrease in birth rates and considerably elevated rates of drug consumption.

Because of the possible pertinence it acquires for the purposes of this work, one impact of the Basque industrial reconversion that merits a more in-depth look is the severe conditions of marginalisation of certain sectors of the population. It is the case of youths from lower social classes, with a poor level of education, who have been socialized in a culture of manual labour, who come from small rural hamlets, who belong to the working class or to the foreign immigrant population who is forced to live in the suburbs of big cities, and who have no possibility of an easy adult insertion into the information society. Several authors (Pérez Agote, 1994; Tejerina, 1999) consider that in the course of the past two decades, the most radical nationalist organisations have captured a good part of their new worlds from within these social groups.

5.2.2 Socio-economic Foundations for Involvement in Community Conflicts

Whatever the case, the experts point out that the socio-economic conditions alone do not seem sufficient to explain the origins and evolution of a conflict, although they can contribute to a better understanding of the use of certain means of action employed by actors in community conflicts. The demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the individuals act as determining factors in their position in society, a fact that influences their ways of political participation (Lijphart, 1997). Based on the previous statement, it is possible to suggest, as we have pointed out already, that the means to which actors resort are influenced by said factors and, in a certain manner, explain the variation in their use.

As can be seen in the case of Northern Ireland, and to a certain extent in Kosovo, the influence of the paucity of economic resources could explain the use of certain non-conventional, and even violent, means of action. In the first case, the role of the conditions of poverty and exclusion, in the broad sense of the term, is singled out in the interpretations of the experts, together with the consequent forms of marginalization for conventional political participation and the use of radical means of action. While on the one hand, they suggest that the paucity of economic conditions the mobilisation of certain Catholic groups, they also point it out as an explanatory factor in the use of violent means of action.
“Socio-economic factors could have facilitated and limited the use of means of action in the sense that economic deprivation on the Catholic side has encouraged their mobilisation, but, on the other hand, it has also favoured the use of more radical means of action.” (Expert, Northern Ireland)

In the case of Kosovo, the interpretation of the role of socio-economic conditions in the use of civil disobedience campaigns seems to be associated to a perception of a low or non-existent efficacy of political participation (Barnes y Kaase, 1979; Dalton, 1996; Parry, Moyser y Day, 1992), plus low levels of confidence in institutions and public authorities (Kaase y Marsh, 1979; Kaase, 1988, 1999; Norris, 1999). It would seem that the use of these types of means of action could have been facilitated by a negative feeling towards the efficacy of the political participation of these minorities – due to their own condition of marginalization – as well as by the perception that Serb institutions are not receptive to their demands.

“Civil disobedience campaigns have been present since 1999 when the Albanian ethnic community developed a parallel sanitation and education system for refusing to serve in the (Serbian) army and pay taxes. A notable increase in the use of this means was observed after 1999. The main cause of this trend is due to the incapacity of the actors to achieve their political goals through institutional channels. That is, ethnic minorities usually represented by the socially poorest stratum feel ‘discouraged’ about the use of conventional means and, for this reason, regard non-conventional means as more appropriate for reaching their political goals”. (Expert, Kosovo)

On their part, Verba, Scholozman and Brady (1995) have explained in great detail the relation between socio-economic status and participation. These authors conclude that the people who have available greater resources in terms of time, political abilities, and prestige have higher possibilities of affording the costs entailed by participation. Thus, the levels of education and income should play a more important role in the activities considered more costly in terms of knowledge, abilities, time and/or money. The interesting thing here is to observe how, in the case of Vojvodina, and under this rationale, actors employ their level of academic training to exert influence on public opinion.

“Vojvodina has the greatest number of educated people. This makes it possible for a large part of the population to participate in intellectual
activities in the sphere of public discourse. The actors decide to struggle for their cause (greater provincial autonomy) in an institutional manner. Instead of taking up arms, they participate in public institutions. Public space is one of such institutions they value, and they consider that influencing public opinion influences public discourse. (Expert, Vojvodina)

In this sense, the educational level, especially the level of the groups that have a university education, has traditionally been a useful factor in explaining the greater political activism since the sixties (Barnes y Kaase, 1979; McAdam, 1986). In fact, a greater inclination towards protest has been observed among students and ‘white collar’ workers (Gundelach, 1995; Norris, 2002; Cainzos, 2006). In addition, students represent one of the main target groups of mobilisation campaigns.

On the other hand, although closely related to the reflections put forward until now, our questionnaires reveal a presumable relation between the variation in the use of the means of action and the evolution of socio-economic conditions. To a certain extent, this idea takes us back to the relevant hypothesis on the analysis of collective action that we attempted to prove in Deliverable 7: the association between the types of resources available to the actors inserted in the conflict and the probability of their using certain means of action. Two examples that show up in our work can clarify the way in which the existence of this presumed link is understood. The first one in which this rationale is used is Northern Ireland. In this case, the experts express that inasmuch as the conditions of exclusion of certain sectors of the population – mainly Catholics - have been overcome or, at least, have improved, the importance of several means of action has decreased.

“Civil disobedience campaigns, strikes, petitions and demonstrations were all means of action employed by the nationalist community during the sixties and seventies for the purpose of demanding better living conditions. The fact that socio-economic conditions have improved since then is associated to a decrease in the importance of these means. (Expert, Northern Ireland)

Up to the late sixties, the socio-economic deprivation of Catholics could explain the use of arms (violent means of action) as a last resort. Their access to better living conditions could therefore be one of the explanations for the decline in the use of these means of action.” (Expert, Northern Ireland)
Likewise, in the case of the Greek Cyprus area, informants highlight the fact that the positive evolution of the socio-economic conditions of the general population, due in part to its entry to the EU, has contributed to the decrease in political expressions on the “street”. On the contrary, in the Turkish-Cypriot case, the improvement in well-being has been more limited and, above all, quite a generalised feeling of dissatisfaction has been produced as a result of comparing themselves to the situation in the southern part of the island. This fact, together with the increase in the presence of civil society in political life pointed out by the Turkish-Cypriot experts, could explain the greater frequency of repertoires like demonstrations and street meetings. In the Cypriot case, several distinct factors seem to coincide. On the one hand, the influence of greater levels of well-being and the development of processes of democratization of political life in the sense that the population has better access to conventional means of civic involvement. On the other, especially in the Turkish-Cypriot case, the democratization processes and the increased participation of civil society in the conflict would be more important than the strictly socio-economic factors in explaining the use of less conventional means of action.

“The improved economic conditions of the Greek-Cypriots have made them less willing to take over the streets and express themselves. The opposite is true about Turkish-Cypriots” (Expert, Cyprus).

Estonia is the last case to which the experts make an explicit reference to the impact of socio-economic evolution on political participation. Again, as we shall see when studying the cultural dimension, its history is radically different from the history of the last two conflicts. With the downfall of socialist production in the ex-USSR, its economic social regime disappears and gives way to the advent of capitalism. Thus, after the independence of Estonia in 1991, the structural transformations have been accompanied, on the ideological level, by a widely spread neo-liberal discourse that insists on “the need and convenience of the triumph of the most efficient” above any other consideration of national, social, etc. interest (Grobart, 2003). This could explain the process of taking distance from political life on the part of the majority of citizens – particularly, the members of Estonian civil society – who are immersed in the logic of the capitalist mode of production. Additionally, it could explain the abandonment of certain means of action used during the transition period. A careful analysis of the Estonian case should insist on looking at how socio-economic change has influenced two large
groups in different ways: the Estonian majority and the Russian minority. In addition, the ways the change has been perceived by the two communities should also be considered. Whatever the case, it should not be forgotten that the rise of the conflict, exactly as we know it today, originated precisely as a consequence of the process of political change and, more specifically, by the manner in which access to Estonian citizenship was defined. Therefore, we can expect political factors to have greater weight than the other factors considered in our work.

“As a direct consequence of the transition to a capitalist market and the pressure it exerts on people in regard to working and raising their standard of living, people now have less time and interest in participating in meetings. (Expert, Estonia)

The use of certain means of action in the Basque Country also raises some interesting comments. As we have already mentioned in the course of this report, this is a Spanish region with a high income level, a fact which could lead us to suppose that certain sectors of the population – represented by the people with higher levels of education and income, who are part of the so-called “globalised economy” – should favour with a certain frequency the use of means associated to information technology. Nevertheless, just as one of the experts has explained, this does not happen; this type of means does not appear to be widely disseminated throughout the Basque country, in spite of clearly being the Spanish region where citizens carry out greater actions of political protest, such as signing petitions and attending demonstrations and street meetings.

The above suggests a certain Basque peculiarity regarding an inclination towards protest, a fact that is coherent with the high level of political conflictivity the region has experienced since the beginning of the democratic transition and where ETA terrorism exerts a special impact. (Ferrer y Fraile,2005). Several experts even talk about a “hyper-politisation” of significant sectors of Basque society.

“The non-conventional action is generally used by emergent sectors of the new generations who have a high level of education and income, who utilize digital technologies, have access to the globalised economy, and voice “post-materialist” demands.” These emergent sectors are present in the Basque country more than in the rest of the Spanish State. Therefore, we can expect to find in Euskadi a frequent practise of these non-conventional repertoires. And nevertheless, it does seem to be that way because the
political use of digital networks (mobile phones, the internet) is not as intense as it might be. This makes us think that these middle class, high-income emergent sectors do not participate in the nationalist conflict as much as subordinate social classes, because their nature is local, not global. (Expert, Basque Country)

Going back to Tilly (1978), we can say that the selection of any repertoire of collective action depends on a rational criterion; that is, on the conjunction of certain factors among which there are the following: the authors’ perception about their efficacy, the risks associated with their use, the levels of legitimacy, the available resources, the rival’s attitude, and the stage of the conflict. Therefore, we can easily assume that among the range of resources available to the actors, those of economic nature are an important factor that facilitates or not the use of a specific means of action in a specific context. Thus, for example, in the case of the Basque country, which is considered a “rich society”, it is understandable that the reach and diversity of communication media facilitate the use of certain means of political expression associated to them. Strictly speaking, press conferences cannot be considered as a means of collective action, but rather as a strategy of the actors to make themselves visible and disseminate their views during the different phases of the conflict. Despite this, it is interesting to observe how press conferences are mentioned by different experts in the Basque case as authentic means of action, not only to the extent that they are used to convocate the population to carry out certain acts of protest, but also because they are perceived as moments in the staging of the conflict.

Likewise, a high level of socio-economic development, in which the communication media play a very relevant role, facilitates the use on the part of the actors of means of action like press conferences to make their positions known to public opinion. Perhaps the division of Basque society in linguistic terms (Basque-speaking – non-Basque speaking) should be borne in mind when considering its impact on the use of certain means, but I am unable to establish this relation clearly. (Expert, Basque Country)

On the contrary, in the case of Northern Cyprus, experts suggest that limitations of an economic nature affect the use of certain means of political action that entail high costs, such as those that require mass mobilisations.

“Starting with the fact that the North Cyprus economy has become isolated (from the outer world) and depends primarily on the Turkish
Finally, despite the concern of the researchers about inquiring about the hypothetical relation between the organisation of society and the use of means of political action, it is interesting to underline the fact that only in the case of the Basque country do the experts address the issue directly. This example highlights the way certain means of action, such as demonstrations, marches, and street meetings are facilitated by dense networks of associations linked to “strictly” political organisations and by lifestyles that favour “street life”. This type of protest generally results in a kind of episodial behaviour that originates as a response to perceptions of institutional inefficiency or absence of alternatives channels to claim certain demands. This could explain the high levels of protest observed in the Basque Country (Ferrer y Fraile, 2005). We will take a deeper look at this subject when we refer to the experts’ interpretation of demonstrations and marches in community conflicts.

5.3 The Cultural Dimension

When referring to the cultural dimension in the explanation of the nature and type of evolution of the means of action employed the actors in community conflicts, the discourses of our experts clearly distinguish between two levels of cultural analysis in socio-political studies. Thus, in the first place, we encounter an explicit reference to the role of the political culture or, more precisely, of the political cultures that serve as a frame for the strategies employed by the actors when selecting or rejecting a specific means of protest. But on the other hand, they also handle a clearly more anthropological conception of culture, understood as the set of tools by which communities, groups, and organisations construct their world views and attribute particular meanings to certain events. Although they include a very disparate set of phenomena in this second way of considering the role of culture, considering it in our present field of study is relevant because it allows us to take a more in-depth look at certain singularities of the means of action that are evidenced in specific community conflicts.
5.3.1 The Role of Political Culture in Socio-political Analysis

The first conception, the one that refers to political culture, takes us back directly to the long and solid tradition of socio-political analysis that includes the set of values, attitudes, and representations developed by individuals, groups, and communities in relation to the political sphere. As is well known, it is a subject of study introduced by functionalist sociology and political science in the late fifties of the 21st century to account for the role they themselves called “micro-politics” in the functioning of political systems, more specifically, democratic ones. It is worth remembering briefly that the purpose of the classic work of G. Almond and S. Verba, “Civic Culture” (1963) was to explain the keys to the stability of democracies. But we must also bear in mind that, following the path laid by them, a considerable number of students has used the perspective of cultural politics to analyse what we call today the “performance” of democratic systems, as well as certain features of the political behaviour of citizens. Additionally, this classic tradition of studying political culture has been applied for decades to understand the “breakdown of democracies” (Linz, 1996) or, in a wider sense, to understand some of the dimensions of certain political conflicts. The subject of “cultures of conflict” is, thus, a thought-provoking field of work in sociology and political science.

It is true that Almond and Verba’s vision of political culture was subject to serious criticism ever since the publication of their work, both in reference to the definition proper of the concept and to the methodology adopted for its study (Pateman, 1980; Verba, 1963). In fact, one of the main objections formulated since the sixties was the inability of the model to account for social change, and very particularly, in social and political conflicts. Nevertheless, after a few years of oblivion, the subject of political culture emerged strongly during the eighties from different theoretical perspectives and at the core of disparate lines of research. The motives for this “return of culture to the forefront” exceeds the scope of these pages, but the existence of at least two fields relevant to our object of study is worth remembering. The first one is linked to the importance in the socio-political analysis of the postulates of a hermeneutic vision of the social sciences (Schutz, 1962) and, more specifically, of the “social construction of reality” (Berger y Luckmann, 1972). Together with the impact of cultural anthropology studies (Geertz, 1973) and the contributions of the “new” cultural history, the most prominent for
our subject are the formulations of “framing analysis”, whose proponents are directly indebted to the sociological work of E. Goffman (1974). Aside from the noticeable turn in the methodology applied to the analysis, from then on studies in political culture recovered their historical dimension and simultaneously intensified the focus on processes of social change and conflict.

On the other hand, although in close relation to the lines of reflection we have just mentioned, during the same period, the cultural dimension acquired noticeable weight in the analysis of collective mobilisation. Cultural elements were incorporated as relevant factors to explain both the actors’ strategies and the repertoires selected to express their actions. At first, this was done by the so-called “European School” (Touraine, 1985; Melucci, 1994; Kriesi, 1995); later, by the contributions of North American sociology, initially much more focused on the economic-rational dimensions of collective action (Oberschall, 1973; Tarrow, 1994). Throughout all this field of analysis, culture is introduced at least in two distinct areas. In the first place, when considering how the mobilisation proper simultaneously presupposes and generates in the course of its development a process of creation of shared identities, a “common us”. On the basis of this presupposition, it is inevitable to acknowledge that the construction of collective identities is a phenomenon in which cultural, symbolic elements occupy an essential place. In the second place, it should not be forgotten that the definition proper of repertoire of collective action, just as Charles Tilly (1978) posited it also refers us back to the cultural dimension. As we have already seen, repertoires are ways of expressing and making visible interests and demands, and are learned and known by the actors who use them. But additionally, the actors that use them, as well as the authorities, the contenders, and the public opinion to which they are directed, attribute concrete meanings to said repertoires, which have important effects on the way a specific conflict or confrontation develops. And, once again, socio-political analysis is incapable of grasping these meanings – always conflictive and changing – without resorting to the frames of analysis provided by cultural analysis.
5.3.2 The Influence of the Historical Construction of Political Cultures on Community Conflicts

Whatever the case may be, a good part of the contributions of the experts employs a rather traditional view of the concept of political culture in which the weight attributed to historical evolution is highly noticeable. Specifically, there is quite a great deal of references to the influence of specific histories of construction of “national” political cultures in the means of collective action used by different actors in these conflicts. There are three very distinct examples that can clarify the way we understand the centrality of political culture. The most interesting thing is that, in spite of its evident heterogeneity, due to the very diverse natures of the conflicts (at least in reference to the means of action implied and the degree of violence reached at some points in their development), in every case, the experts underline that the activism of a good part of their actors and the diversity of the means employed must be explained (at least to some extent) by resorting to a tradition of political culture that favours the involvement and participation of citizens.

The first example used in this argument is the case of Northern Ireland. Here the experts clearly express that in the Irish case there has been a long historical evolution of a political culture that favours public debate and the rise of political organisations with a long tradition. Although they do not express it directly, they seem to be referring to the historical evolution of Anglo-Saxon political culture, which has been considered by a good part of the specialists as the model par excellence of the historical development of the attitudes, values, and behaviours associated with the Western democratic system. The Irish conflict and, more specifically, the rise of nationalist claims, would have taken place on cultural foundations appropriate for the politisation of the population and its involvement in either of the two contending bands.

“Ireland has had for many centuries a very intense political life, with one of the oldest political parties in Europe, Sinn Féin. This has helped to create a highly diverse and rich political culture, where political debates were very common, amongst elites but also at the grass-root level.” (Expert, Northern Ireland)
In the Basque case, on the contrary, resorting to the evolution of political culture becomes much more complex. On the one hand, the discourse expressed brings to mind the exceptionality of the Franco dictatorship, which for almost four decades denied democratic political rights by suppressing all forms and channels of civil involvement. Although the rise of Basque nationalism goes back to the late 19th century, it is not possible to explain its evolution without taking the impact of franquism into consideration, and the way in which it repressed its forms of cultural and political expression. In such a way, the continuity of the conflict after the end of the Spanish political transition and the setting in motion of the state of autonomies but, above all, the conservation of considerable levels of violence take place in the framework of a political culture essentially comparable to the ones in the rest of European countries, except in regard to its dimension of participation. The extensive literature on political culture in Spain coincides in highlighting that the weakness of feelings, values, and attitudes related to citizen involvement is one of the main marks of the Franco regime. Specifically, the high level of political disaffection and the low affiliation of Spaniards to political parties are emphasised.

Here it is interesting to consider how, based on this panorama, the Basque Country and, to a certain extent, Cataluña, are clearly an exception. In fact, the experts emphasise precisely that the distancing of the Spaniards from politics and democratic institutions is combined with regional political cultures that have specific nationalist features. In this case, we find that significant sectors of Basque society are extremely politicised and, above all, have high levels of activism. Thus, an activist political culture is especially present in the more radical nationalist groups, but has ended up impregnating other sectors of Basque society. This could easily explain the ease with which the channels and forms of expression of conventional democratic politics are combined with contentious means of action, some of them extremely violent, in several of the meaningful actors in the Basque conflict.

“At this point, we would have to consider two factors that possibly play a role in two different directions:
1) The weight of a “Spanish” political culture, highly marked by franquism, in which the interest in politics is low, mistrust for the conventional political institutions, is high, and the dimensions of participation are weak.
2) The existence of unique cultural features in the Basque Country that offset the above point (and that are not only explained in “cultural key”, but also have to do
Estonia is the last case in which our informants refer explicitly to the weight of the evolution of political culture. And here, the story is radically different from the two conflicts we just mentioned. As was to be expected, the weight of Soviet domination floats above all the interpretations of the Estonian conflict, although it is not the fundamental reference for alluding to political culture. The influence of the strong wave of citizen mobilisation that marked the process of independence and the consequent transition to democracy is the point of emphasis. The independence of the Soviet Union and the reestablishment of democracy are associated to the involvement of civil society by means of demonstrations and mass meetings, just as in other post-communist states. In the Estonian case, the role of popular mobilisation is interpreted as a key moment in political learning. The acquisition of these foundations of a participatory political culture is not incompatible with the acknowledgement that, once the moment of political change passed, there began a new stage characterised by a certain distancing from political life on the part of most citizens. Undoubtedly, it is about the well-known phenomenon of “disenchantment”, which was analysed some time ago by students of the political transitions in Southern Europe and Latin America.

“Estonia had a very strong tradition of meetings and gatherings during the independence mobilization of 1988-1991. After independence, this dissipated as people become more involved with economic activity and building up a new state and society. Russians, in particular, had a stronger tradition of group meetings, largely inherited from the Soviet era, when the Communist Party or some section of the Communist state would organize long political meetings (such as a trade union or a local party committee in a factory. However, this habituation also decreased after independence since large Soviet-era enterprises were privatized and rationalized, meaning people became more focused on work.” (Expert, Estonia)

5.3.3 The Weight of Some Factors in the Formation of Specific Political Cultures

Within these interpretations of the role of historical evolution of political cultures in the ways in which certain community conflicts are expressed, the experts highlight three specific issues. All of them also fit within the main interpretations of the historical constitution of political cultures in situations where important political conflicts have had to be resolved. The first issue mentioned is the influence of the processes of colonisation...
or foreign involvement (the formulation varies according to experts and cases). These situations are understood as phenomena that impact the historical evolution of political cultures. But we should not lose sight of the fact that they do a better job at explaining the origin of the conflicts and some of the features of their evolution than the subject that occupies us at present: the expression of the conflicts through the means of action actors resort to. In any case, colonisation or the external interference on the part of a “foreign” state are brought forth to explain the evolution of the political culture of the two bands in confrontation in Northern Ireland. Additionally, this idea is expressed – although with slightly different words – when the North Cyprus experts allude to the impact of the militarisation of Turkish Cypriot society and the weak development of its civil society. Finally, we have also found it when considering the way Serbian “colonisation” is interpreted in areas with a Bosnian majority.

Whatever the case, the interference of the colonial state seems useful for explaining two analytically differentiable phenomena. On the one hand, just as we saw in the case of North Cyprus, and to a certain extent in the Sandzak case, the domination of the “foreign” power could explain certain limitations of the channels and forms of political involvement of native populations. Alternatively, to say it in other words, it could justify the weakness of civil society, the narrowness of the space available for expressing the demands of certain groups and communities. Thus, it could also explain certain deficits in its citizen political cultures. On the other hand, the same argument is used to account for some of the repertoires employed to express the conflict and, very particularly, to interpret the escalation of the conflict and the resort of certain groups to violent means of action. This is clearly the case of Northern Ireland. We must not forget that in the Irish case, and in the Basque case, the rationale of the existence of external domination with similarities to colonialism has been used frequently by the more radical nationalist groups to justify their resort to violent means of action fit for “anti-colonial” struggle.

A second element of differentiation in the history of political cultures is the one that refers to the influence of the lines of religious fracture. This is a classical subject in socio-political analysis (Lipset, 1949; Linz, 1996) about which it is necessary to make several clarifications. First of all, it must be pointed out that we are not referring to the fact that in some of the conflicts studied religion constitutes one of the main defining factors of the communities in conflict. The main examples of this type of conflict are, undoubtedly,
Northern Ireland, Kosovo, and Sandzak. What the experts allude to is the weight of religious factors in the conformation of political cultures in certain communities, or even of organisations involved in the conflicts. As was to be expected, this type of discourse appears in Northern Ireland, where the split between Catholics and Protestants clearly marks the political cultures of the main organisations and their interpretation of the conflict. In the Sandzak case, on the other hand, reference is made to the weight of the Ottoman Empire and Islamic tradition upon the political culture of the Bosnian minority.

But perhaps the case in which the action of the religious factor can be seen more clearly in the process of formation of specific political cultures is the Basque Country. Strictly speaking, the Basque conflict cannot be understood in a religious key because Spain has always had – and continues to have – a Catholic majority. In religious terms, nothing differentiates the Basques from other Spaniards. Nevertheless, it is true that the Basque Catholic church showed a favourable attitude towards nationalist theses in the course of the entire 20th century, and especially during the Franco years. But what is really interesting is that the political culture of the different factions of Basque nationalism has a clearly religious bias, in the sense that politics are understood in religious terms – and, therefore, manichaean – and the involvement of the members of their organisations, as a total option that affects all their life spheres. Evidently, the intensity of this type of discourse, as well as its nuances, is very different among nationalist, radical, and moderate groups.

Lastly, it is interesting to mention that the relationship between social classes, understood as one of the main factors that influence the historical development of political cultures, is a subject rarely brought up by the experts. Only in the case of Northern Ireland is there an allusion to the hegemony of the Protestant middle class in the economic, political, and social life of the country to explain some of the features of the political culture of the Protestant groups, as well as of the culture of the Catholic opposition.

“British colonization of Ireland resulted quite early during the XIXth century in the development of a local political culture which was dominated by protestant middle-classes, who sought to gain more autonomy vis-à-vis the British rule (‘home rule’). Afterwards Irish (catholic) nationalism began to embody opposition to British rule, which remained, apart from some short-lived and isolated events, quite peaceful up to the First World War, and which made a wide use of
conventional means of action. This tradition remains as of today.” (Expert, Northern Ireland)

Overall, we found a good number of arguments that resort to the complex processes of the historical construction of political cultures to explain why actors resort to certain means of action as a way of making their position visible in the conflict and expressing their demands. In this sense, it must be underlined that what we are stating is that political culture is an indispensable element to understand the way conflicts are generated and, above all, to understand the complexity of their historical evolution.

5.3.4 Political Subcultures or Community Cultures

On this foundation, the experts introduce another core element in the classical traditional of political culture studies: the subject of political subcultures. In all of the cases, the term employed is “community cultures”, since a contemporary vocabulary is adopted and the term is more in accordance with our perspective. The purpose is to account for the existence of certain specific subcultures in some communities that have special relevance in the conflicts. From then on, a key question in our analysis is raised: to take into consideration to what extent the conflicts, and more specifically the means of action employed during them, are affected by the existence of excluding community political cultures that make it difficult to establish the cultural frameworks that make it possible to conceive a shared political life. Once again, the exports resort to historical kinds of arguments to explain the existence of these types of subcultures.

In our fieldwork, there appeared four examples in which the existence of community political cultures played an outstanding role. The first one is Northern Ireland. The experts assert that, in this case, the existence of a long historical tradition of community cultures has been confirmed. These communities would have favoured political debate, the appearance of local political elites and, in the end, the rise of political organisations with strong local roots. Again, it seems that historical types of arguments are resorted to: those that state that the Anglo-Saxon model of political development has been characterised by the weight of the local dimension and rests on, and encourages, the permanence of community political cultures. In spite of this, the experts on the Irish case do not mention the existence of incompatibilities or confrontations between these local political cultures.
In regard to Cyprus, the reasoning does not refer as much to the presence of disparate community political cultures, but rather points out a logical evident fact: two groups, clearly distinguished by their cultural point of view, coexist on the island: the Turkish and the Greek communities. All of this, together with the long history of the conflict and the involvement of two mother-states (Greece and Turkey) could have resulted in the appearance of very significant differences in the features of both political cultures. In fact, one of the recurring reflections among specialists in the Cypriot case is the need to establish channels and spaces for dialogues among them. There is an important theoretical and political problem underlying this concern: how to establish the basis to make possible the peaceful coexistence of a multi-cultural society marked by profound historical grievances.

The issue of community cultures also seems to be involved in the conflict between the Estonian majority and the Russian minority. On the one hand, the experts highlight the legacy of the Soviet era, which reinforced the existence of a strong Estonian political culture. It was a culture of resistance that probably generated strong feelings of national identity and claims for political independence. This was the culture that encouraged the mobilisations that took place in Estonia between 1988 and 1991. After the reestablishment of independence, the instauration of a democratic system and, fundamentally, the way in which the concession of Estonian citizenship was resolved, caused the second actor to appear in the conflict: the Russian minority. Although the experts do not refer explicitly to this subject, the recent events in this country allow us to think that, most certainly, during the years since independence this minority’s own subculture has been developing.

Our last example is the Basque country. Just as we asserted in previous pages, students of the Basque conflict have always highlighted the existence of significant differences between the features of Spanish political cultures and those of certain sectors of Basque society. Specifically, it has been proved that the associative density of Basque society is greater than in other Spanish regions – perhaps with the exception of Cataluña – and that there is a greater tendency towards citizen involvement in diverse aspects of local and regional life. In this case, the existence of these community cultures is associated to the hyper-politisation of some groups and organisations. On the other hand, it is interesting to point out that this is the only occasion in which the experts
consulted have resorted to the concept of social capital (Putnam, 1993) to explain the rise and the functions of these political subcultures. The high rate of affiliation of the inhabitants of the Basque Country to very diverse associations, the density of associative networks that are very relevant in their social life, and the greater interest in community affairs that is reflected in a high rate of press readership are used as indicators of the notable differences of the political cultures of certain groups. In addition, they also constitute the basis for explaining the greater activism of certain sectors of the population that favours – even among the most radical actors – the efficient use of the more conventional means of action, which are associated to a normalized democratic political life.

5.3.5 The Use of an Anthropological Concept of Culture

Just as we stated at the beginning of this section, actors also employ a concept of culture that is closer to the manner in which sociology and anthropology use this concept; namely, as a set of tools of diverse natures – linguistic, symbolic, technological... – that constitute the basis for explaining their world outlooks, styles of life and, in good measure, the organisational forms of human communities. Nevertheless, we must realize that, in the reasoning of the experts, these references to the role of the cultural dimension in the communities and actors in conflict are tainted by considerable polisemy and ambiguity in the way the concept of culture is defined and used. In this sense, our experts share the lack of agreement that has characterised the social sciences when working with a dimension that is both fundamental to understand social life and difficult to grasp.

This lack of definition explains that, contrary to what occurred in the past when considering the discourses on the role of political culture, the subjects addressed by the experts are more varied and, especially, the degree of homogeneity much lower. To begin with, we are faced with a formulation on the role of community cultures somewhat different to the one posited when talking about local political subcultures. In this case, there is a first group of specialists that refer to the cultural specificities particular to certain communities or groups, which would have served as the basis for the development of identities. These identities are understood as one of the explaining factors in the rise of community conflicts, to the extent that they make themselves
visible, become politicised, and permeate a good part of the demands and claims of
certain groups. This type of explanation appears in the Basque case, where an
argument habitually used by sociologists and anthropologists who have studied historic
evolution is resorted to. Thus, the cultural singularity and exceptionality of the Basque
country is understood as the basis for the construction of identities, particular and
collective, but above all excluding. The same type of consideration is repeated when
explaining the Vojvodina conflict; the existence of a cultural tradition, clearly
differentiated from the Serbian one, among certain communities established in this
territory for a long time is underlined. This cultural tradition has given rise to the
existence of an independent written and literary culture.

The relations between hegemonic and minority cultures is another aspect underscored
by the specialists. Specifically, there is a certain discourse on the influence of the lack of
acknowledgement of cultural diversity in Estonia, where the tensions and lack of
dialogue between the majority culture (Estonian) and the minority one (Russian) is
alluded to as one of the factors that has contributed to the rise in the levels of conflict
and the avoidance of its resolution. Additionally, in the Estonian example it is observed
that the Russian minority was completely isolated after the fall of the Soviet empire.
Thus, its characteristics as a peripheral culture related to Mother Russia were
accentuated. Possibly this created a certain exacerbation of the importance of cultural
elements, not only in the construction proper of Russian identity in Estonia, but also in
the appearance of feelings of exclusion and a culture of resistance to a new type of
cultural hegemony, now in the hands of the Estonian majority. The experts on the
Estonian case greatly insist on the need to take into account the role of the cultural
stereotypes fabricated by the two conflicting communities.

Although this type of argument provides relevant information on the contexts in which
conflicts appear, in which the common identities of the contentious communities are
constructed, and helps to explain the kinds of claims and grievances that define them, it
must be admitted that they do not shed much light on the type of means employed and
the meanings attributed to them by the actors. We have only found two cases where
reference is made to the impact of specific community cultures on the means of action
that appear in the course of the conflict. In both cases, the specialists integrate these
types of reasoning into their explanation for the presence or absence of potentially
violent means. The first of them appears in the analysis of an expert in Kosovo. Specifically, it refers to the permanency of rural-type cultures in the communities that reside in this territory. These are cultures that favour resorting to violence as a means for resolving conflicts.

“Some cultural accounts tend to explain community conflicts in the Balkans with the dominant rural and non-urban character of the Balkan people. According to them, such people are not used to use conventional means to achieve political goals but rather resort to violence and force.” (Expert, Kosovo)

The second case, the Slovene minority in Austria (Carinthia) is exactly the opposite. In this conflict, the specialist alludes precisely to the absence of cultures of violence associated to political confrontation in the two communities (German and Slovene) to help understand the reason why neither band has opted for using potentially violent media to defend its respective demands or maintain its positions.

“Since the Slovenes settled in Carinthia in the 6th century, there have not been very many violent confrontations between the two groups (excluding the repression during WWI and deportations during WWII). Otherwise, the two groups have lived together peacefully and there is no culture or history of violent confrontations (against persons at least). Since the two groups are not accustomed to physically fighting each other, the dominance of more “peaceful” means (assimilation being one of them....) could perhaps be explained.” (Expert, Slovene minority, Austria)

Just as we mentioned above, a good part of the other references we have found on the role of culture (in the broad sense of the term) are quite heterogeneous. Besides, they continue to be used to explain the development of each of the conflicts. Thus, there appear references to certain values that are part of the cultures of several communities in conflict. This is the case of North Cyprus, where tolerance is underlined as a widely disseminated value, a fact that could help us understand the contention of conflict and the increasing role of a civil society inclined to dialogue in both sectors of the island. In other cases, culture becomes a synonym for education and, once again, it is employed to highlight the existence of significant differences between the conflicting communities. For example, the low cultural (educational) level of certain communities stands out as an explanation for some behaviours and demands of the gipsy (“Roma”) communities in Hungary. But it is also used in the opposite sense in the Basque country, where there is evidence of higher levels of education, professional qualification, and cultural practice, in
comparison to the cultural/educational levels of most other Spanish autonomous communities. It must not be forgotten that, since the 19th century, the Basque Country has been one of the Spanish regions with greater social and economic development. Hence, talking about a higher cultural level among broad sectors of the Basque population means acknowledging higher levels of political competence and political participation. Thus, we will find extremely competent and efficacious actors when it comes to using enormously disparate means of action: from the ones specific to conventional democratic participation to the ones linked to the “politics of protest”, with a high risk of political violence.

Nevertheless, in the midst of all this heterogeneity, there is a very clear reference to the role of culture in the repertoires adopted by collective action in political conflicts. We are referring here to the importance of certain cultures of commemoration that give rise to specific forms of action. Thus, an element specially highlighted by the analysts of political conflicts, particularly historians, is underlined: the importance of several commemorative ceremonies in the perpetuation of certain collective identities and in the periodic renovation of visibility of demands. This fact is especially relevant in contexts of political conflict. There are three very meaningful cases in our study. The first one is North Cyprus, where commemorative meetings on the anniversaries of victories or defeats, or simply to remember the absentees, become significant moments, not only for the expression of the conflict, but also situations in which to observe the advances or setbacks in the resolution of the conflict.

“Given that this has been an intense conflict, numerous meetings took place both within and across the communities in Cyprus. There are meetings commemorating losses or victories, but there are also alternative cultures of commemoration that are slowly beginning to mature; e.g. commemorating the missing from both sides.” (Expert, Cyprus)

In Northern Ireland, the commemorative parades celebrated annually by certain Protestant groups to commemorate distant victories over the Catholics have become characteristic events of the Irish case. On almost all occasions, the parades began as ritual marches for the purpose of ending direct confrontations with their opponents, given the fact that they marched through Catholic neighbourhoods. In fact, in the course of the peace process, specific measures were taken to guide and control the parades, which
were understood by some as a renovation of collective memory and for others as renewed provocation.

In Estonia, the importance of these commemorative cultures and their role in historical memory has recently acquired notoriety. In fact, ever since the independence of the country in a context marked by limitations on citizens’ rights, the demands of the Russian minority were expressed mainly through periodic meetings in front of certain monuments that the Estonian majority interprets as symbols of Soviet domination and the Russian minority as symbols of their cultural identity. Specifically, the recent altercations in May 2007 were provoked by the decision of the Estonian Government to remove a monument commemorating Soviet participation in World War II. The statue had become a symbol for the Russian minority.

Finally, we cannot avoid mentioning that the experts include certain references to the use of cultural policies and the role of communication media in their reflections on the cultural dimension. The first of these subjects takes us back to the importance of cultural policies in the management of the conflict by state, regional, or local governments. This subject is beyond the scope of this paper. Nevertheless, it is interesting to point out that a specialist in the Basque case insists on the fact that certain actions in the cultural field have as their objective the international dissemination of the conflict. In his judgement, this would have been one of the objectives of the construction of the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao. The decision to build the museum, financed by the Autonomous Basque Government, was a subject of heated debate among Basque political forces. Whatever the case, it is true that it has succeeded in becoming a symbol of the modernity of the Basque country and has made the region internationally visible.

Concerning the communication media, different experts understand them as fundamental instruments for either the dissemination or the hindrance of specific cultures of certain communities. The fact that Estonian specialists advocate both possibilities is meaningful. On the one hand, radio and television broadcasts in the Russian language are few, thus contributing to the cultural isolation of the Russian minority we have already mentioned. But, simultaneously, caution is expressed about the role of certain Estonian communication media that have contributed to the diffusion of stereotypes...
about the two communities. Stereotypes that are negative for the resolution of the conflict.

5.4 The Political Dimension

We will now consider the way in which experts understand the influence of political factors on the means of action employed by the actors in community conflicts. For this purpose, as was the case for previous dimensions, we requested the experts in the cases analysed to identify some aspects that during the last ten years could have configured the political dimension in the context of each conflict scenario and, specifically, the link to specific political means of action.

The analysis of the information obtained through the questionnaires reveals several distinct arguments that are derived from the experts’ discourse and that have to do, on the one hand, with the definition of the political dimension (the way the experts characterise the political context) and, on the other, with the link they establish between those political elements and the selection and use of means of action by the relevant actors in each case.

When the experts define the political dimension, they refer mainly to four types of issues: On the one hand, the structure and the role of the State in the origins or the evolution of the conflict. On the other hand, the characteristics of the political system. They also mention specific political processes such as attempts to reach peace, the processes of internationalisation of the conflict, and the transitions towards democracy. Finally, there is a reference to the structure and the role of the political elites that seem to be associated with the parties.

The identification of the political dimension with the idea of “political conditions” or “the institutional sphere” (in the way it is defined by the experts), marks the scope of explanation that basically has to do with the structural or institutional characteristics of politics. However, certain elements show up in their discourses that shed light on certain issues that affect the imaginaries or readings about the political processes that take place in that context and that should not be overlooked.
5.4.1 The Political Dimension in the Contemporary Analysis of Collective Action

Whatever the case, there is a central argument in the explanation of the political phenomenon in its relation to the means of action. It has to do with the idea that every feature of the political dimension is perceived and interpreted by different actors in different ways, a fact that implies the selection of different action strategies according to the actors, their political programs, and their location in the political space.

Many of the elements the experts refer to when characterising the political dimension linked to means of action have been extensively described by the specialized literature, mainly through political process theories. The contemporary analysis of collective action has underlined the importance of the political system when dealing with the opportunities for action. Such an idea has given way to the development of the concept that constitutes the core of this perspective, and additionally, a relevant subject of debate. The term “structure of political opportunity”\(^9\) is a strong concept, posed both as an explanatory idea related to the analysis of the diachronic dimension, as well as to the outcomes of collective action. It tries to explain in what situations, and under what conditions collective action will be successful. Consequently, this perspective seeks to link institutionalised politics and collective action by stating the importance of the political system in shaping opportunities for action. Its defining elements, main dimensions, and indicators have been the focus of many different studies in the last decades. These tend to be classified under the so-called Political Opportunity Structure (POS) model of analysis.

The major debates on this issue have been linked to the need to explain collective action as a result of changes in institutional structure or in informal relations in a national polity (McAdam, 1972). Besides, there are other studies that focus on differences in political features of national contexts to explain collective action (Kriesi, 1992). Finally, the perception of political opportunities by collective actors has been another of the meeting points within this perspective (Gamson and Meyer, 1999; Obershall, 1996).

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\(^9\) First coined by P. Eisenger, 1973:11)
One of the ideas that underlie all these works is that the form adopted by collective action is related to the broad range of opportunities and political constrictions specifically to each national context. Actually, when attending to the institutional context, this perspective tends to evaluate mainly the role of the state and the political environment in the evolution of action.

Sidney Tarrow, who has dedicated most of his research to the analysis of this subject, defines it as “consistent - but not necessarily formal or permanent - dimensions of the political environment that provide incentives for people to undertake collective action by affecting their expectations of success or failure”. (Tarrow: 1994:85)\(^{10}\).

In this sense, it comes up as a broad category that has been the object of frequent debates in order to establish its contents (i.e. the main dimension that shapes it). Besides, the researcher has to take into account that, in order to be operational, these opportunities have to be perceived by the actors. Therefore, both structural and symbolic elements take part in the configuration of the opportunities for action\(^{11}\). Finally, by relating action to context, the concept brings back the old socio-political issue of the relationship between structure and agent.

To sum up, the notion of political opportunities helps to explain, from a longitudinal perspective, the variation on periodicity, style and content of action in different institutional contexts. As the rich theoretical and empirical literature reveals, it has certainly accomplished this task. However, the core point of the research on opportunities and action has been the definition of the dimensions that shape political opportunities, a point that Tarrow did not include in the definition quoted above.

Several authors such as Esenger, (1973), Jenkins and Klandermans (1995), Kriesi (Kriesi \textit{et al}., 1995), Koopmans (1996), McAdam, McCarthy and Zald (1996), and Rucht (1996) have developed several theories that try to define the content for opportunities.

\(^{10}\) This concept has also been defined as: “Structural and ideological changes in power” (McAdam, 1999a) or “...concerns the relationship between a group and the world around it. Changes in the relationship sometimes threaten the group’s interest. They sometimes provide new chances to act on those interests”. (Tilly, 1978, p7)

\(^{11}\) Moreover, the concept of political opportunity enlightens the determinants of social action, not only from a rational point of view, but by considering the different narratives underlying the action (narratives that may modify the perception of those opportunities).
Regardless of whether they include three, four, or five elements, they all agree that a change in one of those dimensions could promote the appearance of collective action. Additionally, they state that, whatever forms the action adopts, it is determined by a change in one or more of those dimensions (Mac Adam, McCarthy y Zald, 1996).

The initial ambiguity of the notion and the risk of creating a “catch-all concept” have lead some authors to dedicate part of their research to specify which dimensions constitute the structure of opportunities (Borckett, 1991; Kriesi et al., 1992; Rucht, 1996; and Tarrow, 1994).

Although each author employs his or her own terminology, there is a final agreement on those most relevant dimensions, which has been synthesized by Doug McAdam (1996:54) as follows:

- Openness or closure of access to the formal polity
- Stability or cleavages in the alignment of the elites
- Existence of potential allies within the elites
- Repressive capacity of the state and its tendency to apply it

This conception seems to be inadequate when dealing with contemporary conflicts. Although most of this research was carried out during the nineties, none of these dimensions takes into account the international environment as a specific element in the configuration of opportunities. In my opinion, the reason for this omission is that the majority of the studies in the field have a statist bias (McAdam, 1996). Even though some authors have pointed out the importance of international factors in shaping political opportunities (Layton, 1995; Wang, 1989\footnote{Unpublished PhD dissertations. Cit by McAdam, (1996)}; Anderson-Sherman and McAdam, 1982; McAdam, 1982; Obershall, 2006), it has been a “blind spot” in the vastness of this field of research. Consequently, the central role of intentional trends and events in shaping institutional changes and internal alignments (McAdam, 1996) has been underestimated. Furthermore, contemporary dynamics of global change have not been included in this perspective. Nevertheless, this gap may be amended, first, by taking into consideration, the main trends of change affecting our global contemporary societies. Subsequently, this may be included in the analysis of political opportunities.
On the other hand, this same statist bias demands a classical conception of politics that turns out to be excessively structured and determined by institutions. Thus it leaves little space for other conceptions of politics linked to spheres of social life (the market, for instance) that seem to be at the basis of new forms or notions of the political.

5.4.2 The State and the Means of Political Action

It is clear that the role of the State continues to be central to the structuring of the political imaginary, as well as to the explanation of socio-political phenomena. Additionally, this same structure seems to play a core role in the shape adopted by the conflicts and the processes of mobilisation they generate.

The information obtained through the experts on community conflicts point out the role of the State in three basic senses. First, in relation to the type of political regime it exhibits. Second, about the form adopted by the State from the point of view of territory and the distribution of political power established by virtue of that form. Third, there is the repressive capacity of the State as a defining element of political phenomena, especially when trying to link the political dimension to the use of non-conventional means of action. And finally, we have the legitimacy of the State proper as a central element in the evaluation of the institutions in which the conflict is inserted.

In regard to the type of political regime, two considerations can be made: On one hand, and in spite of the fact that our analysis of community conflicts is focused on democratic contexts, the political development of many of our case studies has gone through non-democratic phases in the course of its evolution (for example, the Basque Country, Cyprus, and Estonia). Although the intention of our analysis was to approach exclusively the changes occurred in the past fifteen years, many experts, tending strongly towards the historical narrative of the events, insist on referring to periods of absence of a formal democracy and even to a lack of “perceived” democratisation on the part of certain actors. This is stated as an explanation for resorting to non-conventional means of action (including strictly violent strategies). A justification for the use of conventional means in a context of full democratisation and the inevitability of the non-conventional in the absence of a non-democratic or excessively intolerant regime stems from the above.
In this respect, the case of Northern Ireland is meaningful. Resorting in the past to non-conventional means (whether they entailed or not a risk of violence) and even the use of strictly violent means of action is explained in terms of absence or denial of access to classical media of political participation (linked essentially to the right to vote).

“It is clear that the lack of openness of the political sphere towards Republican claims has directly impacted positively on the development of violent non-conventional modes of action, seen as the only ways in which claims could be publicized” (Northern Ireland Expert)

The Catholic community’s perception of a lack of democratisation and a “second-class citizenship” backed the justification for resorting to protest media, eventually violent, as a way to demand “the right to demand rights”.

“The refusal by the Stortmont regime dominated by unionists, till the end of the 1960s, to give equal rights to Catholics, led to the radicalization of their means of action. Some of their leaders had the feeling that they had no other choice than to use violence in order to be heard” (Northern Ireland Expert)

The territorial organisation of state power is also pointed out by the experts as one of the basic features of the political dimension and, likewise, a structural determinant of the form political action adopts in the different communities in conflict.

The design of the form of the state and the manner in which the state articulates the claims for acknowledgement of the different communities under its jurisdiction may channel conflictive demands in an institutionalised way. There seems to be a clear influence of the existence of distinct degrees of autonomy of the regional powers or some model of “power sharing” in the moderation and institutionalisation of the conflicts.

The Austrian and Basque cases illustrate this point. In the federal Austrian system, the Government of Carinthia possesses the competences for establishing policies that guarantee the rights of minorities. The debate about putting these policies into practice takes place at the very centre of federal institutions and organisms. In the case of the Basque Country, the impact of the autonomous structure of the state is noticeable in the articulation of the conflict. This design of state and the autonomic decentralisation it
entails has had a noticeable impact on the awareness of belonging to a unique community and on the generation of a privileged status of an autonomous nature (fiscal independence and ample sovereignty). The design of a set of autonomous institutions has contributed to channel conflict claims, but also to generate a strictly Basque space for discussion and political action that powers regional and local participation (above the Spanish average) and also channels protest through conventional means of political expression. Nevertheless:

“The autonomous system may have exerted a double influence:
1. The existence of Basque political institutions has provided settings for the discussion of the “Basque problem” 2. At the same time, access by the more radical nationalist parties to political representation posts (municipal) may have served as a platform for backing certain groups to continue resorting to these means of action” (Expert Vasco)

On the other hand, the structure of the state is also mentioned when alluding to the persistence of forms of political organisation that constrain the appearance of regional autonomy. This would limit the possibility of an institutionalised channelling of demands in conflict and the presence or visibilisation of specific actors who resort to another type of alternative means for the vindication of their claims. This was the case of Northern Ireland up to the Stortmont process of the nineties and, on the other hand, of the resistance of the Serbian State to expand the degree of competence of Vojvodina. In the case of the gipsy communities of Central Europe (specifically the case of Hungary), certain institutions of representation have been perceived by these communities as a de facto limitation to the broadening of their claims and the means to express them.

“the existence of the Roma Minority Self-Governments (in every township where Roma people live), as political institutions created to express the interest of the Roma (they are not supposed to need any other mean) and financed by the Central Government” (Expert from Hungary)

Finally, the repressive capacity of the State and its competence in security matters is, in the words of the experts, the last feature to be underscored in the definition of the political dimension of the means of collective action. This feature (the most essential one in the classical political conception of state) is presented basically in relation to the means of action that entail a risk of violence or simply to narrate strictly violent strategies.
The case of Northern Ireland is undoubtedly paradigmatic in this respect since the role of the State, as holder of the power to exercise violence has modified the strategies of action of different actors as a function of the reading they make of it. While the nationalist-Catholic community perceived state violence as “illegitimate” and repressive, the unionist-Protestant community regarded the state as insufficiently efficient in terms of security.

“For a long time Catholics have not perceived the State as legitimate, and therefore have had a tendency to rely on their own forces (e.g. IRA) rather than on the official police and army” (Northern Ireland expert)

“On the protestant side, the use of violence is clearly linked to fear and to the feeling of not being enough or well protected by the State” (Northern Ireland expert)

Both perceptions have led to the use of violent means against the state and the communities. On the other hand, this same repressive capacity of the state is seen by the experts as a generator of martyrs (and therefore, an incentive for recruitment), but also as dissuasive of violent action.

About the more conventional means of action related to institutions of political participation, the capacity of the state is also signalled when referring to the “relaxation” of repression on specific conventional means and the resort to them. The clearest example of this resort to press conferences and debates in communication media is the case of Cyprus.

The last state feature described by the experts as influencing the resort to different strategies of collective action has to do with the legitimacy of the state proper. This issue turns out to be recurrent in contexts where repertoires of protest linked to non-conventional means with risk of violence take place. The justification is linked to the idea of the discredit of political institutions. The state is not considered legitimate and, therefore, the traditional means of civic involvement, as part of the institutionality of that state, are rejected by the actors, who consequently resort to other strategies.

The tendency towards non-conventional forms of protest, including violence, on the part of Kosovo ethnic minorities has been linked by the experts to this idea of the lack of
legitimacy of institutions that are not considered representative, but rather excluding towards that community. In the Irish case, similarly, the lack of legitimacy of the authority imposed by the United Kingdom has been an incentive for resorting to means of action that were clearly outside the conventional and institutional channels of said authority.

“Discriminative and biased state institutions turn ethnic minorities against them and discourage them from using conventional means to achieve political goals” (Expert Kosovo)

5.4.3 The Characteristics of the Political System in the Configuration of the Means of Political Action

The features of the political system as a core determiner at the time of framing the terms of the conflict also appears in the political dimension, as well as the manner in which specific demands and programs are vindicated by the actors one way or another.

The formal opening up to political participation, the degree of democratisation, the pluralism of the communication media or the conception of political activity are elements that profile and modify personal definitions of the conflict, as well as the strategies selected by each one of the actors for expressing demands.

Concerning the opening up/closing down of the system, it is worth mentioning how the processes of formal or de facto exclusion, as well as the perception of these processes by specific communities, seem to be the backbone of many community conflicts. Furthermore, this mechanism turns out to be very meaningful when designing strategies of political involvement and protest. On the other hand, when resorting to non-conventional means of action or the use of violence, many of these strategies entail a demand for “acknowledgement” through a visibility “campaign” that is conceived in terms of greater efficiency. Underlying these action strategies of communities that are in a situation of exclusion is what R. Cruz (1999) has described as “the right to demand rights” or the struggle for the inclusion as members with full rights in a political community.

The non-formal limitation to political participation in the Catholic community of Northern Ireland up to the seventies, would explain the tendency towards more radical ways of
action that range from resorting to murals (that tell their own history of exclusion by making their program visible) to different kinds of “taking the street” actions like demonstrations, parades, and marches.

We must also point out how the poor representation of the Basque community in the Spanish Parliament (due to its low demographic weight) has resulted in a feeling of exclusion for certain actors. This could explain, on the one hand, the increase in conventional (electoral) political participation in the autonomic and local sphere of that community, and the resort to non-conventional means of protest for the purpose of a “permanent visibilisation” of their demands in face of the Spanish State.

On the other hand, the affirmative action directed to the Sandsak minorities, which resulted in their increased involvement in parliamentary and governmental institutions, has raised the resort to conventional means of action and classical political participation. Simultaneously, the experts refer to the absence of other types of action that have to with the non-conventional.

The degree of democratisation of political life is interpreted by the experts as a permanent element in the structuring of the conflict, as well as in the design of the action strategies on the part of the “contending” communities. This democratisation, which extends not only to the “formal” institutions of the democratic system, but above all, to a certain climate of pluralism and opening up, can easily be observed in the Cyprus case, where certain types of conventional actions (such as debates in the communication media) develop when the level of tolerance of the regime towards those types of expression increases.

“Part of the reason why violence is limited may be the opportunity for peaceful action as an option. As protests are not restricted to any great extent, the availability of non-violent action contributed to peaceful protests.” (Cyprus expert)

The institutional design of the political system is referred to by the experts as a determining element in the shape the conflict adopts. The configuration of the electoral and political representation systems has been an element of conflict and a stimulus for protest campaigns. Nevertheless, and due to the fact that each of these elements is
perceived differently (and frequently as opposites) depending on the authors and the contexts, in other cases it acts as an element that tempers or contains the conflict.

“The highly contested nature of the political system, up until the launching of the current peace process at the beginning of the nineties, meant that violence was used by the most radicals of both sides of the community divide as a way to express their political views” (Northern Ireland expert)

The peaceful protest campaign of NICRA in Northern Ireland against the practice of gerrymandering in the late sixties says a lot about how the “tricky” design of the electoral system acts as a mechanism of “de facto exclusion” of a specific social group.13

In the case of the Walloon-Flemish conflict in Belgium, the duality of the political system, which takes into account the existence of diverse communities, is presented by the experts as an element that moderates the conflict.

5.4.4 Political Processes, Events, and Affairs

When characterising the political dimension in the context of the conflict, many experts allude to specific political processes that take place in the course of the conflict, and to which they attribute general changes in the mobilisation strategies, political opportunities for action, the appearance of new actors, and even a change in the way the conflict is narrated. Specifically, the discourse of experts refers to three types of processes: in the first place, the ones that have to do specifically with peace and resolution initiatives. In the second place, a clear process of progressive involvement of civil society in the dynamics of the conflict is included. Finally, reference is made to the process of Europeanisation and its impact on the evolution of community conflicts.

The first idea may be illustrated by alluding to the peace process in Ulster during the nineties. Following a historical narrative by the experts, in which the resort to non-conventional and violent means of action is explained as a strategy perceived and

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13 The peaceful protest campaign begun by NICRA in 1997 as a form of protest against gerrymandering was proposed along the lines of the model of peaceful protest of the civil rights movements in the United States. Nevertheless, due to the confluence of certain political factors, it triggered public disorder and disturbances. This campaign helps to evidence how repertoires of protest are disseminated beyond the frontiers of a state and, above all, how certain means of action, although proposed as a peaceful means are not exempt from resulting in violence. They change the course of the action as a result of the interaction between actors.
evaluated by the actors as the most effective for decades, the peace process is signalled, undoubtedly, as a clear sign of change of strategies in political struggle. This process is linked to political opportunities for other types of tactics. Nevertheless, it is necessary to insist on the idea that these opportunities have been evaluated differently by different actors (always depending upon the kind of narrative each actor makes of the conflict).

The generation of expectations of change in the institutional design and the structures of power distribution, the inclusion of key actors (such as Sinn Féin) as part of the process, and giving back autonomy to Northern Ireland (following the Good Friday Agreement of 1998), among other factors, has resulted, within the Catholic community, in an apparent incentive for using more conventional means of action and a progressive rejection to violence on the part of the reference populations of the actors who traditionally utilized violence. On the other hand, according to what the experts say, this same process was evaluated quite suspiciously for some time by the unionist sector, as is evidenced by the rejection of DUP to share power with Sinn Féin and its mistrust towards the ceasing of violence.

The idea of the emergence and consolidation of civil society as a central actor in the political conflict is evidenced in two cases: the Basque Country and Cyprus.

Since the middle nineties, there seems to be in the Basque Country a certain link between the progressive increase of civil society’s involvement as a key actor in the conflict and a clear loss of legitimacy of the means of action that entail violence. In this case, processes and events come together for a change in strategies, just as the experts have said when establishing People’s Party Miguel Ángel Blanco’s assassination in 1996 as a fundamental moment for change. It can be said that from then on a true explosion of organisations, associations, and all kinds of pacifist collectives generated, under a spirit of “Basta ya”, a complete protest strategy, both conventional and non-conventional, and frequently very creative, against the ETA organisation’s violence. Additionally, this example reinforces one of the central theses of the theoreticians of the political process that states that the interaction between the strategies of the different actors modifies and conditions the repertoires of action of each actor. The consolidation of civil society organisations as fundamental actors in the Basque conflict and the pacifist program they
defend have been regarded as precursors of a change in the threshold of violent action and, eventually, of the exhaustion of the strategy of those who employ it.

It seems that this pattern of “post-event protest cycle” was reproduced in Cyprus several years later. Here the experts also mention a certain satiation from civil society, which is interpreted by “common people” as a clear rejection of the politics sponsored by the elites. Beginning in 2003, the resort by civil society to means of protest like demonstrations or civil disobedience evidenced a certain spirit of “Basta Ya” by abiding by the status quo promoted and agreed upon by the elites.

5.4.5 The Role of the Political Elites that Appear Associated to Political Parties

The main role of the elites in the definition of the conflict, as well as in the promotion of mobilisation campaigns, is described by the experts as essential when characterising the political dimension of the conflict and the strategies of political action.

Because of either their excessive influence or their loss of weight in the conflict, the experts consider them as a main component of politics. What is most striking about this allusion to the elites is precisely the fact that it has to do more with a classical conception of politics than with the model that insists upon the increasing role of collective mobilisation and civil society in the public life of contemporary democracies. On the other hand, we cannot avoid mentioning that this is surely about a much more “realistic” view of politics. Political parties and, more specifically, their managing organs are the most distinct representation of these elites, although the number of references to them is lower than could be expected.

In the case of Cyprus, this centrality of the elites (which is identified with party politics) is signalled as a basic aspect of the mobilisation impulse of the conflict. Political parties appear as “electoral calculators”, who support or dissuade the use of certain means, especially demonstrations, as one of the functions of their electoral manoeuvres.

Summing up, the political dimension is described by the experts following a scheme of analysis and explanation based on the classical conception of politics. The explanations are based on the centrality of the role of the state as origin/resolution of conflicts as well
as facilitator or repressor of certain action strategies. The opening up or closing down of the political system seems to be an explanatory variable in the selection of means, although there is a tendency for the limits between conventional and non-conventional actions to become blurred. Political processes, in the broad sense of the term, are perceived by the actors as generators of the expansion and contraction of opportunities for changes in action strategies. Finally, the elites continue to be, in the experts’ universe, an explanatory variable of the processes of mobilisation and the general evolution of the conflicts.

5.5 The International Dimension

The impact of the international dimension in the evolution of community conflicts has been one of the central themes of the PEACE COM project. For this reason, and in the light of several issues that arose in the statistical analysis of the questionnaire, and which led us to write Deliverable 7, turning to expert knowledge turned out to be of enormous theoretical and empirical interest for strengthening the analysis of this issue.

When defining the elements that would configure the international dimension in the use of means and strategies of political action, the major part of the information obtained alludes to three types of questions: in the first place, the involvement of international actors and other states in “domestic” conflict scenarios. In the second place, it points towards political processes that take place in the international environment and, finally, to historical or recent events and affairs that are considered “key” motors (direct or indirect) of change in the dynamics of community conflicts.

5.5.1 International Actors and Means of Action

Regarding the authors, it seems clear that the pressure of certain international authors for a transition towards a demilitarisation/institutionalisation of the conflicts within a conventional “normalised” scheme of action has been enormously important in certain contexts. It is surely logical to attempt, in the framework of Europeanization, a peaceful transition towards other types of conflicts whose management could be channelled through ad hoc institutions and policies.
Just as the experts report, the implication has been very clear in certain contexts and rather ambiguous in others. In those cases in which international actors have adopted an active role, the conflict has resulted basically in two issues (depending on the nature of the intervening actors): on the one hand, diplomatic and direct pressure (actors like the UN and other States have mediated and encouraged the resolution of the conflict and the use of conventional means). On the other, the encouragement of specific programs for the economic support of communities, the “accommodation”, and the resolution of the conflict have been sponsored primarily by the EU.

Regarding the way the interventions of international actors has affected the means of action and the ways of expressing conflicting demands, the experts coincide in referring to the importance of the interventions for the institutionalisation of the conflicts and their framing within strategies strictly linked to conventional and “formalised” means of action.

Again, the case of Northern Ireland is meaningful in this regard inasmuch as the involvement of the Irish, British, and American governments has exhorted the return to party politics on numerous occasions. Additionally, the economic support, geared exclusively to groups that are linked to the use of this type of means, has been an incentive for abandoning other types of action.

In the Cyprus example, widely internationalised since the eighties, the involvement of international actors has also been relevant in the ways described above. On the one hand, the UN’s support to peace efforts has been described by the experts as a central aspect of change in the strategies of expression of conflicting demands. On the other hand, the financial support of the United States for the establishment of networks among communities has also been an influence. Some of these interventions seem to have conditioned a channelling of the conflict through conventional means of action in which civil society has played quite a relevant role.

“the role of the EU has increased the boundaries of conventional peaceful political activity. Although the EU laws are not being implemented in the north,

14 It is meaningful that the experts do not mention the fact that in the cases where international actors play a role, there appear “conflicting” actors’ discourses. In the Basque case, it is very revealing to contrast how certain actors clearly opt for an internationalisation of the conflict as part of their strategy (the abertzale world, but also moderate nationalism) and others deny the “need” for international involvement under the argument that it is strictly a domestic issue.
the general public is aware of the fact that they have the right to engage in politics through conventional ways that include no violence (Cyprus expert)

Nevertheless, there is another type of involvement of international actors that is narrated in a different way by the experts because it has more to do with the “strengthening” from abroad of the conflicting communities. This mode of intervention has been displayed by actors such as mother-states and diasporas.

The intervention of other states that are considered “motherlands” has played a revealing role in the Cyprus case where Turkey and Greece have historically sponsored their respective communities. Nevertheless, it is interesting to point out that none of the experts refers directly to the role of these two states, in spite of the fact that they talk extensively about the role of the international dimension in the Cypriot conflict. On the contrary, this type of intervention does appear explicitly in the case of Sandsak, where the backing of Bosnia-Herzegovina to the Bosnian minorities in Serbia has contributed to the strength of these communities by reinforcing their goal of being acknowledged by the Serbian State.

The influence of diasporas has been very similar to the type of implication of mother-states. The role of the historical Irish diasporas to the United States has been a central one at the time of strengthening the Catholic community through diverse political and economic strategies.

“International support has been historically much greater for Republicans (who have succeeded in publicizing their struggle in a favourable light). Several factors contribute to this state of affairs: the support from the Irish Republic as well as from the Irish diasporas on the one hand, and the popularity of “freedom fights” using post-colonial frames in the Western world” (Northern Ireland expert)

To a much lesser extent, some authors also point out the relevance of studying the role of the Basque communities in France and some Latin American countries as elements of support to certain organisations relevant in the conflict. Despite this, we must state that none of the experts mentioned this subject.

About the actors, we must also explain how specific domestic actors have developed internationalisation strategies for having their conflicting demands reach supra-national
instances. The Cypriot case, for example, evidences how, since the eighties, the conflict is presented to the diverse international actors as a “diplomacy game” that attempts to make the problem visible and make some sort of demand for intervention. In the same manner, certain sectors of moderate and radical Basque nationalism have established support networks in the international sphere and have demanded for decades the intervention of the main international organisations for the resolution of the conflict.

5.5.2 International Political Processes and Means of Action

Another element that can be extracted from the experts’ discourse when defining the international context in relation to strategies and means of political action, in said context has to do with certain phenomena of “contagion” or possible learning processes that are linked to the resolution of conflicts.

On one hand, “other peace processes” are set forth as a source of potential learning or inspiration on new ways to resolve certain conflicts. Some experts consider the South African case as a reference for a possible peaceful transition of the Northern Irish conflict. Likewise, in the present state of the Basque Country conflict, many specialists see the peace process in Ulster in the same way; furthermore, some of them present the possibility of a copy or contagion linkage effect of resolution strategies. It is also a recurrent and extremely debated subject among the different actors.

On the other hand, the Europeanization process proper has been a central element in specific contexts to the point of modifying the strategies of the contending actors. Thus, the entry of certain international organisations has implied new opportunities for certain actors and also the constriction of the same opportunities for others.

It has been very revealing in the Basque case to contrast how the increase of police cooperation in the European sphere, and specifically with the French state, has substantially broadened the repressive capacity of the Spanish State towards the organisations that employ violence. The end of “sanctuaries” and the increase of all kinds of cooperative measures in the field of security during the nineties have brought forth a progressive decrease in the operational capacity of ETA and, therefore, in its opportunities for violent action.
In the framework of the processes that occur in the international context, there is still room for reflecting on the international dimension and its impact on the means of political action. Again, a clear classical conception of international affairs is derived from the experts’ discourse. Nowhere in their interventions is there a reference to the dynamics of global social transformation that is happening at present in this environment.

It appears interesting to establish a difference between “international” and the “global” since this difference has to do with the substantive tendencies of contemporary change that take place. Assuming the risk of simplify, the notion of internationality is linked to the idea of a plurality of nation-states who recognize each other as legally equals, who keep and defend their sovereignty, their territory and their frontiers and who arrange their external relations through a common rule (while maintaining their sovereignty). This is the state-system established in Westphalia (1648). In opposition “global” has to do with the inversion of this tendency. It has to do, above all, with blurred frontiers with certain undermine of state sovereignty, with the asymmetry within states violability of territories and the loss of legitimate violence monopoly by the state.

It is possible that one of the main shortcomings of this research could have been its limitation in considering this significant change. Undoubtedly, the actors dimension is central for the analysis of the means of action that establish the dynamics of the conflict. Nevertheless, by focusing exclusively on international actors from within this conception of “internationality”, many processes that take place in what we could call a “global” context and that affect the authors beyond their relations with other international actors remain beyond reach.

To get to know possible changes in the action strategies of actors in domestic contexts, it is also relevant to adopt a point of view on the diffusion processes of means of action within this global context. Repertoires of contention, as the set of actions that a group may perform in the dynamics of contention, have historically shown a strong resistance to change (Tilly, 1978). Nevertheless, the modular nature of the contemporary repertoire (Tarrow, 1994), its capacity to get adapted in numerous and different contexts, have greatly aided the diffusion of its main types of action. Although the space for innovation is small, there are some cultural and structural variations in each context. Global dynamics of social transformation modify the diffusion and innovation processes in the
repertoires by changing patterns of organization, communication, access to resources, time, conceptions of space, etc. Moreover, the emergence of new global violence may vary the configuration of repertoires in terms of violent strategies, not only by changing the structure of repression and/or facilitation of this sort of action (mentioned above), but also by modifying the narratives and the legitimacy of violence.
6. ANALYSIS OF THE MEANS OF ACTION REFERRED BY THE EXPERTS

6.1 Introduction

This section is devoted to taking a deeper look at certain characteristics of the means of action referred by the experts in each case. Before we embark on our present tasks, we have considered it pertinent to point out some considerations that help us to understand better the reaches and limitations of the contents we have developed.

Just as we have repeated in the course of the text, due to the information limitations we face, this section is not under any circumstance an exhaustive analysis of the historical evolution of the use of certain repertoires of action in the course of the history of community conflicts, nor a study on the evolution/transformation of the way the actors use/legitimate certain means of action. The above would imply a case study for each conflict, due to the immense complexity each entails, as well as the long history that defines each one. It would also imply the development of specific studies on actors. Both are beyond the reach of this research. For these reasons, what we are specifically seeking in this section is to present some considerations based on the interpretations made by the experts on the meanings of the means of action selected in different contexts, the possible factors that have determined their use in recent decades, the existence or absence of certain events that could be associated to possible change or continuity.

Keeping in mind that the contents are based on information gathered from the questionnaires, it is important to point out that although at the beginning we were expecting to obtain detailed information on the different means of action, when we proceeded to the analysis, we encountered certain information gaps particularly in certain cases and certain means. Among other reasons, this could be due to the fact that the application of the questionnaire did not allow direct interaction with the experts and, therefore, we did not have the possibility of having available the benefits of a face-to-face interview.

Likewise, just as we have said during the description of the questionnaire, each expert had to select the three means of action he or she considered more relevant for the past fifteen years in terms of frequency, legitimacy, and effectiveness. This explains the
broad scope of means referred by the specialists, which range from means of political expression that entail the use of violence, however intensive, such as armed struggle, violent repression, bombing, riots, kale borroka, damage to property, and painting signposts to others such as murals, civil disobedience campaigns, demonstrations, parades, manifestos, petitions, participation in elections, referendums, or press conferences. An interesting fact to point out, and that merits a deeper look at, is that strikes are not mentioned by any of the experts. In addition, there is only one case in which electoral boycotts were mentioned, although not the boycotts associated to consumer spending.

Additionally, it is surprising that several specialists included in their answers actions that cannot be considered as belonging to the concept of means and repertoires of action, just as we had stated in the first part of the Deliverable. For example, the language courses formulated in one of the cases are activities that eventually could contribute to the long-term mitigation or decrease of the intensity of a conflict, and they even respond to a demand expressed by certain actor, but they do not correspond whatsoever to the definition of means of action. Neither do political lobbies, negotiations for the resolution of a conflict, international intervention, to name just a few examples, fit in the concept of means and repertoires of action. This could be due to the complexity of the concept, to the point that it turns out to be ambiguous and confusing for some experts.

Finally, we considered it convenient explain the reasons that led us to select, from among the group of referred means, demonstrations, murals, and the means that entail risk of violence for inclusion in this section. Above all, in the three cases, we had available enough information provided by the experts for a deeper study. On the other hand, all of them are clearly meaningful means of action that correspond to the different types we presented in the first chapter of this work. Thus, while demonstrations may be understood as an example of a “new” repertoire of constrained actions, murals correspond to the confrontation repertoire and, in the last case; we are dealing with means that resort to violence to express demands.
6.2 Demonstrations as a Means of Action in Community Conflicts

It is important to start by pointing out that demonstrations are the means of action mentioned by the greatest number of experts – a total of eleven – and that also have to do with the greatest number of cases; specifically, they are considered a relevant means of action in six different conflicts. In spite of everything, as we will have the chance to prove in the course of this section, this could surprise us because in recent years demonstrations seem to have become an extremely generalised repertoire that appears in disparate socio-political contexts and is also employed by actors of very diverse natures.

The generalisation and normalisation of demonstrations has been explained by several scholars as a result of the globalisation process. According to this opinion, demonstrations would be a means of action that responds perfectly to the new type of demands that characterise the new global political scenario – the demands that P. Norris (2002) calls “life-style politics” – as well as the demands to construct new scenarios for civic involvement. If we accept these assumptions, we could expect demonstrations to increase their frequency and relevance at the core of community conflicts. Nevertheless, we must admit that the information gathered in the course of our work does not introduce any fact that would allow us to support or refute these theses.

In fact, it is surprising that none of the experts mentions the link between demonstrations, which they understand as a highlighted repertoire in their community conflicts, and the phenomenon of what we could call the “globalisation of protest”. In other words, there is no evidence of a link between demonstrations and altermondialiste movements; neither is the fact mentioned that their expansion could be due to the impact of phenomena of diffusion or contagion provoked by the success or pre-eminence in other contexts. In the great majority of the cases, demonstrations are analysed simply as “local phenomena” inserted in the context of specific conflicts. Only one expert, from the Basque case, referred to a certain tendency towards the normalisation of demonstrations at the international level. On this occasion, the argument does bring together some of the ideas found in the most recent studies on demonstrations. Thus, the fact the new actors that resort to them is highlighted, a fact that leads us to consider the changes the actors could introduce into their meaning.
Additionally, the expert reminds us that this is about a classical repertoire of protest that has become institutionalised and routine in new national and international contexts.

**Some Initial Reflections on the Contemporary Socio-political Analysis of Demonstrations**

Before delving into the analysis of the results of our work, we think it convenient to devote a brief section to formulate some of the theoretical and methodological issues posed by the analysis of demonstrations as a means of collective action. For this purpose, we will refer very briefly to the main subjects of discussion and lines of research that have been emerging in socio-political analysis in the last two decades.

We should begin by remembering that (street) demonstrations are one of the classical repertoires of expression of demands and protest, and also one of the most widespread. On the other hand, it is clearly a contemporary phenomenon that occupies an important place in what Tilly (1994, 2000, 2002,) called the history of the struggle for inclusion in citizenship. Additionally, inasmuch as it is an event, it is much more than an action with a simply instrumental character. The routinisati on, extension, continuity, and legitimacy of demonstrations turn them into a very relevant citizen’s practice. However, demonstrations are also potentially violent, unforeseeable events that take place under the suspicion of situating themselves outside the margins of the institutional channels of democratic life. All of this confers a certain ambiguity to them.

Some scholars who have studied demonstrations (Favre et al, 1997; Fillieule, 1997a; 1997b; Favre, 1990) question both the theoretical frameworks and the methodology employed by classical socio-political analysis when studying demonstrations. Above all, they underscore the existence of profound contradictions in the results of the research. In this lack of consensus on the nature of demonstrations at the end of the 20th century, three main points of contention can be distinguished (Favre et al, 1997). In the first place, there are those for whom a demonstration is a political resource of the more privileged social classes of the population, while for others it is a resource of the underprivileged. In the second place, scholars, demonstrations increasingly take place outside the margins of traditional organisations and their purpose is the defence of post-materialist values (Inglehart, 1977, 1991). Simultaneously, works continue to be published that seem to prove that the weight of traditional organisations, particularly
labour unions, is still dominant and at the service of corporate interests. Finally, the authors disagree about the degree of legitimacy conferred to demonstrations as a resource for the expression of demands.

The considerable development, in recent years, of research on collective mobilisation has contributed to the knowledge on key aspects of demonstrations. For example, we have available significant information on some relevant issues, such as the organisations that convocate demonstrations on what Tilly (2000) calls the police control of protest, as well as on the relationship between demonstrations and communication media and the structural conditions for the success of the protest. However, there is still an important gap regarding the individual dimension of this type of action. In other words, there are few studies available that look deeply into the way individuals go from a predisposition towards manifesting themselves to finally deciding to carry out a specific, effective action: manifest themselves (Favre et al, 1997, p.4).

Whatever the case, demonstrations are, above all, a notable political invention (Tilly, 2003) characterised by three main elements: In the first place, they are deliberate gatherings of people in a public place, preferably a location that combines visibility and a symbolic meaning. In addition, their objective is to prove belonging to a politically relevant group or backing a stand by means of the human voice, the printed word, or another type of symbolic object. Finally, demonstrations are able to transmit a collective determination when they act in a disciplined fashion in a location or moving through a series of locations. Considering all of the above, the first problem the researcher has to face is to consider the origins of such a particular form of expression of protest and the reasons that explain their broad continuity over the course of time (Tilly, 2002).

On the other hand, in spite of their unquestionable diffusion and legitimacy as a repertoire of protest, and also their routinisation and normalisation in the public life of contemporary democracies, demonstrations have been – and continue to be – “under suspicion”. Due to their very nature, they cannot free themselves from a certain amount of ambiguity; they are unforeseeable events during which the risk of a violent outburst is run, and they may even question some of the foundations of democratic systems (specifically, the concept of representation). In a certain way, it must be admitted that demonstrations are convoked when the established mechanisms for the resolution of
conflicts have failed; when negotiations have broken down.\textsuperscript{15} All this array of questions - certainly formulated in haste – helps to explain why, although from the perspective of the social sciences it is inevitable to acknowledge an interest in studying them, difficulties persist in the attempts to build this repertoire of protest into the normative theory of democracy.

However, it must be admitted that protest, in general; and demonstrations, in particular, constitute one of the core elements of life in democratic systems. Demonstrations are simultaneously a collective response to crisis situations and a consequence of the crisis of traditional channels of political participation (Fillieule, 1997a). Without forgetting that they are one of the main ways of expressing demands for acknowledgement, that is, “making themselves visible” that are within reach of groups excluded from the political community. In good measure, the physical, real confrontation between political contenders is being substituted by dialogue and negotiation. But it is also being replaced by a euphemistic representation where the confrontation is formulated in a symbolic way. In addition, due to the weight of the symbolic and drama dimension, demonstrations lend themselves extraordinarily well to fill this role.

Thus, we are faced with a repertoire of collective action that is widely disseminated across the world, that appears in very diverse situations and political regimes and, above all, that enjoys a high degree of legitimacy as a way to express claims and demands of very diverse natures (Fillieule, 1997\textsuperscript{a}). Additionally, everything seems to point that it is a repertoire on the rise, since for at least a decade, the \textit{altermondialiste} movement, together with other movements that characterise “post-modernity”, have decidedly placed their bets on demonstrations as a convenient way to make their demands visible\textsuperscript{16}. From the field of social science, this phenomenon has generated a particular interest in considering the possible consequences of the strengthening of “other” forms

\textsuperscript{15} This is Tilly’s (2003) thesis. He associates the appearance of demonstrations with the “breakdown in negotiations”; that is, with the situations in which the relations between the groups that formulate the demands and those who have to respond to them leave the institutionalized channels and produce different kinds of confrontations.

\textsuperscript{16} A notable volume of recent works on the \textit{altermondialiste} movement is now available; more specifically, on the characteristics of its forms of expressing violence. Among others, the works of Farro (2001); Robles (2002); Pont Vidal (2004); Tejerina (2002). (Della Porta and Rucht, 1998; Della Porta and Mosca, 2005, Calle, 2005) may be consulted.
of political participation and the consequent weakening of the more traditional ones (Norris, 1997).

The phenomenon of the impressive density of demonstrations in present day democratic systems has been highlighted in good measure by scholars of political action and collective mobilisation (Norris, 2002; Tarrow, 1994; Tilly, 2000, 2003; Favre, 1990) to the point that it has been admitted that large demonstrations are events that determine the rhythm and tempo of democratic political life and are understood by citizens as a fundamental right whose legitimacy cannot be questioned. There have been attempts at explaining this fact as a response to the crisis of traditional institutions of representation in liberal democracies, with different diagnoses and solutions according to the actors under consideration. In any case, it is evident that the normative theory of democracy faces a serious questioning of some of its assumptions.

Quite a long time ago, A. Etzioni (1970) posited that “demonstration democracy” is a form of natural evolution of contemporary democratic systems, defined as the way of functioning of a democracy where demonstrations are a legitimate corrective measure of the electoral expression. Therefore, this means of action becomes integrated into representative democracy on account of being the expression of interests different from the ones encompassed by electoral politics; specifically, much more particular interests. Thus, while elections take into account the common interests of the citizens and should represent the new social groups that are entering political life, demonstrations represent the space for the expression of very specific interests of specific groups. Consequently, their function is to fill the gaps in representation that constantly arise in the democratic fabric. In spite of this optimistic conception of their role, Etzioni is also aware that demonstrations carry dysfunctions because they can lead to an oversimplification of claims and political problems, which are complex by nature. Demonstrations are also carriers of seeds of non-representativity and of an inclination to violence that is contrary to a democratic climate. However, in spite of all, the author considers that the dissemination of demonstrations is an inevitable phenomenon in contemporary democratic political life.

On his part, P. Favre (1990) questions part of Etzioni’s argument; he specifically disapproves of his confidence that demonstrations will become an effective means for
the expression of certain interests and claims that remain outside electoral politics. Certainly, Favre admits the extension and increase in weight of demonstrations in contemporary democratic life. However, he introduces two important ideas that, once more, draw a scenario that is ambiguous about the place and role of demonstrations. Above all, he maintains that their political influence is very poor and, consequently, also their weight as an instrument for realizing specific interests. In fact, he states that there are very few examples where a demonstration leads to a change in a specific governmental decision. Hence, its political effectiveness is very limited.

The author admits that there exist demonstrations that seem “decisive” at the time of resolving specific conflicts, especially when they pertain to sectorial conflicts or acts of denunciation, but we must not lose sight of the fact that political change can never be explained by one particular action. From this perspective, demonstrations are only a singular event within the totality of a crisis, and it is the totality itself that produces the change. Thus, it may be inferred that the interpretation of “the demonstration as a moment”, as a singular event should be completed with a parallel analysis of the juncture in which it takes place.

On the other hand, Favre’s second big objection has to do with another feature inherent to demonstrations: the degree of unforeseeability they entail and the poor control of the meaning that will be given to the event *a posteriori*. Here, he is referring to what P. Champagne (1990) called “paper demonstrations”. This whole set of factors accounts for the fact that, at least at present, this repertoire is not believed to be the fittest means to ensure that the interests of the different groups that compose society are taken into consideration, nor does it aid the resolution of a specific conflict.

And, nevertheless, people seem to attend more and more demonstrations. How can this fact be explained? The answer is not easy, but our understanding is that their increase in popularity has to do more with its symbolic dimension than with its instrumental one. In a world where spaces for social life are running the risk of becoming dematerialized, demonstrations become one of the few moments when it is legitimate to physically occupy public space. Inasmuch as they are “ceremonies of solidarity”, they makes it possible to “be together” and, above all, to be visible to others. Hence, the important role they play in the renewal of feelings of belonging and the reinforcement of collective
identities. On the other hand, it should not be forgotten either that, during times of increased importance of claims of an expressive nature – linked to the politics of presence and diversity – the festive, symbolic, and identity facets, which are consubstantial with demonstrations, turn it into a well-suited repertoire for reaching these ends.

6.2.1 Demonstrations in Community Conflicts

Although the bulk of this report is based on the findings of the questionnaires answered by a series of experts on our conflicts, we cannot forget that demonstrations and marches were two of the means included in the questionnaire designed for actors and the basis for the previous stage in our research. In fact, the analysis of Section D of the questionnaire – devoted to the means of action – was the axis of the previous deliverable (Deliverable 7 “Models of Action”). That is the reason for the convenience of beginning by remembering briefly some of our findings and conclusions on the way the actors inserted in these conflicts understand demonstrations and marches.

Above all, the legitimacy they attribute to both means is very high. Although petitions are undoubtedly the means of political action most valued by 90.8% of the interviewees, immediately following we have marches (89% approval) and then demonstrations (83.4% approval). In addition, their effectiveness is considered quite high. Thus, the maximum percentage of all the repertoires included in the questionnaire is reached by demonstrations with 70.9% of effectiveness. On their part, marches, petitions, and strikes show the lowest results, but in spite of this, they still obtain significant scores: marches (66, 1%), petitions (53, 1%), and strikes (48,6%).

In our previous report, we had also found a singular relationship between legitimacy and effectiveness. Although for the entire set of repertoires studied, there was a clear polarisation of the actors’ answers, since legitimacy was clearly linked with effectiveness and non-legitimacy with non-effectiveness, demonstrations and marches appeared as the two only exceptions to this relationship. In both cases, even the majority of those who disapprove of them as means of action, namely, those who deny their legitimacy, continue to consider them effective.
It seems fitting to end this brief subsection of our paper by remembering some general conclusions on these two types of repertoires that were part of Deliverable 7. In our report, we pointed out that to explain the high legitimacy and effectiveness of the two actions, we should reflect on the symbolic importance in contemporary societies of occupying public space and attracting attention. We even alluded to the telegenics of those events. On the other hand, we also alluded to the fact that the “excesses in institutionalisation” of contemporary democratic politics were probably offset, at least for the repertoires that are more attractive to the actors, by street politics. That is, street politics without excesses, safe in a certain way, and which seem to match the type of demonstrations and marches in the conflicts we analysed.

We now move on to the consideration of the aspects underscored by the experts when mentioning demonstrations as one of the means of action that are more characteristic of their respective community conflicts. A good part of them has a bearing on certain issues we noted in the section devoted to the role of demonstrations in socio-political analysis. To begin with, our specialists make a clear distinction between two types: demonstrations for making claims and commemorative demonstrations. This distinction is also found in studies on the morphology of demonstrations (Favre, 1990), where their specificities are underscored. The instrumental factor takes precedence in demonstrations where claims are being made; that is, the actors resort to the repertoire propelled by a specific situation of conflict or disagreement or to express a specific demand. In this case, demonstrations are convoked around a single petition that, generally, confers unity to slogans and the banners carried by the demonstrators. This is the type of event that Tilly (2001) is thinking about when he states that they rise when the possibility of dialogue between the contenders is shattered. Nevertheless, the recognition of the primacy of the instrumental aspect in a demonstration does not mean denial of the importance of its symbolic aspects, nor ignoring that in many cases there is a veritable calendar of demonstrations for making claims (Fillieule, 1997).

On the contrary, commemorative demonstrations are endowed essentially with a symbolic character. These demonstrations are convoked periodically for celebrating and remembering past events. Thus, they have a much less instrumental character, since they are moments for expressing the conservation of a common belonging or for showing that the claim is still alive. Every society, and even many social movements, set
up a calendar of demonstrations that becomes widely known by the population. Let us think, for example, of the worldwide demonstrations of 1 May, or the demonstrations in honour of working women (March 8), which are much more recent. This does not exclude the fact that their organisers take advantage of the occasion to select a specific slogan or cause that is added to the parade with a view to maintaining the claim dimension (the application of a new labour law in the May 1st demonstrations or the demand for specific policies against gender violence in the March 8th ones, to cite only two examples). In any case, commemorative demonstrations have many points of contact with parades, which is the reason why we decided to include this last repertoire as a specific section of our analysis. Both are defined by the importance of certain elements of a ceremonial kind, which make them similar to a traditional religious procession (Hobsbawm, 1965), but they also contain meaningful ludical elements.

The distinction between legal and illegal demonstrations is mentioned by only one of our specialists, specifically when referring to the ones that take place in the Basque country. This is a meaningful oversight that could be a reflection on the phenomenon of diffusion and normalisation of demonstrations in democratic societies, to which we have already referred. Nevertheless, we should remember that, to the extent that the right to demonstrate has become even a constitutional right in certain countries, legal demonstrations seem subject to a whole set of complex procedures that define a good part of the event proper. In fact, their convocation, the route to be followed, the time allowed for carrying it out, and the slogans are subjects debated and agreed upon by two of their main actors: convoking organisations and government representatives. Additionally, the way in which the two meaningful actors intervene – law and order service and security forces – depend directly on those agreements and, therefore, are radically different according to the legality or illegality of the demonstration.

With all probability, the fact that a great many experts have ignored this subject can be explained by another notable phenomenon: we did not find any reference to the risk of violence entailed by demonstrations. Only in the case of marches (parades) in Northern Ireland and in a reference to the violence following demonstrations, expressed by the same expert of the Basque case we mentioned above, is it believed that demonstrations are a potentially violent repertoire. In fact, the dimension of inherent confrontation in this mean is barely highlighted. In a certain way, in the discourses analysed, the process of
diffusion and normalisation previously referred to is taken for granted and all the symbolic and expressive aspects are emphasised more than the potential for confrontation.

One of the features underscored by the students of demonstrations is that, in addition to being a simple repertoire, well known by a great number of groups and people involved in a conflict, their popularity could be explained because they are extremely adaptable to different kinds of situations and objectives. Both factors are found among the ideas that appear repeatedly in the experts’ questionnaires.

A constant of a good part of their interpretations is their insistence on the relevance of visibility of the demonstrations. Consequently and above all, demonstrations are a means used by actors to make visible the conflict or one of its dimensions. Thus we have that the specialists take in the importance of occupying public space – literally, they use the phrase “take over the street” – and above all, its telegenics. Along this line of thought, an argument is highlighted that presents demonstrations as events in which to exhibit the symbols of the groups in conflict, a fact that turns it into an event with many similarities to a parade.

Based on all this, it is not surprising that a good part on the informers insist on the high degree of legitimacy of this means of action, which is linked to the tendency towards an increase in the frequency of demonstrations. Legitimacy and frequency, in turn, are related to the proof of the increase in the number of actors that resort to them, both for expressing demands and making themselves present at the heart of the conflicts. The number of actors mentioned by the specialists among those who resort in great measure to demonstrations is very broad. It includes political parties with differing ideological signs, civil society organisations, and communication media. Among the social movements that tend to repeat themselves in the different cases are women’s, pro-peace, and student movements. On the other extreme, governments, government institutions, and churches are the actors that resort less frequently to demonstrations.

Academic literature on repertoires of collective action warns us about the close relationship between the birth and the diffusion of any kind of repertoire of collective action and certain social, political, and cultural conditions that either make them possible
or hinder them. Demonstrations are primarily an urban phenomenon. However, they are also associated to a certain diffusion of basic political rights. Although it is evident that we are faced with demonstrations under dictatorial or authoritarian regimes, it is equally evident that this is about a repertoire closely linked to the processes of democratisation of contemporary political systems. In the framework of the case studies included in our research, the extension of demonstrations is interpreted as a phenomenon related to specific democratic processes. Cyprus, Estonia, Kosovo, Sandzak, and Vojvodina are the examples in which this idea appears more frequently. However, there also are some references to the impact of the Spanish political transition for explaining the diffusion and normalisation of demonstrations in democratic Spain, more specifically, in the Basque Country.

Together with the above subject, the relevance of demonstrations also appears associated to the entry of new actor into the political sphere. In other words, it is associated to an increase in the number of actors that intervene directly in the development of the conflict. In a certain way, and in spite of the fact that we already mentioned the existence of a wide number of actors whom the experts link to this specific repertoire, a close relationship continues to be established between civil society organisations and the resort to demonstrations as a means of action. Thus, demonstrations are conceived as a result of the increase of the centrality of civil society in the conflict. However, warnings concerning the frequent attempts at the instrumentalisation of demonstrations on the part of traditional political parties and forces also rise.

In some cases, the specialists warn that demonstrations are a resource that is habitually employed to respond to specific events that the convoking actors consider meaningful for the development of the conflict. In the Basque country, for example, demonstrations are systematically convoked as a response to ETA attacks. But it is also true that the organisations linked with the more radical nationalism (the leftist “abertzale”) call for demonstrations each time the government takes decisions that, in their understanding, directly affect the conflict (the illegality of certain political organisations is an example) or when the forces of public order break up an ETA commando and capture its members. The Cypriot experts, in turn, allude to the demonstrations that provoked international intervention in this conflict.
From the study of the questionnaires, we have ascertained that the specialists frequently refer to two sets of factors to explain the diffusion and the role of demonstrations. In the first place, the experts allude to the existence of political cultures that favour or block the appearance, diffusion, or normalisation of demonstrations. On the other hand, they consider the influence of certain political systems that do not allow the channelling of the actors’ demands through other means and, therefore, encourage more direct ways of expressing demands and grievances, among them demonstrations. The role of both dimensions – cultural and political – in the means of action utilized in community conflicts will be the subject of a careful analysis in a later section of this paper.

We began this part of our report by underscoring, on the one hand, that demonstrations are the repertoire most frequently mentioned by our experts. We concluded this appreciation by adding that the experts barely linked the diffusion of this repertoire to certain trends in the evolution of politics at the international level emphasised by the experts. All in all, we can say that the informers focus their reflections on specific conflicts. Along these same lines, a constant that is repeated in almost all their interpretations is that the nature of and the roles played by demonstrations cannot be understood without taking into account the close link to the historical development of the conflict. It is perceived that during different phases of these conflicts, many of them decades old, important changes have taken place about the meanings, actors and intensity of the demonstrations. Whatever the case, there is a considerable coincidence in highlighting that, at least in the course of the last decade, a trend towards stability or towards a certain increase in the use of demonstrations is stressed.

6.2.2 Notes on Demonstrations in Several Specific Conflicts

On separate occasions, we have repeated that one of the limitations of our study is that we cannot risk formulating solid conclusions on the characteristics, functions, and evolution of the repertoires of action in each of the conflicts encompassed by this research. Our work perspective has a primarily comparative bias, which is the reason why we attempted to use references to specific conflicts whenever we wanted to illustrate meaningful coincidences and differences in the use of certain repertoires of action in community conflicts of diverse natures and with a disparate background and evolution. In spite of all these warnings, in the case of demonstrations, we relied on quite
rich information on some specific cases, a fact that allows us to consider them in a more detailed fashion.

The Turkish Cypriot case illustrates well the role of demonstrations in a socio-political context with an increasing involvement of civil society in the conflict. The experts state that, in the course of recent years, demonstrations have been a repertoire mainly used by minority social groups and political parties lacking representation in parliament to express their points of view and, especially, their stands in favour of resolving the conflict. Above all, they highlight the demonstrations in favour of peace that have been encouraged by those actors. Thus, the diffusion of demonstrations is understood as proof of the growing involvement of civil society in the conflict. Also, in this case, this emergence of civil society is linked to a more generalised process of democratisation that is affecting the political system and the entire Turkish Cypriot society. This type of relationship between the processes of political change and the rise or decline of certain means of action is a meaningful element that had already appeared when we took into account the way in which the experts understand the influence of the political dimension.

Thus, demonstrations are encouraged “from below” by civil society seem to be a disseminated phenomenon, both in North and South Cyprus. The actors that encourage demonstrations stress the relevance the women’s movement has gained, besides certain groups of intellectuals. In any case, it is interesting to point out that this is also a case where demonstrations are used as a response to certain specific events. Particularly, they seem to be a habitual reaction to certain characteristics of the Cypriot conflict: international intervention, specifically from the UN and the EU. Finally, it is worth mentioning that the experts do not forget to introduce certain nuances into this interpretation of demonstrations as the repertoire *par excellence* of civil society. In their opinion, to understand the evolution of demonstrations and their role in the conflict, it should not be forgotten that each event is taken advantage of by the most important political parties to support their own stands or simply to try to instrumentalist the Cypriot society’s potential for involvement. Thus, the ambiguous element of this repertoire, which is emphasised by those who study the phenomenon, is recovered, not in regard to its potential for disturbing public order, but rather in regard to the danger of lessening the value of the authentic demands of social groups to the extent that it refers to events that occur outside the margins of the institutionalised channels for civic involvement.
When the Basque Country experts insist on the relevance of this means of action, it is necessary to frame their reflections inside the more general phenomenon of the diffusion and normalisation of demonstrations in Spain ever since the political transition. In fact, all the studies carried out on the subject stress that they are dealing with a means that enjoys a very high degree of legitimacy and is employed by a broad number of actors, including the Catholic Church. In fact, both inside and outside the Basque Country, every meaningful public event is usually accompanied by a wave of demonstrations.

In the Basque case, the heavy weight of demonstrations since the middle nineties is interpreted as the result of the involvement of Basque civil society in the conflict. It is true that before then demonstrations had taken place as a response to ETA attacks, but these had taken mostly outside the Basque Country. However, since that time, and more specifically, after the kidnapping and subsequent assassination of Councilman Miguel Ángel Blanco of the Popular Party, the diffusion of demonstrations represents the end of a passive attitude, an attitude of silence on the part of Basque society. Hence, most demonstrations are organised to make visible the conflict and to reject violence. By the use of this repertoire, some actors, specifically certain social movements that favour peace, have succeeded in making themselves visible and occupying an outstanding position in the panorama of Basque political life. Nevertheless, and although they are not mentioned as frequently by the experts, it must not be forgotten that the more radical nationalist groups resort to them for opposing certain government decisions and the actions of public order forces when acting against political violence.

In any of the two types, the Basque case is an example of reactive demonstrations, whose sequence and frequency are closely linked to ETA actions. Despite the above, other experts point out to the link between cycles of demonstration and the strategies of the main actors. In short, we have before us three types of demonstrations. In the first place, there are testimonial demonstrations, which express solidarity with the victims of violence. Next, we have demonstrations organised mainly for the purpose of exerting pressure on certain social sectors. Finally, we have demonstrations whose primary objective consists of exerting political pressure in the face of certain judicial or governmental decisions. A broad number of actors involved in the conflict use these two last categories.
Demonstrations are a repertoire that, as stated previously, requires a certain degree of preparation. Hence, it is necessary to pay attention to the organisations that convoke them. However, they are also encouraged or hindered by another type of actor. In the Basque case, their diffusion contributes to the support that some institutions usually receive; namely, the experts mention the Basque Autonomous Government and the Catholic Church as their main encouragers. Perhaps the fact that demonstrations are moments when the symbols of the Basque nation are exhibited could explain this fact. It is also considered that the communication media have played an outstanding role in the diffusion and normalisation of the repertoire.

Finally, we do not want to end this reference to the Basque Country without remembering that this is the only case in which some demonstrations – above all the ones convoked by radical nationalist movements and organisations – end up as violent events.

If we go on to consider the Estonian case, we find a series of reflections on the role of demonstrations that are very different from the reflections on Cyprus or the Basque Country cases. We start by acknowledging the existence of a demonstration culture that is linked to the political changes of the late eighties. It was then that this repertoire acquired a twofold meaning. Above all, it became the first kind of grass-roots political participation during the last days of the USSR and contributed noticeably to the transformation of Estonian political culture and the process of democratisation proper. Additionally these demonstrations made visible the existence of a hidden conflict that was starting to be forged, as well as the ethnic and linguistic division of society.

Once the period of political transition was over, we encountered quite a different situation. On the one hand, the moment of “disenchantment” began. The experts insist on the political passiveness of the Estonian majority following independence and on a new valuation of professional and private life. Concerning the Russian minority, passiveness also became generalised, a fact that could be explained by their lack of resources for ethno-political mobilisation.

The interesting thing is that we are not facing, as in the previous examples, meaningful demonstrations characterised by claims. Some experts explain this absence by the
weakness of civil society and the lack of a tradition of protest organised in such a way that present conflicts result in mobilisations. However, the conflict does express itself by means of commemorative demonstrations or gatherings with a strong symbolic content and charged with connotations of vindication and contention. It suffices to remember that the recent escalation of the Estonian conflict was the result of the repression of a demonstration convoked as a protest against the removal of a monument with strong symbolism for the Russian minority.

6.2.3 A Specific Case: the Northern Ireland Parades

Undoubtedly, parades are a repertoire that shares many elements with demonstrations. Their very nature implies the concentration of a considerable number of people – the more, the better – the occupation of public space and an organised parade. We could agree that parades are a particular type of demonstration in which the expressive-symbolic factor predominates over the vindicative-instrumental one. Four experts in the North Irish case mention parades as a very relevant means of action; there is no mention of them, in any other case. For this reason, we have decided to devote a small section of our work to them.

The interpretation done by the four experts follows the same line of reasoning that we noted in the above paragraph. For them, the parades in Northern Ireland are primarily a commemorative demonstration; they are highly ritualised events with a strong symbolic content. All of them insist on their long history: civil commemorative parades already existed in the 18th century. The Irish conflict is characterised by the existence of an established calendar of parades that take place in spring and summer. By means of this repertoire, certain events associated to the history of the conflict are celebrated, mainly victories in key battles for British supremacy in North Irish territory. These are parades that adopt the totality of military paraphernalia and, are thus adopted primarily by the unionist band. The Protestant band was the one that invented parades and practised them for a long time. Nevertheless, the relevance they acquired during the more critical stages of the conflict explains the fact that they have been imitated, although not as strongly, by the Catholic band. In any case, there is no clear agreement among experts when they try to signal the main actors in parades. When they refer to them, they mention churches, political parties, cultural organisations, and the police.
Their main function seems to be the renewed periodical and ritualised marking of the sectarian divisions between contending blocks. This is why they also play another role: they reinforce the identity dimension. Thus, they clearly mark the belonging to one of the two bands, which is expressed ethnically, historically, and religiously. Evidently, the consequence of this fact is that the strengthening of the internal social cohesion of each group is another of their objectives.

As in demonstrations, an essential component of parades is the movement of the *cortege* along the street following a path that is usually endowed with a strong symbolic component. In the case of the North Irish parades, this fact is fundamental, since a march that follows a fixed itinerary attempts to mark the “territory” of those who march. The recurring conflicts that result every time a parade takes place are due to the changes in the composition of the neighbourhoods or areas through which they parade. In the parades with large coverage by the communication media, precisely because they tend to trigger violent events, the parade takes place along the streets and areas inhabited predominantly by members of the other community.

Contrary to what happened with demonstrations, when analysing this event, the experts devote more time to the more visible elements of the parade. Above all, they emphasise its evident parallelism with religious processions. However, they also stress a whole series of elements that surround them, which contribute to reinforcing the meaning attributed to the occupation of streets. The parades are accompanied by fireworks, the ground on which the participants march is painted, and arches are built to be crossed by the marchers. Concerts and other activities take place on parade days for turning them into days of full celebration that convoke a numerous public. Finally, commemorative murals are painted in the search for a long remembrance of the parade.

Another element that distinguishes the way our experts have presented demonstrations from the way others have spoken about parades in Northern Ireland refers to violence. Let us remember that in the case of demonstrations we were surprised by the fact that hardly any expert mentioned the risk of violence associated to demonstrations. When referring to parades, exactly the opposite is true: emphasis is placed on the fact that this is an extremely contentious repertoire associated with disturbances in public order and with frequent violent acts during its development. However, it is also true that the risk of
violence has decreased in the past fifteen years as the peace process has advanced. Inasmuch as parades are understood as the epitome of the conflict, the way in which it is manifested reflects a decrease in the level of conflictivity during this last period. This is why it is interesting to signal that one of the points that mark the peace talks was the creation of a Parade Commission for the purposes of controlling the development of the parades and avoiding violence. Whatever the case, parades, understood as a contentious event, continue to exist in a general context of pacification.

6.2.4 Another repertoire that shares many elements with demonstrations: “symbolic gatherings”

Although gatherings of a symbolic nature are only mentioned explicitly by one expert in the Belgian case, inasmuch as they are relevant means of action in community conflicts, we believe in the convenience of including them briefly in this section. This is justified because we have enough evidence to allow us to think that they also play a relevant role in other cases. Specifically, we are faced with events of this type in the Basque country, and the Estonian and Slovene minority experts also refer to certain commemorative demonstrations.

Academic literature acknowledges the overlapping of gatherings and demonstrations, but insists on the role of the movement of the demonstration or the parade in the meaning acquired by the occupation of public space. In face of the above, by definition, the gathering is static and reproduces – just as the other two repertoires do – certain characteristics of religious gatherings.

Reference is made in the Belgian case to a massive annual pilgrimage of Flemish nationalists, which includes participants that range from the more radical nationalist sectors to the more moderate ones. Although their importance has decreased in the past years, this event has been widely spread through the communication media and has made the continuity of the conflict periodically visible. Its function as a renewing agent of the collective identity of the group and the increase in internal cohesion seem undeniable. According to the experts, a unique phenomenon also appears in the Russian minority in Estonia. With very limited political resources, some groups take
advantage of certain commemorative dates to convoke gatherings in front of monuments they endow with a strong symbolic charge.

Last of all, in the Basque Country we encounter at least two types of gatherings. Firstly, since the middle nineties the diffusion of demonstrations has been accompanied by an increase in the number of gatherings convoked as a protest towards ETA attacks or as a response to certain governmental or judicial decisions. Although most of them are peaceful, on several occasions they take place simultaneously and in the same site of gatherings convoked by opposing bands to protest against specific events to which they attribute radically different meanings. In these cases, skirmishes between members of the two bands are not infrequent. The second type of gathering that shows up in the Basque Country, is similar to the one described by the expert on the Belgian case. It is a commemorative gathering convoked by nationalist organisations for celebrating a meaningful date in the history of the Basque people or their own party or organisation. These gatherings combine the “romería” (the traditional country festival), which is very common in several Spanish regions, with other strictly political ceremonies.

6.3 Murals: Means of Political and Cultural Expression

It is interesting to point out that this means of political expression is mentioned only by the experts on the Northern Ireland case. This could be due to the fact that during recent decades these paintings have become one of the most evident representations of the conflict. Just as we stated at the beginning of the section, its contents does not attempt to be an exhaustive analysis of this form of cultural-political iconography. Our purpose is simply to offer an approach, based on the interpretations of the experts, to this widely disseminated and traditionally employed means of expression, which is still relevant. Specifically, and going back to what we have just said, we seek to rescue the meanings given to murals in the context of the Northern Ireland conflict, to identify the possible factors that determine the evolution of their use – during the last decades – as well as certain specific events that could explain them, and, finally, recognise the actors linked to this means of political expression.

When the experts were questioned about the meaning of murals in the context of the Northern Ireland conflict, we found that they all agree in stating that, contrary to what
happens with other frequently used means of action employed there, mural paintings represent a “peaceful” means of action of a political and cultural character that seeks to define territorial limits. They also emphasise that this is about a means that is very popular among actors (both unionists and republicans) from which they intend to indicate the ethnic and political identity of a territory, and also evoke present and past episodes, reaffirm their community’s main beliefs, rescue symbols and heroes, honour the dead, and express opposition, among other purposes. Consequently, political and religious messages such as “honour the dead”, “support local paramilitary groups”, etc. can be found frequently. Some even include messages of support to international political groups committed to the “struggle for freedom”, such as ETA and the Palestinian groups.

This could explain the high levels of legitimacy enjoyed by mural painting in the Northern Ireland context.

Indeed, murals intend to communicate a wide variety of messages and seek to contribute to forming favourable public opinion, not only among the inhabitants of a specific community, but also among “impartial” passersby.

Although it is true that these paintings generally occupy spaces under the control of a specific community, occasionally, when they are done in common or vaguely defined spaces, they may generate conflicts and disputes; for example, the famous mural located at the entrance to Bogside in Derry, whose caption says: “You have entered the free territory of Derry”, has been destroyed and repainted on more than one occasion. Some murals are repetitive and last a long time; others, on the contrary, vary according to present events. Whatever the case, their content is influenced by the conditions that prevail during a particular political moment.

Among the interpretations on the evolution of their use, the experts take us back directly to the long tradition of the first unionist murals in Belfast working class neighbourhoods that goes back to the beginning of the 20th century. In these paintings, King Billy, William of Orange, winner of the Battle of Boyne is depicted as a way of reaffirming loyalty to the memory of William III and expressing the British identity of Protestants. This was to be one of the most recurrent subjects with which the unionist cause would be identified in
the course of “mural history”. Beginning with the political changes of the sixties, unionists included symbols and scenes with a highly paramilitary content in their paintings.

On the contrary, the social and cultural situation of the Irish nationalists before the eighties made this kind of pictoric expression very difficult in a space that was politically controlled by the Protestants. Therefore, it is suggested that it is not possible to allude to republican murals until the beginning of the eighties when the first mural paintings in support of the hunger strike of eleven prisoners, among them, Bobby Sands, sought to vindicate their status as political prisoners.

From then on, the use of mural paintings in republican neighbourhoods serves as a means of protest, vindication, and political expression. The hunger strike and the armed struggle of the Irish Republican Army (IRA) would be two central themes in the republican mural representations during that period. However, little by little, the paintings devoted to armed struggle were to disappear from Catholic neighbourhoods coinciding with the declaration of ceasefire. Only the ones that pay homage to dead “combatants” would remain.

On the contrary, in Protestant areas, this type of murals continues to be used habitually, even after the cease of hostilities. Our informers assert that the reiteration of military themes by the loyalists could be explained as a function of what has given cohesion and meaning to their cause since the beginning: the defence of the territory.

Whatever the case, relevant historical moments of both the conflict and the peace process still remain depicted on the walls of Northern Ireland.

Even though it is a means employed by both groups, there are noticeable differences in thematic content and design, to the point that an unaware passerby is able to identify the identity of the neighbourhood he or she is crossing. In other words, murals have turned the zones “inhabited by Protestants” into “Protestant zones”, and thus have differentiated them from the areas inhabited by their Catholic neighbours. The opposite is also true.

Now let us look at some of the differences. While republican paintings show a special thematic variety (in some of them even the peace dove appears), greater mastery of
painting techniques (perspective), innovation and colour (more cheerful), the Protestant murals are characterised by the use of flat colours (mainly green, grey, and black) and there are hardly any human figures; when they do appear, they are symbolic representations. The characters are represented in an idealized fashion, and it would seem that the items that accompany and identify them with one faction or another are more important than the correct resolution of the drawing.

In the same fashion, the murals of the Catholic zones represent their heroes with their faces uncovered and the local patrols of the republican army in contact with the people, thus attempting to show a significant grass-roots support to the republican cause. On the contrary, in Protestant zones, the combatants appear with their heads covered (generally by balaclava helmets), strongly armed, and in a combative attitude. In other words, unionist mural paintings tend to adopt a “more paramilitary style” (except for the historical murals) a degree of simplicity that contrasts with the realism of republican paintings, whose mural designs are based on the mastery of drawing, colour, and perspective.

Now then, in regard to the actors linked to this means of expression, the experts consider that the paramilitary groups, local cultural groups (artists’ groups, such as the Bogside Artists, famous for their murals in the Derry area, who feel committed, as artists and citizens, to depict their history on walls), and political parties are the actors with a closer association to mural painting. On the contrary, they suggest that the institutions, communication media, the police, the army, and the churches are less linked to mural painting.

Finally, as the experts point out, in the context of the Northern Ireland conflict “many violent feelings find a peaceful way to free their imagination in mural graphics.” Walls have become the means to perpetuate memories both in Catholic (mostly republican) and Protestant (mostly unionist and loyalist) zones. This is an expression that seeks to redeem the most recent past and a way to vent anger by reaffirming identities and expressing beliefs.

Aside from the ideas that are defended and transmitted in the murals, it is interesting to observe how both groups, in the face of specific contexts, feel the need to express
themselves. And they do it in an “urgent” manner, using the fittest support for their need for communication. In Northern Ireland, mural painting has been – and still is – a popular activity with a naive style of imagery by which actors publicly express their political ideology and mark their territory in either zone. A way of simultaneously communicating and identifying. And in the words of an expert, it is about “a way to channel violence”.

6.4 Violent Means of Action in Community Conflicts

Violence is one of the fundamental characteristics of the trajectories of several community conflicts approached by the PEACE COM project. Despite the fact that neither the questionnaire directed to the actors during the first stage of the work, nor the parameters of the questionnaire directed to the experts contained explicit questions on violence as a means of action, several recurrent references regarding their use arose in their discourse. We will now try to systematise them. Although the terminology employed is clearly disparate, the narratives on violence flow rather homogeneously and, therefore, it seems possible to organise the information by resorting to the different kinds of consensus and disagreement generated in the narratives.

The first item of disagreement has to do with the terminological issue; that is, the terms each expert uses to narrate similar situations. The way we designate different forms of political violence, as well as their own definition has been at the base of all the studies that attempt to approach their analysis (González Calleja, 2003). For this reason, the issue of its definition has become a capital task of any perspective on political violence. Before we continue, we must clarify, at the risk of simplifying the analysis, that we will include all the actions that the experts consider means of political action that entail direct violence on people or objects.

Among the issues referred to by the experts as conditioning factors that explain the use or rejection of violence, there are a few general recurrent ideas in the majority of the narratives. These elements have to do with: a) the opening up or the closing down of the system to include conflicting groups and demands; b) the structure of political alignments; c) the emergence of broad political processes that affect the structure of the conflict (such as attempts at pacification, the internationalisation of the conflicts, the integration into the EU...); d) specific events that take place inside or outside the
domestic realm and that affect the conflict structurally or symbolically; e) the social support or rejection of the use of violent means; and f) the repressive capacity of the state or supra-state structures and the levels of that repression.

6.4.1 Some Ideas on the Study of Violence in Socio-political Analysis

Several elements considered by the experts to be conditioning factors in the utilisation of violent means of action in the various conflict scenarios have been broadly approached in the numerous studies on political violence developed from a socio-political perspective.

Violence is a basic element of social and political relations and is also becoming one of the most distinctive characteristics of contemporary societies. Moreover, the violence that takes place in the context of politics, strictly speaking, political violence, (the one that deals with all kinds of political distribution claims and contention of power), constitutes a clear element of the contemporary dynamics of social global transformations. Civil or internal wars, ethnic or ideological conflicts that become violent, ethnic cleansings, preventive wars, terrorism, and all sorts of episodes in which specific actors use violence on a political basis, take place regularly within our societies. One of the most outstanding features of this kind of “contemporary political violence” is that it is still produced within and affects extremely modernized societies, even those with high levels of political development. In this sense, violence cannot only be related to socioeconomic underdevelopment and to a lack of democracy¹⁷, but has also to be understood as part of advanced societies.

As a social empirical fact, the most common debate on this issue has focused on its rational and relational nature (since psychological and irrational approaches seem to be no longer hegemonic in social sciences). However, no available “integrated” perspective of analysis, widely supported by academics, has been able to adequately include the different levels of this social phenomenon. Within the theories of violence, it is difficult to find satisfactory explanations that incorporate the individual, societal, and state levels, or even the international arena. Each paradigm emphasizes one single level of analysis,

¹⁷ This point was raised by Theories of Modernization during the sixties and seventies. Rostow and Huntington are some of its pioneers.
focusing on a particular conception of violence and stressing some aspects, while ignoring others. Consequently, we face partial explanations and clashing definitions of political violence\textsuperscript{18}.

During quite some time, the analysis of political violence has been a "blind spot", due in part to the fact that much of the research has understood violence as a result of individual or collective irrational behaviour, and consequently has tended to consider it as a subsidiary field of research. Nevertheless, the sociology of conflict and political sociology are the fields that have contributed to the enhancement and consolidation of the study of violence\textsuperscript{19} in the last decades. The appearance of fruitful debates within collective action studies and several proposals of the rational choice perspective are two good examples of the importance of recent research on this subject\textsuperscript{20}.

The contemporary development of the sociology of conflict and mobilization has produced a cluster of theories of collective action that help us understand all these factors. Within this collection of works, the whole legacy of studies linked to the analysis of violence as a central element of repertoires of collective action has to be mentioned. This perspective of analysis maintains that violence is just one of the possible means of action available to actors. Therefore, collective violence is defined as a kind of contentious action in which strength is employed against people and property\textsuperscript{21}.

Insofar as it is a type of "standardized" protest, violence is considered a specific means of action, and, therefore, has to be studied with the same categories as collective action.


\textsuperscript{19} The production has been spread into numerous specialized disciplines (sociology, history, political science, economics), and there was an outbreak of studies on political conflict during the seventies. Moreover, the cultural analyses since the nineties have increased the fragmentation of this field of analysis. Ekkart Zimmermann, (1983) has extensively compiled the most significant proposal in this respect.

\textsuperscript{20} González Calleja (2003:538) describes the way in which protest and violence reached their ontological condition of "normal" social phenomena at the beginning of XXI century, as was stated by his analysis of conflict and collective action.

\textsuperscript{21} Literature on the causes and uses of violence is broad and varied. It includes the frustration-agression paradigm ( Dollard & al, 1939), perspectives of social discontent or of relative deprivation (Gurr, 1970) and theories on the rational use of violence as a normalized type of action (Tilly, 2003). For a broad explanatory study on the theories of violence, see: Rule, 1988 or Zimmermann 1983.
The concept of “repertoire” allows us to proceed in this way. Consequently, violence is evaluated in terms of the strategies and political programs of contenders (Tarrow, 1994).

On the one hand, major debates within this approach of violence are related to the way violent contention is expressed (Tilly, 1978), to the emergence of violence within the context of the dynamics of contention (Tilly, 2003), and to the relationship between repertoires of violence and opportunities. In any case, the repressive role of the state and the organization of social protest are stressed\(^{22}\) (Della porta, 1995; Della porta and Tarrow, 1986). On the other hand, there are also studies that consider the role of identity, discourse, tradition and legitimacy in the use of violence (Apter, 1964; Ross, 1995), as well as others that address the analysis of organizational structures, the mobilization process, and the use of violence, by developing the categories raised by the resources mobilization approach (Rucht, 1999; Kriesi, 1996; Della Porta, 1990)

In the last decades, the increasing threat of terrorism and other kinds of organized violence (Kaldor: 1999) in western countries explain a renewed and growing interest in studies on political violence. Due to the recognition of all these phenomena, the most recent theoretical and empirical research outlines the diversity of the existing and the emerging forms of violence.

The following summary of works may undoubtedly exhibit the growing interest in this matter within social sciences, as well as indicate the diversity of subjects and perspectives of analysis. Starting with the point of view of the actors who employ violence, a whole set of studies have focused on the State – its presence or absence - as the central element of the analysis of contemporary violence. Within this perspective, on the one hand, we find research centred on the repressive role of the State (Tilly 2003; Rummel 2004; Della Porta and Tarrow, 2001). On the other hand, other studies explain certain conflicts as a consequence of the disintegration of the State (Kaldor, 1999), as a result of its lack of monopoly on violence (Münkler, 2002; Brubaker, R and D Laitin, 1998) or even in terms of the privatization of such monopoly (Shannon, 2002). Furthermore, other authors focus on the study of “upward” violence, producing a whole set of analysis of insurgent groups, terrorist organizations, and ethnic communities.

\(^{22}\) When framing opportunities for collective violence, the tolerance-repression pair constitutes a standpoint for this type of study (Tilly, 1978), (Tarrow, 1994), (Della Porta, 1995), Obershall, 1999).
involved in different kinds of conflicts. (Tilly, 1978; Della Porta, 1995; Fearon and Laitin, 2003).

A major part of this literature may prove useful when trying to understand the experts’ narratives on the uses and conditions of violence in community conflicts, inasmuch as it suggests certain elements that allow accounting for the conditions under which violence may arise. It also points out several novel aspects in the study of violence, such as the impact of global processes that take place in the international sphere.

6.4.2 The Use of Violence in Community Conflicts

If we admit some of the presuppositions of recent literature on mobilisation and conflict, the resort to violence in the expression of political demands in the context of a conflict represents a more accessible strategy for the different authors. Before we start evaluating factors “external” to authors, which favour or dissuade the use of violence, it would be worth evaluating first the effectiveness and legitimacy conferred by the actors to this strategy.

By taking as a reference the analysis of the results in D7 (Deliverable 7 “Models of Action”) we could perform a minimal evaluation of the authors’ perception of violence in terms of effectiveness and legitimacy. Despite the fact that there are no direct questions on the use of violent means of action in the PEACE COM survey, because they require a much more detailed qualitative analysis, it is possible to extract some general ideas. Concerning the actors who resort to means of action, certain homogeneity in terms of effectiveness, frequency, and approval of the more institutionalised means may be inferred; the differences rise from what we could call “the politics of protest”. In this sense, with the exception of boycotts, all the means of action entailing some risk of disturbance of public order or violence are considered “non-effective” or are “not approved” by the majority (civil disobedience campaigns, occupation of buildings, blocking of traffic, painting slogans and damage to property. The lowest levels of

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23 These levels are more or less homogeneous, except in the case of Northern Ireland where there still seems to be a certain degree of positive valuation of the effectiveness of certain non-conventional means of action.
legitimacy appear linked to damage to property; its indexes grow exponentially compared to other actions (probably because they entail express violence).

When we consider the rejection of means that entail risk of violence, particularly when it is express violence (damage to property), it is possible to infer a clear tendency towards the loss of legitimacy in the political use of violence. We must remember that the bulk of the information was provided by representatives of more or less institutionalised, visible, and legitimate organisations in the political scenarios of each case (basically, political parties and civil society organisations). Moreover, we should also remember that the organisations that tend to use violence frequently are outside the margins of the system and completely removed from institutional channels. In any case, it is possible to insist on a generalised rejection of the use of violent means of action based on the relation that is established between the “non-approval” and the “non-effectiveness” of this type of means.

If we admit that in the present context of the community conflicts we are analysing, the means of action that imply risk of violence or express and direct violence against people or objects are massively rejected, in the second stage of our field work (the experts’ questionnaires) violence appears recurrently in at least four cases: Northern Ireland, the Basque Country, Cyprus, and Kosovo.

It is true that the use of violence is not “one more” repertoire among the repertoires available to the actors. In terms of strategic calculations, the effectiveness-legitimacy binomial should be evaluated in more detail, inasmuch as violence increases the costs to the organisations that employ them. In this sense, the terms of its employment cannot be strictly compared with the rest of the means of action proposed in the framework of the actors’ questionnaire and D11.

We must point out that the hypotheses we have posited are related, in the first place, to the definition and situation of the actors within the conflict proper; in the second place, to the factors in the environment (political, economic, social, and cultural) that could determine the context in which these actions take place; and finally, to the impact of certain internationalisation/globalisation processes that could affect the change in the
means and forms of political expression of the demands (diffusion, creation of available means, and influence on certain events in political violence at an international level).

When studying the more recurrent or specially significant means of political action of the past fifteen years in each case, the experts of Northern Ireland, Cyprus, the Basque Country, Kosovo, and Belgium identified scenarios in which violence makes itself evident. If we consider the cases and the number of experts in whose narrative it appears, it is important to insist on the idea that Northern Ireland and the Basque Country turn out to be the cases where the experts alluded to violence as a means of political action (a total of four and three experts, respectively, versus one expert per case in the rest of the questionnaires).

On the other hand, it is equally important to underscore, taking all the cases into consideration, with the exception of one expert, all the rest, coincide in signaling a decrease in the use of violent means of action against people, although the degree of recurrence in the use of violent means of action against property (what some call “low intensity violence”) remains stable.

Now then, when the experts identify the factors underlying this trend, the set of narratives mentions similar issues that affect the organisation and internal evolution of the actors as well as elements of the political, social, economic, and cultural environment in which they are inserted and that generate the context of the action. The opening up of the political system and its capacity to include or exclude communities and, therefore, specific actors, appears as a key element when evaluating the different violent trajectories. Several experts mention the appearance of violence associated to processes of political exclusion, formal but also perceived. On the other hand (and this is the case of Ireland), the institutional change that followed the peace process presupposed the opening up of the political system. It became more inclusive, thus favouring a change in repertoires: from a more violent strategy towards more conventional forms of action.

The experts refer to the structure of the political alignments as a conditioning factor of the possible strategies to be used by actors. The presence of allies in the elites and the parties offers the organisations that use violence new opportunities for diversifying
actions and, eventually, redirecting it towards the political sphere. On the other hand, the existence or absence of allies in the institutions ("political arms" like Sinn Féin or Batasuna, in the Irish and Basque cases, respectively) rises as a meaningful element in the process of change in the resort to violence. Let us think about the case of the Law of Parties (Ley de Partidos) (2000) and the limitation it implied for the social bases that support the Basque National Liberation Movement (MLNV, by its Spanish acronym) in terms of institutional presence. Relying on the support and legitimation of the reference population is fundamental to the organisations that use violence. When this results in political and institutional presence, the better for the organisation. Despite this, the loss of allies among the elites or the impossibility of legal-institutional presence implies a reduction in the possibilities of visibilisation of the demands of those who utilize violence and also increases the cost of violent actions. Indeed, the opening up of the political system and the alignment of the elites are two of the classical variables in studies on political opportunity developed by the theoreticians of collective action (Kriesi, 1995; Tarrow, 1994).

Another factor that seems to be at the base of the decrease in violent actions in community conflicts has to do with the emergence of broad political processes that affect them structurally and symbolically. This is the case of the peace initiatives that open long processes of negotiations. All the Northern Ireland experts agree on underscoring how the peace process has resulted, in the end, in a demilitarisation of the organisations that employed violence and a re-directioning of political action towards strictly institutional channels.

Among other factors, the peace and/or negotiation processes open up the possibilities for certain types of actions and close them down for others. However, whatever the case, these opportunities make themselves available for some actors, but not for others. According to the Northern Ireland experts, the opportunity cost of the organisations that traditionally resorted to violence has risen significantly since the emergence of the Stortmont process.

Several experts of the various cases have showed how the process of Europeanization and the eventual internationalisation of the conflicts could be a factor in the decrease of violent actions in certain contexts. The wide rejection to violent means, implicit and
expressed in the spirit of European integration, and the consequent pressure to dissuade the use of violent means in member states, has resulted in a clear increase in police and political cooperation in this respect. The decline in effectiveness and legitimacy of violent actions in this context could result in a factor for dissuading actors from resorting to this means and, consequently, could be a possible cause of the decrease of frequency.

On the other hand, the rise in certain strategies for the externalisation of the process towards the European arena, especially on the part of social movements (Della Porta 2003), opens up political opportunities for other actors who intend to make domestic conflicts visible at the political community level. In a certain way, this has been part of the strategy of moderate Basque nationalism, and also of the more radicalised nationalism linked to violence in recent years: the externalisation of their demands in a higher sphere of political decision.

Another factor of change in the use of violence narrated by experts is related to specific events that take place inside or outside the domestic realm and affect the conflict structurally or symbolically. Specifically, these events result in two factors: In the first place, there is the repressive capacity of the state; and in the second place, there are certain thresholds of tolerance above which societies can no longer tolerate violence.

In the domestic realm, events of political violence are suggested, which imply a break in the evolution of the conflict due to their spectacularity, number of victims, or the political context in which they take place. This is the case narrated by the Northern Ireland experts concerning the Omagh attack of 1998. They all agree on signaling how this action put an end to the possible grass roots support to violent action that could have taken place until then. The clearest expression is the internal war that started within the IRA organisation proper between those who envisioned a way out of violence and the so-called real IRA, author of the bombs.

Something similar takes place in the Basque country, where in the middle nineties ETA’s “socialisation of suffering” campaign (just as it was narrated by an expert) led to a series of selective kidnappings and assassinations of politicians. The assassination of Miguel Ángel Blanco, council member of the Popular Party, in Ermua (Guipúzcoa) in 1996
appears as an event that provoked a change in the threshold of social tolerance to violence. The emergence of a movement of protest and rejection to violent actions, widely diffused and extensively mobilised during the past ten years, has evidenced what some experts on the Basque conflict call “la salida del silencio” (the departure from silence) of a society, silent for decades, that started to “take the street” frequently following those events to make explicit the rejection to violent actions.

In the international sphere, many actors agree on pointing out how the 9/11 events in the United States have generated a “wave of horror” and rejection of violence that has resulted in greater difficulties for carrying out actions of this type by those who traditionally used them. If we take into consideration the effectiveness/legitimacy binomial in the resort to violence, the cycle of terrorist violence initiated in the international context by the Al Qaeda organisation (11S, 11M, 7J, etc…) could pose some problems in the strategic calculation for their use, due to the fact that, at least in Western societies (the context in which our community conflicts are inserted) the levels of tolerance towards actions of this type have been substantially modified, as well as the strategies of police repression exerted on them.

The last factor mentioned is the repressive capacity of the State. This factor has been at the base of a good part of the studies on political protest; specifically, violent action (Tilly, 1978; Della Porta 1995). Additionally, it is well known that the way police exert repression on violent actions plays a truly ambiguous role: it ranges from generating martyrs for the cause of an organisation, thus prodding recruitment, to dissuading and decreasing the capacities of the organisation involved. The experts of the Basque case have extensively narrated this factor. According to their narrative, the operational weakness of the ETA organisation is probably one of the factors that has caused a certain decrease and diversification of its activities. Likewise, according to some experts, this apparent weakness appears linked to an increase in the police repression of the Spanish state and to international cooperation and cooperation with other states (specifically, France) in security matters. Although only one of the experts mentions it, the impetus towards legal and police repression generated as a consequence of certain changes in the international environment, which we have mentioned already; that is, “the war on terrorism”, has been able, among other factors, to influence the opportunity cost entailed by the use of violence in a context now perceived in a different way. Aspects
such as the disappearance of “sanctuaries” or the increase in the repressive policies against terrorism of the EU’s member states may help to illustrate this idea.

Within the strictly European space, the response of the member states to the global struggle against terrorism has been relevant, due in part to the direct relationship of Europe with this phenomenon. Following 9/11, the first initiatives undertaken by the leading institutions gathered in the “action plan” (9/001), contain a broad set of measures that have been implemented to promote cooperation between security services and police departments of the member states. The main work packages deal with terrorism financing, police and customs cooperation, security of explosives, cooperation between intelligence services, and critical infrastructure protection. The reception of all the measures modifying the domestic context of each member state is of crucial importance for considering the evolution of political violence in those contexts.

Finally, we must call attention to the absence of an express reference in the experts’ narratives to the impact of the process or processes of globalisation that are taking place at present. None of them has referred to the incidence of factors that have to do with processes of diffusion and contagion of this type of means of action. Neither are contemporary changes in communication and technology mentioned. In spite of this, it cannot be denied that the globalisation process poses important changes that have an impact on the use of violence, particularly on those aspects that have to do with technology and the extension of criminal international networks. Additionally, one of the most distinctive features of the use of violence as a means of political action (specifically, when we speak about terrorism) is the need for publicity it requires, and which is inherent to the event proper. The changes in the platforms of communication and diffusion of information in the context of globalisation also seem to be affecting the way violence is used. Following the spectacularity of the 9/11 attacks, any action that employs violence requires a considerable level of destruction. This fact, again, increases the cost of the actions for the organisations that carry them out. If we think about the last ETA organisation attack in December 2006 at Terminal 4 of the Barajas International Airport24 (which put an end to the incipient negotiation process for the pacification of the

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24 If we wish to carry out a detailed analysis of this action from the point of view of the “external” influences on its strategy, we should also consider the (international) location of the action. In fact, two of the victims of that act were Ecuadorian nationals.
Basque Country) we can see how, in terms of destruction (not in terms of victims), the attack exceeded by far the level previously obtained (specifically, the attack against the Hipercor shopping centre in 1987).

Despite the limitations of the material available to establish an exhaustive comparison on the use of violence in community conflicts, it is possible to refer to an additional issue; namely, a special type of violent action that merits special consideration because of its characteristics: low intensity violence.

6.4.3 The “Limited” Use of Violence: Direct Action in Belgium and the kale borroka in the Basque Country

What we could call “violence against things”, “damage to property”, and eventually, “low intensity violence” has resulted in specific strategies in the contexts of some of our examples. When narrated by the experts it shows a tendency to remain stable. Although in the specific case of “direct action” in Belgium, it is considered marginal, it is a habitual strategy of certain groups in the case of kale borroka in the Basque Country.

About the Belgian case, during the past fifteen years, the use of this means has remained stable and its use has been certainly marginal. In the words of the experts, the stability of this tendency could be explained mainly by the fact that during that period, the activities associated with conventional politics seemed more effective to reach certain political goals than the ones carried out by small marginal groups during the “heroic” sixties and seventies when actors resorted to paramilitary type actions to reach their goals.

Damage to property usually occurs in restricted spaces. These are actions like the destruction of signs written in French near the periphery of Brussels or the hanging during the night of posters with slogans such as “Adapt or leave” on the houses of French-speaking people. Among the most violent, although less frequent, actions are sabotage and demonstrations (counter-demonstrations) during gatherings of French-speaking people (political meetings or cultural events). Thus, the more radical Flemish nationalist groups seem to be the actors linked to these actions. Additionally, these actions generally take place during events with good coverage by communication media,
such as local elections in the periphery of Brussels (2006), electoral gatherings of French-speaking people, and also during pre-electoral periods.

In the case of the Basque country, damage to property appears associated to “kale borroka”\(^{25}\). This euskera term is used in Spain by the security forces, the press, the political class, and public opinion to refer to the public disturbances that take place in the Basque country. They are carried out by youths linked to organisations of the radical Basque nationalism (abertzales), particularly youth organisations. Although street violence has existed since the seventies (as part of the anti-Franco strategy), only in the nineties, following the fall of the ETA’s top leadership in Bidart (1992), do the kale borroka get organised.

The causes mentioned by the experts to explain the resort to this type of action have to do with internal processes of ETA, the environment, and the general political system. Concerning the first ones and in terms of the effectiveness of the kale borroka, one of the experts states:

> “These types of action have become a part of the ETA strategy, which keeps two fronts open. On the one hand, “direct” violence (bombs, kidnappings, assassinations) and on the other, “minor actions” that do not carry with them large police or criminal costs (the organisation of street fighting by poorly articulated groups or, rather, decentralised groups, makes police repression and convictions for terrorism difficult. Finally, kb has a “reservoir” for the recruitment of potential members of the organisation.” Expert, Basque Country

Among the external causes, we find the increase of police repressive strategies, the disarticulation of certain ETA commandoes, the increasing effectiveness in the results obtained by the Spanish security corps and forces, and the beginning of cooperation with the French. All these factors have influenced the serious weakness of the operational structure of ETA that began to be visible since the middle of the eighties. This could have led to an increase in “minor” actions like kale borroka. This a repertoire of action that involves the use of violence and basically “minor” destruction of property. The most frequent acts are burning buses, damage to urban furniture (litter bins, lamps, lamps,

\(^{25}\) This type of action is based on a strategy of a clear alteration of public order and damage to property. Even though it does not have the express intention of causing damage to people, it frequently wounds them.
rubbish containers), and attacks against the headquarters of financial organisations or political parties.

The groups that carry out the *kale borroka* follow a repertoire that combines elements of “urban guerrilla”, as well as typical violent episodes associated to “urban bands”. Thus, this is about a means of action that, in the Basque case, combines an evident political intentionality that is a response to certain events associated to the conflict in the Basque Country with elements that express the discontent and the “rage” of the young.

It is possible to identify three distinct stands concerning the meaning given to this means of action in the Basque country. On the one hand, we have the narrative of the *kale borroka* characters. It gives us a glimpse on how that repertoire is widely justified by, and even supported on, the inevitability of the use of violence. In their opinion, the situation of police and political repression exerted on Euskal Herria can only lead to this type of protest and, therefore, they even regard it as a legitimate “struggle for liberation”, just as we can see in the following narrative:

“Kale borroka has been carried out for many years, varying its forms according to the conditions; it can be an assault against txakurrada, setting up a barricade, hanging posters that are not “politically correct” or opening fire on a ETT (...) In the police, corrupt, militarised, and fascist states like the ones where we are made to live in, sadly, other forms of protest cannot be developed (...) We do not belong to any group, Y, H, K, or L ; we are participants in the Basque national and social liberation process using the means we consider more necessary, fair, and effective at each moment (...) The future and the path we see is struggle, radical struggle, until we obtain independence as a nation and socialism as a social project. We will not give up, even if we have to pay a high price like arrest, criminalisation, or prison”.26

The main aspects on which the experts disagree regarding this means of action are:

-1) the degree of spontaneity or organisation that is behind each wave or outburst of *kale borroka*. Is it a movement “directed” by the leftist abertzale or is it simply the spontaneous violence of a group of youths linked to these organisations?

-2) the strength of the relation between this type of “low intensity” violence and ETA’s planning of attacks against people.

- 3) the type of treatment (criminal, police) given to these events.

Questions like these also suggest, in addition to a unified understanding concerning the use of this means of action, the presence of disparate perceptions regarding its degree of legitimacy and effectiveness. Whatever the case, in the course of recent years, *kale borroka* and, above all, its recurrence, is one of the most relevant and impacting phenomena in the Basque case, to the extent that it is evidence of how a conflict remains unsolved and, additionally, entails a very high potential for violence.

Regarding the frequency of *kale borroka*, the experts consider that in the course of the past fifteen years, it is possible to observe periods of high intensity and periods in which it seems to disappear. However, it is not possible to identify a homogeneous trend in the increase or decrease of this phenomenon during these years; rather, permanence with a higher or lower degree of intensity. In any case, the *kale borroka* events evidence a cyclical character linked to events in the development of the Basque conflict (changes in legislation, situation of prisoners, parliamentary debates, among others).

On the other hand, there is consensus regarding the difficulty in identifying a single event that could be associated to the change or permanence of its importance. On the contrary, in this case, it is necessary to undertake a thorough analysis of the cycles of its appearance and its relation to specific relevant events in the Basque case. Nevertheless, it is possible to suggest that, generally, this means of action has been a response to ETA manoeuvres and, therefore, certain events that could have forced change and diversification in the goals and methods in the strategy of the organisation should be considered when attempting to reach a better understanding of the evolution of *kale borroka*. Other events like the increase in police repression, the effectiveness of the state security forces, as well as international cooperation in the struggle against terrorism, seem to influence the presence of this means of action.
7. CONCLUSIONS AND GENERAL REFLECTIONS ON OUR RESULTS

In this section we will present briefly some ideas surrounding the analysis of the means of action, as well as certain reflections on the reach of our work. Lastly, we will lay out a synthesis of possible future lines of research.

We will propose based three main ideas based on the analysis of the information obtained in the course of Work Package 4:

1. A great majority of means is useful for different contexts, demands, and programs, and they are used by very diverse actors.

   According to recent work on repertoires of action, and along the lines of our own hypotheses, a broad dissemination of some means of action is evident. In other words, in the framework of community conflicts, different means of political action are employed by a growing number of organizations, as well as by a growing number of actors. All this confirms the thesis that states that, we are facing “modular” repertoires” that adapt to diverse situations and, additionally, have certain margins for innovation.

2. The Normalization of Some Means

   As we have pointed out before, regardless of the existence of a community conflict context, we are witnessing a process of normalization and diffusion of some means of actions, usually considered means of “protest”. Generally, at the heart of everyday political life of contemporary democratic systems, specifically in the ones where community conflicts take place, there is evidence that the expansion of this type of actions has become so generalized that actors of diverse natures recover old “protest” repertoires (like demonstrations and strikes), attribute new meanings to them, and usually employ them. This allows us to back Della Porta XX, Norris 2002; Walgrave y Van Aelst’s 2001 thesis of “normalization of protest”. With the exception of the means the entail risk of disturbance of public order and/or violence, there do not seem to be large differences in the means through which different organizations or movements present in public life express their demands or interests.
3. Just as is stated in the notion proper of repertoire, contexts appear as a significant conditioning factor of the specific forms by which actors express themselves. In any case, it must not be forgotten that it is the actors who in the end select the means by which to express themselves.

Certainly, the actors opt strategically for using specific means of action. But here we must admit once again that our work does not allow us to carry out an in-depth study of the specific process through which different actors in different contexts perform the selection. But we do believe we have presented some meaningful results on how certain dimensions are involved in the fact that certain means of action – violent or not – are considered as closer, more feasible, or more legitimate by certain actors. We have also been able to clarify some of the reasons why there exist clear processes of diffusion and copy of specific means, while in other cases the form of contagion is not as clear.

It is in this sense that we can assert that certain peculiarities of the context – which includes specific historically determined socio-economic, cultural, symbolic, political, and international factors – significantly influence the different repertoires of action displayed in community conflicts. In other words, the particular features of the context and its historical evolution are involved in the ways the actors adopt different forms of expression of their, demands, grievances, and interests.

In the light of our analysis, and summarizing the ideas of the above sections, we can conclude that two sets of political actions, interrelated between them and separable only for analysis, take place. On the one hand, we have the set of actions that have to do with the “everyday political life” of formally constituted democratic systems and, on the other, the actions that belong to a “society in conflict”. In our judgment, this explains the fluency between constrained and contentious repertoires in some cases in which political life operates, in the majority of them, within the limits of western democratic systems. But scenarios with a high degree of conflictivity also emerge, with very different fluctuations according to the phase of the conflict, and in which contentious means reach considerable levels of violence.

Summing up, the techniques utilized in our research grant an advantage to everyday politics and make difficult the analysis of more violent means for the expression of the
conflict. For this reason, and also because we situate the analysis in democratic scenarios, it is possible to suggest that there exist conditions for the diffusion of what Tilly has called *contained* collective action. Thus, petitions, demonstrations, parades, and marches correspond to an understood, known, and accepted repertoire that presumes little commitment and a low risk of disturbing public order. Yet due to the fact that we are dealing with “societies in conflict”, there are certain moments in the evolution of the conflict that favor the rise of contentious actions associated to a repertoire of actions that entails risk of violence, high degree of organization, and significant costs for the actors.

In the framework of community conflicts, these two sets of actions permanently interact, a fact which leads us to acknowledge that the frontier between a constrained action and a contentious action fluctuates. Thus, we find ourselves in the face of a wide scope of possibilities that are displayed in the framework of the conflicts, and that range from actions associated to routine political participation to means of protest that entail risk of violence and disturbance of public order. This allows us to infer the existence of the so-called “complex repertoire”.

**A Changing and Complex Repertoire**

With the analysis as a departure point, we have been able to identify in Deliverable 7 a specific type of repertoire of means of political action known by and available to the actors as a means for the expression proper of the conflict. Likewise, we were able to evaluate and describe this set of means in terms of the frequency, effectiveness, and legitimacy. That is, the repertoire combines a broad variety of means associated to normalized democratic life with Tilly’s constrained action and to a set of means, also considerably wide, that entail, at least, risk of disturbing public order and damage to property. Only the means that imply risk to people clearly divide the actors in regard to frequency, legitimacy, and effectiveness. This is why we make reference of a specific “tool kit” of possible instruments for action when we considerer the means that are used in community conflicts in the European sphere, tools that could be used in conflict situations and that are geared to the expression of demands, claims, or a particular political program.
Additionally, we were able to come closer to a characterization of the repertoire in the following terms: it is a broad, common repertoire that is not differentiated by the actors except in the cases where violence occurs: it is easily identifiable as a function of the context, very influenced by new politics, and disparate in terms of contagion or diffusion.

Thus we consider (as several authors have done) that the concept of repertoire implies a special complexity due to its multi-dimensional character and, particularly, to the fact that it includes political and cultural factors specific to each context. Thus the repertoire is not simply a set of means to put forth claims, but a collection of meanings that emerge during the development of a specific conflict, in a relational way. This is why, as we have mentioned above, a broad variety of means of action and numerous actors willing to carry them out can be observed in the framework of community conflicts.

Likewise, even when certain homogeneity in the use of certain means is suggested, there is also evidence of peculiarities in the employment of means associated to violence, primarily in contexts with a high level of conflictivity. Once again, using the analysis as a departure point, and without disregarding the preponderant role played by the actors in the selection of means of action, our work shows how the context influences to a great extent the forms of political expression that take place during the evolution of a conflict.

On the other hand, there do not seem to be meaningful differences that would allow us to associate certain specific means of action with specific actors; that is, in the case of community conflicts there exists a large variety of forms of political expression that do not always correspond to one or another of the actors involved. An additional feature we have found is that the means of action associated to new politics seem to be acquiring more relevance. Lastly, even though we could suggest a high level of diffusion and contagion in the use of certain means of action, it turns out to be evident that this does not happen with other forms of political expression. Thus, while demonstrations are referred to in most of the cases selected, the murals and parades that characterize Northern Ireland, are not mentioned elsewhere.

With the empirical evidence obtained, we can make reference to the existence of a complex and changing repertoire whose singularity is determined, in a certain way, as a
function of the context where it operates and, not exclusively under the perspective of the authors who carry it out. Consequently, the analysis of the different dimensions that configure the domestic contexts in which these conflicts take place is revealed in our work as an important element when accounting for the conditioning factors of the available, understood, effective, and accepted repertoire of action.

«A population’s repertoire of collective action generally includes only a handful of alternatives. It generally changes slowly, seems obvious and natural to people involved » (Tilly, 1978:156).

Hence, in community conflicts the “handful of alternatives” to which the actors resort and to which they confer legitimacy are clearly conditioned by the context in which they take place. Summing up, the ideas presented are the basis for the argument that (without regard to those actors who resort to violent actions that were not considered during the first stage of quantitative analysis), beyond the perspective of the author, the context represents the crucial element for explaining the use of certain means of action and their evolution.

Now then, one of the points of theoretical departure for the analysis of means in Work Package 4 was based on classical studies on political participation by Barnes and Kaase (1979), and even their classification of means of action was adopted as a first approach to the variety of means employed in community conflicts. At a second moment of the research, we considered the tools proposed both by classical and more novel analyses in the field of collective action. The concept proper of “repertoire” and the proper dynamic conception of “contentious politics” are proof of the above:

However, in the course of our work we have questioned some fundamental considerations of this theoretical baggage; namely:

- In the first place, the classification of political action in terms of conventional and non-conventional (backed by the logic of “institutionalization” of the means) does not prove operative inasmuch as the frontiers of conventionality seem to have blurred. The phenomenon of “normalization of protest” and the so-called life-style politics also back this idea. The classification does not account for actions and strategies in
contexts of conflict that frequently turn violent. Let’s remember that in many of the community conflicts selected, actions of this type are recurrent and even accepted in specific historical moments.

- In the second place, we must acknowledge that we have available extensive literature on collective action and social movements, which has been enormously useful for approaching the analysis of actions from the perspective of the authors, that the tools proposed have been fruitful in explaining actions in democratic contexts, and that additionally considerable progress has been evidenced in the field of conflict analysis (by granting relevance and rationality to a whole set of actions that includes violence and that had been left out of the analyses of political action). In spite of all the above, in the course of our analytical work, we faced certain difficulties in putting some of these tools into practice. The above could be justified to the extent to which we work with highly complex, contexts of political conflict that also have multi-dimensional natures and disparate historical evolutions.

With this in mind, it would be pertinent to carry out for each case another, more exhaustive analysis in the future for the purpose of enriching our perceptions. Above all, this would allow us to establish in a more precise manner the way in which the dimensions considered in our analysis intervene in the diffusion, transformation, or disappearance of certain means of action. On the other hand, it would make it possible to consider whether or not there still remain significant differences among the large number of actors within this process of normalization and diffusion of certain repertoires of action. Nevertheless, at this moment in our reflection, we are capable of presenting possible criticism on three levels:

1. The novel classification proposed at the start of Deliverable 11 between “constrained action” and “contentious action” poses some relevant problems at the time of characterizing the complex repertoire of community conflicts, inasmuch as we see that the frontier between one means of action and another is not clean cut and fluctuates. Certain actions, such as demonstrations, that are susceptible to a low risk of violence or disturbance of public order in peaceful contexts, frequently degenerate into violent actions (depending not only on the specific moment when they take place but on the actor that carries them out and the way the repressive structures
of the state act). Although this evolution towards violent actions depends in great measure on the selection of the actors that carry them out, we could suggest here that certain conditioning factors of the context could be susceptible of favoring this degradation

2. Although the literature on collective action has approached micro- (identities, narrative, perceptions), meso- (organizational structures and mobilization processes), and macro- (political opportunity contextual structures) sociological issues to approach the analysis of collective action, the theoretical presuppositions of this type of research grant centrality to the views of the actors when explaining the action. Nevertheless, in our analysis, context reveals itself as an extraordinarily revealing factor, a fact which leads us to acknowledge the convenience of taking a more in-depth look at the contextual factors that define the structuring of the scenarios where the action takes place (cultural, political, socioeconomic, and international). dimensions

3. Finally, we must make evident how the clearly statist bias of the studies on collective action presuppose certain limitations at the time of accounting for political action in community conflicts. Many of these conflicts have been internationalized and clearly affected by broad globalization processes that affect the way political action is put into effect (technological and communication structures, diffusion of means of action, externalization of the protest, cycles of “global” violence, etc.) Hence, approaching the complexity of the global processes and the numerous tendencies of change that affect domestic contexts widens our understanding of the conflicts; on the contrary, our understanding is reduced when we overlook the scenario beyond.
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### ANNEXE 1

#### Section D of the questionnaire

**D6. How often does your organization …**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>At least once a month</th>
<th>At least once every quarter</th>
<th>At least once a year</th>
<th>Less than once a year</th>
<th>Never</th>
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<td>D602 Organize meetings</td>
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<td>D603 Mail promotional material</td>
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<td>D604 Hang posters</td>
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<td>D605 Publish manifestos</td>
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<td>D606 Publish books, essays</td>
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<td>D607 Organize petitions</td>
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<td>D608 Participate in manifestations</td>
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<td>Other, please specify</td>
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</tbody>
</table>


D7. Please have a look at the following types of actions.
Which ones would your organization approve of in order to advance your cause?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Approve very much</th>
<th>Approve</th>
<th>Disapprove</th>
<th>Disapprove very much</th>
<th>Don't know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>D701 Petitions</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D702 Demonstrations</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D703 Walks, marches, etc.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D704 Strikes</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D705 Hunger strikes</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D706 Civil disobedience</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
campaign
<p>| D707 Boycotts                  | ☐                 | ☐       | ☐          | ☐                    | ☐          |
| D708 Occupation of buildings   | ☐                 | ☐       | ☐          | ☐                    | ☐          |
| D709 Blocking traffic          | ☐                 | ☐       | ☐          | ☐                    | ☐          |
| D710 Painting slogans          | ☐                 | ☐       | ☐          | ☐                    | ☐          |
| D711 Damaging property         | ☐                 | ☐       | ☐          | ☐                    | ☐          |
| Other, please specify          | ☐                 | ☐       | ☐          | ☐                    | ☐          |
| D712 ________________________  | ☐                 | ☐       | ☐          | ☐                    | ☐          |
| D713 ________________________  | ☐                 | ☐       | ☐          | ☐                    | ☐          |
| D714 ________________________  | ☐                 | ☐       | ☐          | ☐                    | ☐          |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Has done in last 3 years</th>
<th>Might do in next 3 years</th>
<th>Has never done/will never do</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>D801</td>
<td>Petitions</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D802</td>
<td>Demonstrations</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D803</td>
<td>Walks, marches, etc.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D804</td>
<td>Strikes</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D805</td>
<td>Hunger strikes</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D806</td>
<td>Civil disobedience campaign</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D807</td>
<td>Boycotts</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D808</td>
<td>Occupation of buildings</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D809</td>
<td>Blocking traffic</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D810</td>
<td>Painting slogans</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D811</td>
<td>Damaging property</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other, please specify</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D812</td>
<td></td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D813</td>
<td></td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D814</td>
<td></td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
D9. Considering the **current** stage of X.
How effective do you judge the following types of action?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very effective</th>
<th>Somewhat effective</th>
<th>Not very effective</th>
<th>Not effective at all</th>
<th>Don't know at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>D901 Petitions</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D902 Demonstrations</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D903 Walks, marches, etc.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D904 Strikes</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D905 Hunger strikes</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D906 Civil disobedience campaign</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D907 Boycotts</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D908 Occupation of buildings</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D909 Blocking traffic</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D910 Painting slogans</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D911 Damaging property</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other, please specify</td>
<td>□</td>
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<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
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<tr>
<td>D912</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D913</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D914</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PEACE COM

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR EXPERTS
ON MEANS AND REPERTOIRES OF ACTION IN
THE FRAME OF ‘COMMUNITY CONFLICTS’

By: the Research Team of the Universidad Complutense de Madrid

Please send us, at least 4 filled questionnaires

- 2 questionnaires by staff members of the ‘research team’ involved in the PEACE-COM
- 2 questionnaires by other experts in the ‘community conflicts’

Deadline: send to peacecom@cps.ucm.es before January 15th, 2007
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR EXPERTS
ON MEANS AND REPERTOIRES OF ACTION IN
THE FRAME OF ‘COMMUNITY CONFLICTS’

Dear Colleague,

It is crucially important, for the research schedule we are developing, that we study in depth certain peculiarities of the means and repertoires of action employed in the course of the past fifteen years in the various ‘community conflicts’ included in the PEACE-COM project.

For this reason, we appeal to you, as an expert, to fill in the following questionnaire:

We thank you in advance for your interest and cooperation.

Project PEACE COM - Spain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. General information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Case Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Name of the expert who fills in the questionnaire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Contacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Current professional activity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.5 Are you currently involved with the PEACE-COM project? Yes____ No_____
### Information about the research instrument

- **Type:** schedule standardized interview for experts (a set of identical questions to be answered by experts)
- **Means of recording:** magnetic means (written questionnaire)

### Organization of the Questionnaire

It is composed of three sections.

- **SECTION A**
  - Includes pages: Instructions, Example (Basque Country), A1, A2, A3

- **SECTION B**
  - Pages Instructions, Example (Basque Country), B1, B2, B3

- **OBSERVATIONS AND COMMENTS**

### General Instructions

**Please bear in mind the following when filling in the questionnaire:**

- Read the instructions carefully (the instructions for each section are presented at the beginning of each one).
- Pay special attention to additional explanations.
- It is worth stating that there are no right or wrong answers; we are requesting information based on your experience and expertise.
- Make sure you fill in the information in magnetic means.
- We would like to remind you that the deadline for sending the filled-in questionnaire is January, 15th, 2007.
- Before e-mailing the questionnaire we request that you verify that all questions have been answered.
- Use the spaces provided. Should you require additional space, you may use the space provided in the last part of the questionnaire (observations and comments).
- Please contact us at peacecom@cps.ucm.es in case of any questions or concerns.
SECTION A

Instructions
- In this section you will find pages: A1, A2, A3.
- Here you will find specific questions about a means of action previously selected by you.
- Before filling in these pages, we recommend that you select three means of action that, in your opinion, are the most relevant ones in your particular case.
- Once you have selected the means and repertoires of action, we request that you fill in the following table.
- An example from the Basque Country case illustrates the point.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case Study</th>
<th>Means of action</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>A 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>A 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>A 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: If you think additional means of action are worth including, please copy the format(s) and attach it (them) at the end of the document. In this is the case, please include those means in the above table.
Example

Case Study: Basque Country

Means of action: Demonstrations

1.1 Do you think the importance of this means of action has increased, decreased, or been constant in the course of the last fifteen years as a way to express the demands of the various actors involved in the conflict? (In terms of frequency, legitimacy – effectiveness).

Mark the symbol that corresponds to your answer:

1.2. In your opinion, what are the main causes that could help to explain this tendency? Specify the nature of the causes, for example, influence of international or internal political events, impact of an ‘accommodation policy’, etc.

Demonstrations became generalized in the Basque country since the middle nineties as a way of making the conflict “visible” and, most of all, as a means for a significant part of the population to express rejection to the increase in violence. In this sense, the origin of the dissemination of this repertoire seems to be strictly linked to factors of internal politics: specifically, to an increase of particularly bloody attacks by ETA. Nevertheless, the influence of external factors should not be disregarded, especially those that provide demonstrations with very spectacular “festive” and “telegenic” elements. On the other hand, the increase in demonstrations in the Basque Country is parallel to the large normalization and diffusion of demonstrations all over Spain.

1.3 Briefly describe the significance attributed to this means of action in this particular context. Include an example.

In the Basque case, in the course of the last few years, demonstrations have been understood as the expression of Basque society involvement in the conflict; in other words, as the conclusion of an era of silence and fear, and the initiation of active opposition to violence on the part of a large segment of the Basque population. The cessation of violence is the most widely spread slogan of these demonstrations, way above the division of opinions on how to reach this objective.

The most meaningful example is the “White Hands” movement that spread mainly during the send half of the nineties. Following every attack, there was a call for silent demonstrations in which the participants paraded with raised white-painted hands as a symbol of their desire for peace. The movement took “¡Basta ya!” (Enough is enough) as its name.

1.4 What actor or actors are associated with this means of action?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly associated actors</th>
<th>Weakly associated actors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Political Parties</td>
<td>a. More radical sectors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Peace movements</td>
<td>b. Institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. CSOs</td>
<td>c. The church</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.5 Please mention any peculiar event that could be associated to change (or permanence) with respect to the importance of this repertoire. Please describe the context of the event.

Two mortal ETA attacks marked the start of the large spread of demonstrations: that of Councilman PP in a municipality of the Basque Country (Ermua), M. A. Blanco (July, 1995) and that of Professor F. Tomás y Valiente (February, 1996). This was also the time during which the “Manos Blancas” (white hands) movement was formed.
1.1 Do you think the importance of this means of action has increased, decreased, or been constant in the course of the last fifteen years as a way to express the demands of the various actors involved in the conflict? (In terms of frequency, legitimacy – effectiveness). Mark the symbol that corresponds to your answer:

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>↑</td>
<td>↓</td>
<td>←→</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please specify

1.2 In your opinion, what are the main causes that could help to explain this tendency? Specify the nature of the causes, for example, influence of international or internal political events, impact of an 'accommodation policy', etc.

1.3 Briefly describe the significance attributed to this means of action in this particular context. Include an example.

1.4 What actor or actors are associated with this means of action?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly associated actors</th>
<th>Weakly associated actors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>b.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td>c.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.5 Please mention any peculiar event that could be associated to change (or permanence) with respect to the importance of this repertoire. Please describe the context of the event.
### Case Study: Means of action:

#### 1.1 Do you think the importance of this means of action has increased, decreased, or been constant in the course of the last fifteen years as a way to express the demands of the various actors involved in the conflict? (In terms of frequency, legitimacy – effectiveness).

Mark the symbol that corresponds to your answer:

- [ ]
- [ ]
- [ ]

Please specify

#### 1.2. In your opinion, what are the main causes that could help to explain this tendency? Specify the nature of the causes, for example, influence of international or internal political events, impact of an ‘accommodation policy’, etc.

#### 1.3 Briefly describe the significance attributed to this means of action in this particular context. Include an example.

#### 1.4 What actor or actors are associated with this means of action?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly associated actors</th>
<th>Weakly associated actors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>b.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>c</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 1.5 Please mention any peculiar event that could be associated to change (or permanence) with respect to the importance of this repertoire. Please describe the context of the event.
1.1 Do you think the importance of this means of action has increased, decreased, or been constant in the course of the last fifteen years as a way to express the demands of the various actors involved in the conflict? (In terms of frequency, legitimacy – effectiveness).

Mark the symbol that corresponds to your answer:

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please specify

1.2 In your opinion, what are the main causes that could help to explain this tendency? Specify the nature of the causes, for example, influence of international or internal political events, impact of an ‘accommodation policy’, etc.

1.3 Briefly describe the significance attributed to this means of action in this particular context. Include an example.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly associated actors</th>
<th>Weakly associated actors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>c</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.5 Please mention any peculiar event that could be associated to change (or permanence) with respect to the importance of this repertoire. Please describe the context of the event.
Instructions

- In this section you will find pages: B1, B2, B3.
- You will find the means of action grouped as follows:
  - B1: Conventional means of action
  - B2: Non-conventional means not entailing risks or threat of violence
  - B3: Non-conventional means entailing risks or threat of violence

- When you think about each of these groups or sets of means of action and their particular ‘community conflict’, there exist some peculiarities of the cultural, socio-economic, and political dimensions of the context, as well as in the international sphere, which eventually will facilitate or limit the employment of certain means. We would like you to express a brief opinion on the way you think they have operated. Please make your answer as specific as possible by considering the factors that have contributed or limited the use of certain means of action, as well as the context.
- An example from the Basque Country case illustrates the point.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Case Study: Basque Country</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cultural</strong></td>
<td>Non-conventional means entailing risks or threat of violence: Occupation of buildings, Blocking traffic, Painting slogans, Damaging property, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.3.1 What cultural features of the context do you believe have facilitated or limited the use of any or several means of action? Specify the cultural features you are referring to and state in the sense in which you think they have operated.</td>
<td>Anthropological studies highlight the existence in the Basque case of a particular culture characterised by a rich community life, as well as by the importance of a traditional type of family where the mother is the dominant figure. In this context, the main traditional cultural expressions of the Basques revolve around the figure of the man-soldier (the “gudari”) and favour a certain “culture of violence”, which the most radical nationalism may have taken advantage of. It is an essentially rural culture, although part of its expressions have been reproduced in urban industrial areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Socio-economic</strong></td>
<td>Two factors may have fostered the use of these means of collective action: 1. The richness of a community life that, in spite of its rural origins, has been maintained (albeit transforming itself) in the urban and industrial milieu. The tendency to associate is much higher in the Basque Country than in the rest of Spain, with the exception of Cataluña. 2. The industrial crisis that took place in the region since the eighties, which generated a climate of social discontent especially among the youth of working-class neighbourhoods in the large cities of the Basque Country.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.3.2 What socio-economic characteristics of the context do you consider to have facilitated or limited the use of any or several means of action? Explain your answer.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Political</strong></td>
<td>The Basque autonomous system may have exerted a double influence: 1. The existence of Basque political institutions has provided settings for the discussion of the “Basque problem” and, therefore, groups that claim increased autonomy, or even independence, have stopped employing these means of action. 2. At the same time, access by the more radical nationalist parties to political representation posts (municipal) may have served as a platform for backing certain groups to continue resorting to these means of action.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.3.3 What do you think has been the incidence of the political system in the employment of these means of action? Explain your answer as best you can, considering both the limiting and the contributing factors.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>International</strong></td>
<td>The origin of this recourse to violent means of action in the sixties and seventies is found in a key nationalist reading of several theories on decolonization and armed struggle as roads for achieving “national liberation”. More recently, the international impact seems twofold: a) following the September 11th attacks, there seems to be a decrease in the threshold for “tolerable violence”, b) maybe there could be a certain influence of forms of violence against property (the one called “kale borroka” in the Basque Country) from “anti-establishment” international groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.3.4 What international factors do you think could have affected the use of these means of action? Explain your answer.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dimension</td>
<td>Case Study: Conventional means: Meetings, Press Conferences, etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cultural</strong></td>
<td>B.1.1 What cultural features of the context do you believe have facilitated or limited the use of any or several means of action? Specify the cultural features you are referring to and state in the sense in which you think they have operated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Socio-economic</strong></td>
<td>B.1.2 What socio-economic characteristics of the context do you consider to have facilitated or limited the use of any or several means of action? Explain your answer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Political</strong></td>
<td>B.1.3 What do you think has been the incidence of the political system in the employment of these means of action? Explain your answer as best you can, considering both the limiting and the contributing factors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>International</strong></td>
<td>B.1.4 What international factors do you think could have affected the use of these means of action? Explain your answer.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**PÁGE B 2**

**Case Study:**

**Dimension**

Non-conventional means not entailing risks or threat of violence: Petitions, Strikes, Demonstrations, Civil disobedience campaigns, etc.

| Cultural |
|------------------|----------------------------------|
| B.2.1 What cultural features of the context do you believe have facilitated or limited the use of any or several means of action? Specify the cultural features you are referring to and state in the sense in which you think they have operated. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Socio-economic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B.2.2 What socio-economic characteristics of the context do you consider to have facilitated or limited the use of any or several means of action? Explain your answer.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Political |
|------------------|----------------------------------|
| B.2.3 What do you think has been the incidence of the political system in the employment of these means of action? Explain your answer as best you can, considering both the limiting and the contributing factors. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>International</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B.2.4 What international factors do you think could have affected the use of these means of action? Explain your answer.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Case Study:

**Dimension**

**Non-conventional means entailing risks or threat of violence:** Occupation of buildings, Blocking traffic, Painting slogans, Damaging property, etc.

#### Cultural

B.3.1 What cultural features of the context do you believe have facilitated or limited the use of any or several means of action?

Specify the cultural features you are referring to and state in the sense in which you think they have operated.

#### Socio-economic

B.3.2 What socio-economic characteristics of the context do you consider to have facilitated or limited the use of any or several means of action?

Explain your answer.

#### Political

B.3.3 What do you think has been the incidence of the political system in the employment of these means of action?

Explain your answer as best you can, considering both the limiting and the contributing factors.

#### International

B.3.4 What international factors do you think could have affected the use of these means of action?

Explain your answer.
OBSERVATIONS AND COMMENTS

In this section please add any comment or information you consider relevant.