

Eugene Huskey, Stetson University

Gulnara Iskakova, University of Central Asia

Abstract

This paper seeks to understand why opposition elites in the postcommunist world have such a poor record of cooperating with each other. The explanations are based largely on interviews conducted with 33 members of the Kyrgyzstani opposition during the last year. Using open-ended responses and data from a questionnaire administered to the interviewees, the analysis assesses the importance of six factors in explaining the low level of opposition cooperation: the splitting tactics of the government; the ambition of opposition politicians; the level of trust between members of the opposition; the economic and everyday life conditions in the country; political values; and loyalties to kinship, ethnic, and regional groups.