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Abstract

Institutional instability has been a central feature of political life in much of the post-communist world. During the last two decades, for example, Kyrgyzstan alone has introduced new constitutions, or introduced significant constitutional changes, seven times: in 1993, 1994, 1996, 1998, 2003, 2007, and 2010. This working paper argues that, not only specific rule changes, but rule changeability has complicated the development of a legitimate and effective opposition. To assess the implications of rule changes and changeability for opposition behavior in this post-communist case, this working paper focuses on institutional instability in Kyrgyzstan in the areas of electoral rules, parliamentary size and structure, and the sub-national sites for political contestation.