WHO CARES? PUBLIC OPINION ON POLITICAL CONDITIONALITY IN FOREIGN AID

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Abstract:

We provide evidence on the individual and country-level determinants of citizens' support for political conditionality in foreign aid, using novel survey data for 27 European countries. Based on the welfare state literature and existing public opinion research in foreign aid, we expect citizens with more rightist political orientations as well as those who do not perceive their own state apparatus to function in a meritocratic way to be more likely to support political conditionality. Our multi-level analysis supports these hypotheses in general, but also shows that the effect of political orientations on support for political conditionality in foreign aid is limited to traditional donor countries, where the left-right-cleavage has been dominant in politics.

1. INTRODUCTION

Since the end of the cold war, conditioning the allocation of foreign aid to political criteria such as democracy levels or human right standards has become a common practice among Western donor governments. Today, political conditionality is not only seen as a measure to sanction a decline in democracy levels and human right standards, but also to more pro-actively promote improvements in democratic governance, the rule of law and human rights. Moreover, particularly democratic governance is also perceived to increase the socio economic benefits of foreign aid because more democratic governments tend to spend foreign aid resources over proportionally for the provision of development enhancing public goods (e.g. Svensson, 1999; Kosack, 2003).[1] Finally, recent evidence also suggests that foreign aid to autocratic countries not only fosters patronage and clientelism (Hodler & Raschky, 2014), but also tends to stabilize authoritarian structures (Morrison 2009; Dutta, Lesson, & Williamson, 2013).

Still, political conditionality has not been consistently applied and many authoritarian countries such as Vietnam, Laos, Rwanda or Ethiopia still receive large sums of development assistance.[2] This inconsistency in the use of political conditionality has several origins. For developmental reasons it might be unavoidable to distribute large shares of foreign aid to the poorest countries, which often are also among those with illiberal political institutions. Overarching security concerns, trade interests, colonial ties or geostrategic interests of donor governments can also distort an allocation formula guided only by developmental concerns such as the neediness of the population or the quality of political institutions (e.g. Alesina & Weder, 2002). Finally, the disbursement pressure within aid bureaucracies also can work as detrimental factor for more selective aid allocation in favor of democracy and human right standards (Svensson, 2003).

Given these conflicting objectives regarding the use of political conditionality, some scholars have argued that donor governments' use of political conditionality is also driven by

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[1] The evidence that the effectiveness of foreign aid is conditioned by the level of democratic governance or more broadly by 'good' political institutions (Burnside & Dollar, 2004) in recipient countries is in line with insights from the institutional turn in the social sciences that identifies political institutions in general and democracy in particular as crucial determinants of economic development (e.g. Olson, 1993; Lake & Baum, 2001; Acemoglu, Johnson, & Robinson, 2002; Keefer, Neumeyer, & Plümper, 2011).

[2] During the past two decades, a growing body of literature has dealt with questions of aid allocation, investigating which type of developing countries get more foreign aid and whether political institutions in recipient countries do matter as a criteria for aid selectivity (e.g. Alesina & Weder, 2001; Claessens, Cassimon, & Campenhout, 2009; Clist, 2011).

their domestic concerns about the broader public's reaction to highly visible human rights violations, coups or corruption cases.[3] In line with the liberal strand of foreign policy analysis (e.g. Moravcsik, 1997), the allocation of foreign aid would therefore not only be a function of developmental concerns or the pursuit of national economic and security interests, but also a response to the interests of a donor government's core constituencies.

Still, little research exists on the variance of citizens' support for political conditionality. So far, public opinion research on foreign aid has examined the general disposition of the public towards the provision of foreign aid (e.g. Knack & Paxton, 2012), citizens' varying preferences for multilateral aid (e.g. Milner, 2006) and the broader public's concern with corruption in recipient countries as a potential source for the waste of aid resources (Bauhr, Charron, & Nasiritousi, 2013). Moreover, recent studies have also investigated the individual determinants of citizen support to external democracy promotion (Brancati, 2013; Faust & Garcia, 2014). To the best of our knowledge, however, there is no systemic inquiry on the individual and national determinants of citizens' support for political conditionality in foreign aid.

Against this background, this article attempts to fill this research gap by providing a multi-level analysis drawing on 2011 survey data from 27 European countries. More specifically, we investigate the individual and national level determinants of two independent variables: first, the support for political conditionality and second, the support for aid generosity, the latter being a variable that combines a citizen's general support for foreign aid and her support for political conditionality.

Our theoretical expectations build on the literature on public opinion in the field of foreign aid (e.g. Paxton & Knack, 2012) as well as on research that investigates citizens' attitudes towards re-distributional policies in Western welfare states (e.g. Korpi & Palme, 1998). First, we expect citizens who do not trust their own state as being a meritocratic agent of redistribution to be more likely to support political conditionality in foreign aid. Second, we expect political orientations to play a role with citizens located more towards the right of the political spectrum to be more supportive for political conditionality. We also expect, however, that the latter relations should be restricted to those donor countries where political conflict lines have been mainly organized along a left-right cleavage.

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[3] The literature frequently mentions that the use of political conditionality and aid sanctions is at least partly driven by donor governments concerns of being criticized by human rights organizations, parliamentarians and ultimately the broader public for neglecting human rights and democracy issues in their foreign aid policies (e.g. Apodacal &. Stohl, 1999; Fisher in this volume).

Despite of broad support for political conditionality, our econometric analysis still reveals several individual level effects that explain the remaining variation among the European population. Citizens' support for political conditionality is significantly influenced by the corruption level they attach to their own state apparatus. Moreover, citizens' support for political conditionality is also related to their political orientation with people on the right side of the political spectrum being more likely to support political conditionality. The analysis of our aid generosity variable provides similar results. Those with less rightist perceptions and those who have more trust in the well-functioning of their own state tend to reveal higher degrees of aid generosity. If we split, however, our country sample into old and new EU member states the results change in line with our theoretical expectations. The effect of political orientation gets stronger in the sub-sample of old member states, whereas it disappears in the sub-sample of new member states. Moreover, the corruption perception variable has a more substantial effect in the sub-sample of new EU member states. Finally, country-context factors also strongly affect the support for political conditionality, but to a much lesser degree the level of aid generosity. Citizens of countries with more former colonies are less likely to support political conditionality, while those with better political institutions are more likely to do so. Finally, those Europeans from countries with lower growth rates over a five year period prior to the 2011 survey are less likely to support political conditionality – a finding that might reflect the negative attitudes of citizens in crisis hit countries towards the structural adjustment conditionality of the EU.

Overall, our analysis adds to several strands of the literature. Beyond adding to research on Europeans' public opinion towards foreign policy issues (e.g. Hooghe, 2003; Schoen, 2008), we shed light on the determinants of European citizens' support for political conditionality, thereby contributing to a better understanding of the domestic political economy of foreign aid provision. In accordance to other recent research on the importance of a donor governments' ideological position of how aid is delivered (e.g. Tingley, 2010; Faust & Koch, 2014), our results show a similar pattern with regard to public opinion in traditional Western donor countries. Moreover, our analysis bridges the public opinion literature on the welfare state with research on citizens' attitudes towards foreign aid, suggesting a similar effect of political orientation in established European democracies.

The remaining of our analysis is structured as follows. Next we provide a brief review of the literature and present our theoretical arguments regarding the determinants of citizens' support for political conditionality. Hereafter, we present our data, define dependent and

independent variables and provide the results of our inquiry. After discussing our results, the last section provides a summary of our analysis and suggests further avenues of research.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL ARGUMENT

Conditioning foreign aid to political criteria is high on the agenda of political decision-makers in the field of foreign policy and development assistance. The US millenium challenge account, the EU's governance incentive tranche and its reformed budget support policy are only a few illustrations of how policy makers have tried to develop aid allocation schemes that reward political regimes in developing countries with more democratic institutions, less corruption and higher respect for human rights. In a similar vein, highly visible cases of corruption, human rights violations or democratic decay have often provoked a reduction or even the complete suspension of aid flows. As aid allocation studies have shown, however, the use of political conditionality has not been consistent between donor governments, neither within single donors over time. This inconsistency originates in the fact that promoting democracy and human rights and sanctioning illiberal regimes is not the only function of aid provision. There are numerous conflicting objectives regarding aid allocation.[4]

Giving foreign aid to illiberal regimes and ignoring human rights violations comes with a risk for donor governments, as they can easily be accused by human rights activists or critically interrogated by parliamentarians who have to explain to their constituency, why tax payers' money is used for potentially propping up repressive dictatorships or being wasted by feeding corrupt elites in illiberal regimes. Accordingly, the use of political conditionality should at least partly be a response to potential criticism from domestic actors and therefore fall into the realm of domestic politics in donor countries. Yet, we expect that concerns about feeding dictators or wasting aid resources due to corrupt structures should not be equally distributed among donor governments, nor is it realistic to assume that all voters have the same preferences about how foreign aid should be delivered.

For instance, recent case study evidence on the suspension of budget support has pointed to the fact that donor governments often differently respond to corruption scandals and human right violations. At the same time, donors only tend to gang up to exert collective pressure on

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[4] There is an abundant amount of aid allocation literature supporting this argument (Noel & Therien, 1995; Therien & Noel, 2000; Lundsgaarde, Breuning, & Prakash, 2007; Bueno de Mesquita & Smith, 2009; Dreher, Sturm, & Vreeland, 2009; Milner & Tingley, 2013).

the recipient government when such events reach a critical level of publicity in their own countries (e.g. Hayman, 2011; Molenaers, 2012; Faust, Leiderer, & Schmitt, 2012). There are several reasons for why different donor governments behave differently in applying political conditionality under the same recipient country setting, but one reason is the ideological feature of the donor government. Noel and Therien (1995, 2002), for instance, argue that the structure of a country's foreign aid policy reflects its domestic structures. In that sense, governments favoring targeting and means testing in domestic redistribution should also apply a similar approach in foreign aid and emphasize the use of conditionality more than others. In this regard, Tingley (2010) suggests a partisan effect by showing that targeting foreign aid on poor countries is the preferred choice by right-wing governments. More recently, Faust and Koch (2014) have identified a partisan effect on the provision of budget support, where right-wing governments are less inclined to this aid modality, the efficacy of which depends heavily on the recipient country's administrative quality.

In a similar vein, public opinion on foreign aid has also been found to be determined by ideological and partisan choices. Milner and Tingley (2013) report that the political left-right cleavage is an important individual level determinant of foreign aid preferences. Paxton and Knack (2012) come to a similar conclusion. Rightist political positions correlate with lower support of foreign aid. The causal connections between political and foreign aid preferences are explained through several potential mechanisms: by information shortcuts for complex issues such as foreign aid (Fiske & Taylor, 1984; Paxton & Knack, 2012), by economic individualism linked towards attitudes on redistributive welfare systems (Feldman, 1983), by right-wing beliefs about the role of individual effort for income (Piketty, 1995), or by conservative concerns of foreign aid being government intervention into the international market place (Milner & Tingley, 2013).

Survey research, however, has not explicitly modeled the effect of political positions on individual attitudes towards political conditionality in foreign aid. Given this research gap, we argue that the traditional cleavage in established Western democracies between leftist and rightist political orientations should also be reflected in citizen's attitudes towards political conditionality in foreign aid. Consequently, we formulate our first hypothesis as follows:

H1: In societies where political struggles have traditionally been organized along a right - left cleavage, citizens are more likely to support political conditionality as their political orientation moves towards the right side of the political spectrum.

Accordingly, this hypothesis builds on previous evidence suggesting that people with more rightist orientations have not only been less supportive to foreign aid in general and more preoccupied by a potential waste of foreign aid through corruption in recipient countries (e.g. Paxton & Knack, 2012; Bauhr, Charron & Nasiritousi, 2013), but are also inclined towards more interventionist forms of democracy promotion (Faust & Garcia, 2014). Our hypothesis also parallels evidence from the welfare state literature, according to which citizens with more rightist political orientations are more sceptical regarding re-distributive policies in general and prefer targeted social policies for efficiency reasons and in order to reduce the overall size of redistribution (Korpi & Palme, 1998; Mkandawire, 2005). As we have formulated in our hypothesis, this effect of political orientation on attitudes towards political conditionality in foreign aid should be restricted to countries where the division between left and right has traditionally been anchored in political cleavages. We think that this distinction is important, because the argument that government ideology along the left-right cleavage matters for aid allocation, universalism and redistributional policies (e.g. Tingley, 2010; Bergh, 2004) implicitly assumes that political competition is structured along the left-right cleavage. This is not, however, necessarily the case in many new EU member states, where the left-right continuum is inherently instable and not a crucial category for voting decisions (Casal Bértoa, 2014). Accordingly, we formulate our second hypothesis:

H2: In societies that have not been traditionally organized along a left-right divide, political orientations formulated on a left-right continuum will not affect the likelihood of supporting political conditionality in foreign aid.

Finally, we assume that citizens' perceptions about the meritocratic level of their own state apparatus affects their likelihood to support political conditionality. This assumption is related to the literature testing citizens' trust in their own state as a determinant of foreign aid support. Although Paxton and Knack (2012) find no correlation between general trust in one's own government and support of foreign aid, there are theoretical reasons to assume that such a link may exist. For instance, Popkin and Dimock (2000) argue that people who trust their own government are also more likely to believe that the government can successfully intervene in other countries, which is of particular importance in the area of foreign aid. Moreover, Hetherington and Globetti (2002) show that trust in government is important when the benefits of the government's activities accrue to others, which is also the case in foreign aid. Moreover, evidence from the welfare state literature points to the direction that people's support for broader forms of domestic redistribution is also determined by the level of

confidence they have in their own state apparatus (e.g. Rothstein, 1998). Where citizens believe that politics and policy processes are characterized by low levels of transparency or high levels of corruption, we expect them to be much more sceptical about the state's capacity to redistribute tax payers' money in a benevolent manner without being captured by mighty special interest groups. Thus we not only expect that the perception of a citizen's own state as being characterized by high levels of corruption will decrease her willingness to redistributive policies, but also increase her preference for conditionality as a means for better constraining the maneuvering space of her policy-makers. Put differently, one should expect that the support for conditional redistribution increases as trust in the functioning of one's own state apparatus decreases, because conditionality constrains the leeway of policy implementation and also better allows for monitoring and control of state entities. These considerations should also apply to political conditionality in foreign aid. Therefore, we expect that the perception of the meritocratic functioning of one's own state affects the likelihood of supporting political conditionality in foreign aid.

H3: With citizens' increasing level of trust in the functioning of its own state apparatus the likelihood of supporting political conditionality decreases.

DATA AND EMPIRICAL ESTIMATION

To analyse citizens' preferences for conditionality we use survey data from Eurobarometer 76.1 conducted in 2011. These data include 27 EU member states and 25444 respondents over the age of 15. The advantage of the this survey is that it is the first survey that explicitly ask citizens about their preferences on political conditionality attached to foreign aid across a huge number of aid providing countries.[5] Specifically, question QD5 is formulated as follows:

"Do you think that the EU should require developing countries to follow certain rules regarding democracy, human rights and governance as a condition for receiving EU development aid?"

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[5] Moreover, the introduction to the question explicitly states that "EU development aid consists of the aid provided by both the European Commission and the national Governments of the EU Member States".

The answer categories to this question are "Yes, definitely", "Yes, to some extent", "No not really", and "No, definitely not". Moreover, question QD1 asks for citizens' general support for giving foreign aid and is formulated as follows:

"In your opinion, is it very important, fairly important, not very important or not at all important that the EU help people in developing countries?"

As such, the answers to both questions are categorical. Both variables are unevenly distributed, as the first two answer categories account for far more than 50 percent of the total, which justifies treating them as dummy variable (see Appendix 1). Accordingly, we transform the categorical variables into dummy variables and reverse them in order to render the interpretation of the results easier. Our key dependent variable is the dummy variable *Conditionality*, where 1 stands for support of conditionality (answer categories "Yes, definitely", "Yes, to some extent") and 0 for lack of support of conditionality (answer categories "No not really", and "No, definitely not").

One of our key independent variables in the analysis below will be the support of *Foreign aid*, which is also coded as a dummy variable with 1 indicating support for foreign aid (answer categories "very important" and "fairly important") and 0 lack of foreign aid (answer categories "not very important" or "not at all important"). *Conditionality* and *Foreign aid*, however, are most likely endogenous so we cannot test them in the same estimation model. To deal with this endogeneity problem, we created an alternative dependent variable named *Generosity*, which combines the two variables as explained below. Figure 1 shows the mean values for support of conditionality and foreign for each country.

Figure 1 about here

Figure 1 shows that public opinion strongly favors conditionality. On average, 91 percent of the whole sample agrees with aid conditionality. There is, however, variation between countries. Around 95 percent of respondents in the Czech Republic, Ireland, Lithuania, Malta and Poland support conditionality, whereas support for conditionality in Denmark and Italy is below 86 percent. Preferences for foreign aid follow a different pattern with much bigger variation. Foreign aid has very high support rates in Sweden, Cyprus, Poland and Luxembourg, whereas less than 80 percent of all respondents are supportive of foreign aid in

Hungary, Estonia and Slovenia. In Germany, Denmark, Portugal, the Netherlands and Italy the combination of both dimensions of support is more generous with high support of foreign aid but less support of conditionality. The opposite support pattern occurs in Lithuania, Bulgaria and Estonia with strong support of conditionality, but low support of foreign aid.

Our independent variables are individual and country level variables. On the individual level we include respondents' age, gender, level of education, possession of goods, political orientation and the perception of corruption in the respondent's own country. The variable *Gender* is coded as 1 for male and 2 for female. *Education* is measured in number of years. As there is no question related to income in the survey, we measure respondents' wealth by the possession of goods. *Durables* is coded as the sum of the following items a respondent owns: a television, a DVD player, a CD player, a computer, internet connection at home, a car, and an apartment or house. *Political orientation* ranges from 1 to 10, where 1 is support for left parties and 10 for right parties. Finally, *Corruption perception* is the survey question asking whether respondents perceive corruption as a major problem in their country, where higher values depict agreement with corruption being a major problem.

On the country level we include a country's level of governance, the growth rate, the gini coefficient and the number of its former colonies.[6] The first three variables are five year averages over the period 2007-2011. *Governance* is the effectiveness of governance variable (World Bank, 2013). *Growth*, defined as the yearly GDP growth rate in percent *Gini coefficient* are taken from the World Development Indicators (World Bank, 2014).

Overall, our data set is therefore hierarchically structured into country and individual level data, which necessitates multi-level estimation techniques (Steenbergen & Jones, 2002; Goldstein, 2003). In models estimating the binary dependent variable, we use country random effects models. When country level data is included we rely on mixed-effects logistic regressions, which control for random effects for the binary variable. Table 1 shows our estimations for individual level variables.

Table 1 about here

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[6] Initially, we also included the amount of overseas development assistance (ODA), but the variable is highly correlated with governance (.8).

Our first model estimates the individual level variables for the full sample of countries with country dummy variables included. *Durables* and *Corruption perception* are statistically highly significant and have a positive sign. Wealthier respondents and respondents who think that corruption is a problem in their country are more likely to favor political conditionality. The sign of *Durables* complements the findings of Chong and Gradstein (2008) who report that higher income increases support for foreign aid. At the same time, however, models 1-4 show that wealth also increases the support of conditionality. The positive and significant sign of *Corruption perception* is in line with our third hypothesis, which highlights the role of trust in one's own government for supporting redistribution policies (Hetherington & Globetti, 2002) and effective intervention in other countries (Popkin & Dimock, 2000). *Age* and *Gender*, on the other hand, are not significant. *Education* enters with a negative sign and borderline statistical significance, showing that respondents with more years of education are less likely to favor conditionality. As expected by our first hypothesis, *Political orientation* is significant with a positive sign. Respondents favoring right parties are more likely to support political conditionality in foreign aid. This effect of political orientation on preferences for conditionality is in line with our theoretical expectations based on the positive correlation between partisan preferences and support of foreign aid (Paxton & Knack, 2012; Milner & Tingley, 2013).[7]

Model 2 includes our country level variables. The significance level and coeffecent size of the individual level variables remain robust. Moreover, the country level variables are highly significant in the full sample. The positive sign of *Governance* indicates that respondents living in better governed countries are more likely to favor conditionality. In models 3 and 4, however, we see that *Governance* is statistically highly significant with a large coefficient in the sample of new European donor countries, whereas its impact is negligible in the sample of traditional donor countries. We explain this difference by the matter of fact that traditional donor countries have much higher governance values than new donor states, which are mostly former post-socialist countries, many of them still struggling with the consolidation of democracy and the rule of law.[8] It thus can be plausible argued that *Governance* is more of a concern for respondents in new donor states rather than in old donor states. The theoretical interpretation of the result is not much different from the interpretation of *Corruption*

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[7] We also tested for a non-linear effect using the squared term of *Political orientation*. The size of the nonlinear effect, however, is so weak that it can be neglected and the squared term is not significant anymore once the country level variables are included in the estimations.

[8] Again, a test for a non-linear effect of the governance variable in the full sample did not yield significant results.

perception. Both variables can be seen as proxies for how far people can trust in meritocratic policies of welfare redistribution. Our results therefore underline the plausible argument according to which low levels of governance and a high level of perceived corruption tend to increase the support for political conditionality in foreign aid. The *Gini coefficient* is positive, showing that respondents in more unequal countries are less lenient and more supportive of conditionality. Respondents in countries with higher average growth rates are also more likely to favor conditionality, which is in line with the effect of the individual level variable measuring the amount of the respondent's possessions (*Durables*). *Number of colonies* enters with a negative sign, which might be interpreted that respondents living in former colonial powers are more attached to their former colonies and thus less likely to favor conditionality.

As shown in models 3 and 4, these results, however, are strikingly different, if we split the overall sample into two groups of traditional and non-traditional groups, the latter mainly being composed of the new EU member states. The magnitude and significance of *Political orientation* drop in the sample of new member states. This finding supports our second hypothesis. Party orientation only matters in old donor states, which can be explained by the under-institutionalization of party systems in many east-European member states (Casal Bértoa, 2014). At the same time, the magnitude and significance of *Corruption perception* is much stronger in the sample of new donor states. With regard to the country level variables *Gini coefficient* and *Growth* remain significant only in the sample of new donor states. The positive coefficient of *Gini coefficient* indicates that in countries with higher inequality respondents support international redistribution more likely with conditionality. The positive sign of growth at first sight may be counterintuitive, but the positive correlation between high growth rate and support for conditionality can be explained by respondents' reluctance with conditional EU financial assistance programs in countries hit by the recent financial crisis, which are mainly in the group of traditional donor countries. Finally, *Number of colonies* is not included in the sample of new donor countries, as none of these countries is a former colonial power. Leaving out this variable also makes sense from a theoretical perspective, because the inclusion of the variable would capture much of the difference between the two samples. Figure 2 presents the marginal effects of each variable based on the full sample (model 2).

Figure 2 about here

The magnitude of effects is strong for the country level variables *Governance*, *Durables*, *Gini coefficient*, *Growth* and *Number of colonies*. A switch from minimum to maximum level of *Governance* increases the likelihood of support of conditionality by 11 percentage points, of *Gini coefficient* by 6 percentage points, of *Growth* by 6 percentage points and a change from none to the maximum *Number of colonies* lowers the likelihood of support for conditionality by 7 percentage points. Accordingly, country context matters substantially for a respondent's likelihood of supporting political conditionality in foreign aid.

Among the individual level variables *Education* and *Corruption perception* have a sizeable effect. A maximum change in *Education* decreases support of conditionality by 6 percentage points, whereas a maximum change in *Corruption perception* increases support by 4 percentage points. The 95% percent confidence intervals of these variables do not overlap. The effect *Political orientation*, however, is weak in model 2, but in the sample of old donor states (model 3) a swing from left- to right-wing party preferences does have a more substantial effect of 4 percentage points.

Additionally, we test how much our results are driven by individual countries. Figure 3 depicts the z-scores of each variable in the full sample when a country is dropped from the equation. Figure 3 shows the jackknife estimations for our main independent variables. The z-scores of *Corruption perception* are high, but it decreases to 3.5 when Italy is dropped from the equation. While the significance level remains high, the jackknife estimations demonstrate that Italy raises the effect of the variable. The z-scores of *Political orientation* decrease when Denmark, the Netherlands or Sweden are dropped showing that the left-right divide on foreign aid in these countries plays a strong role for the support of political conditionality. Finally, the z-scores of *Governance* are low without Italy or Romania in the estimation, demonstrating that the low governance levels in these two countries have a strong effect on preferences for conditionality on the whole sample.

Figure 3 about here

Finally, we try to identify whether the preferences for political conditionality are driven by preferences for foreign aid. The relation between both variables is complicated to study, as the

causal impact may work in both directions – preferences for foreign aid may have an impact on preferences for conditionality and vice versa. This endogenous relationship restricts us from including preferences for foreign aid as an independent variable into our regressions.

In order to better understand whether preferences for foreign aid play are role we change our estimation approach and create a new variable which we call *Generosity*. It is an ordinal variable composed of the two dummy variables of conditionality and preferences for foreign aid. The variable takes the value of 3 if respondents are in favor of foreign aid, but without attaching conditionality to it. We assume that this is the highest level of *Generosity*. The value of 2 combines support of foreign aid, attached with conditionality, while supporting conditionality without favoring foreign aid gets the value of 1 – the lowest level of *Generosity*. The last and to a certain extend contradictory category combines rejection of foreign aid and rejection of conditionality. In order to estimate generosity we use multilevel ordered probit estimations with robust clustered standard errors. Table 2 shows the results.

Table 2 about here

Our first model shows the result for the full sample without country level variables. Country dummies are included. *Age*, *Gender* and *Education* are statistically highly significant. The variables also remain significant with a similar coefficient size in the subsequent models, except for *Education* in model 8. *Generosity* drops with *Age*, but increases with *Education*. Women are also more likely to be generous than men. *Political orientation* has highly significant impact on the likelihood of being generous. The variable is statistically significant with a negative sign in all models, except in the split sample covering new donor countries. Respondents on the right part of the political spectrum are more likely to be less generous, mainly in the old donor countries. *Corruption perception* is significant with a negative sign. This means that respondents who believe their country is corrupt are less likely to favor aid without attaching conditionality to it. The variable is especially strong in model 7 with the sample of old donor states, but not in the sample with new donor states. *Governance* only matters in the sample of traditional donor states. The negative sign shows that respondents in countries with better governance are more likely to support conditionality. *Growth* matters in the sample of new donor states. As we will see, the effect of *Growth* is strongest in category 2, which combines both support of foreign aid and support of conditionality.

We estimate the magnitudes of effects for *Generosity* using Clarify (King, Tomz, & Wittenberg, 2000) based on model 6 of Table (2). Figure 4 presents the marginal effects.

Figure 4 about here

The Figure shows the marginal effects for each category of *Generosity*. A change from very left to very right of *Political orientation* lowers the likelihood of category 3 by 5 percentage points, but increases the likelihood of category 2 by 1 and of category 1 by 3 percentage points in the full sample. Again, the effect of *Political orientation* is much stronger in the sample of traditional donors – a decrease of 9 percentage points of category 3, and an increase of 3 and 5 percentage points of categories 2 and 1. Higher *Corruption perception* increases the likelihood of the least generous category by 4 percentage points, and lowers the likelihoods of the more generous categories 2 and 3 by 5 and 2 percentage points. Finally, high level of *Governance* has a very strong magnitude of effects with an increase of 6 percentage points in category 2 and a decrease of 6 percentage points in category 1. The effect, however, is different when Italy is left out of the equation. Without Italy, an increase in *Governance* decreases the likelihoods of category 2 and 1 and increases the likelihood of category 3 by 9 percentage points. Once preferences for foreign aid are taken into account, thus, higher governance levels lead to more generosity.

Figure 5 about here

Finally, we checked whether our results are driven by country outliers. Figure 5 presents the jackknife estimations based on model 6. The z-scores of *Political orientation* and *Corruption perception* are not driven by outliers and remain highly significant when single countries are left out from the equation. *Governance* is not significant in the full sample (model 6), only in the sample of new donor states. As we can see in figure 5 *Governance* becomes in the full sample significant when Italy is left out of the sample.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

Political Conditionality on foreign aid is a contested concept. On the one hand, political conditionality restricts the margins of maneuver of foreign aid allocation, what can be detriment of the neediest recipient countries of foreign aid. On the other hand, selectivity allocating along political criteria such as democracy levels has also been found to augment the economic and political effectiveness of development assistance. Against this background of this tension and the fact that aid providing governments might also avoid political conditionality because they pursue other non-development-oriented criteria, the European public articulates a strong preference for political conditionality in foreign aid.

As the descriptive statistics of our analysis have shown, there seems to be strong societal demand within European donor countries for political conditionality, the neglect of which could seriously decrease the legitimacy of foreign aid. Almost 99 percent of respondents in Cyprus are supportive of conditionality. Only 86 percent of Danish respondents favor conditionality, but this still is a large margin of support. The overwhelming backing among European citizens for political conditionality among Europeans thus makes it extremely difficult for democratically legitimized donor governments to neglect political criteria in foreign aid allocation. Foreign aid as a measure for international redistribution necessitates needs broad public support. In this regard, the huge demand for political conditionality also helps to explains, why policy-makers in donor countries often become particularly keen on applying aid sanctions, when critical events in recipient countries become public among parliamentarians, the media or human rights activists in donor countries.

Beyond simply demonstrating this broad support, our analysis has contributed to identify individual and country level factors, which have driven the huge societal demand for political conditionality in foreign aid. Using Eurobarometer data with more than twenty-five thousand observations across 27 European countries, we were therefore able to tackle a research gap neglected so far by scholars of public opinion and aid effectiveness. As a main determinant for variation in support for conditionality we find that citizens who perceive corruption to be a problem in their own country to be more likely to be in favor of conditionality. Accordingly, citizens who do not believe in the meritocratic functioning of their own state apparatus prefer aid to be politically conditioned as a means to restrict the maneuvering space of their own state entities. In addition, citizens on the right end of the political left-right spectrum are more supportive of foreign aid. This effect of political orientation, however, works mainly in the sample of old European member states where the political left-right cleavage is

institutionalized. Moreover, we provided an explanation for why individual-level data do not uniformly determine the existing variance among citizens' support for political conditionality. Regarding the contextual country- conditions we revealed that respondents in better governed countries are more likely to support conditionality, whereas citizens of former colonial powers are less inclined to support conditionality. Finally, citizens in countries with lower growth rates are also less in favor of conditionality.

Overall, our results therefore shed additional light on the role of domestic factors in the debate about political conditionality. As shown elsewhere in the literature, the public in aid providing countries is particularly concerned in foreign aid ending up in the hands of corrupt and undemocratic politicians (Bauhr, Charron, & Nasiritousi, 2013). In this regard, our results suggest that for similar concerns about aid being used inefficiently, citizens who do not trust their own governments tend to be more likely to demand political conditionality in aid allocation. In practical terms, this strong public demand for conditionality may cause difficulties for donor governments to cooperate with recipient governments unable to comply with aspects of political conditionality and in such instances sideline official aid channels by allocating more aid to non-state actors (Dietrich 2013).

Moreover, particularly from the perspective of right-wing conservative policy-makers, conditionality can be seen as aid targeting in disguise, as it reduces the number of recipient countries and would concentrate available means on a reduced number of. The effect of rightist political attitudes on our aid generosity variable points to this direction. Reproduced in mirror-image, more leftist policy-makers would tend to be more lax on political conditionality because this allows them to follow their preference for greater aid generosity and to implement a more universalist principle of solidarity by broadening their portfolio of aid receiving countries.

Overall, our results present important parallels to the welfare state literature that argues that welfare targeting is preferred by rightist governments which tend to have a preference for constraining or even shrinking the size of the welfare state. In the area of foreign aid policy targeting on the poor leads to a similar trade-off, as it reduces the overall amount of foreign aid (Bodenstein & Kemmerling, 2014). Importantly, however, we also show a split between traditional and new donor countries in terms of support for conditionality. Political attitudes are a main determinant in traditional donor countries, not in new donor countries, while support for conditionality is higher in new donor countries and more determined by corruption perception.

Our results are based on old and new donor countries of the EU. Subsequent research should shift its focus towards public support for conditionality to new donor countries outside of the EU, as they become increasingly important in global foreign aid often neglecting conditionality (e.g. Strange, Parks, Tierney, & al., 2013). A second venue for future research is the link between public opinion and aid allocation of donor countries. In our paper we have shed light on individual preferences. Yet we still have to understand how governments respond to preferences for conditionality in terms of aid allocation, both in old and new donor states. In addition, it would be interesting to see if different drivers of public support also lead to different approaches to foreign aid policy in new donor countries.

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Appendix 1. *Support for conditionality*

Country	Pro-conditionality dummy Mean and its Std.Dev.	Supportive of conditionality[1] Percentage and number of respondents				Number of respondents
		Yes, definitely	Yes, to some extent	No, not really	No, definitely not	
Austria	0.898 0.303	32.2	55.1	7.7	2.3	990
		328	561	78	23	
Belgium	0.868 0.340	57.5	28.5	10.6	2.5	1019
		591	293	109	26	
Bulgaria*	0.927 0.260	52.0	31.2	4.6	2.0	903
		523	314	46	20	
Cyprus*	0.992 0.089	90.1	8.3	.8	0	502
		456	4.2	4	0	
Czech Republic*	0.946 0.226	54.4	37.9	4.3	0.9	1042
		581	405	46	10	
Denmark	0.857 0.350	48.2	36.2	8.0	6.1	987
		483	363	80	61	
Estonia*	0.934 0.249	55.8	31.8	5.3	.9	938
		558	318	53	9	
Finland	0.934 0.248	48.0	44.3	4.0	2.5	990
		481	444	40	25	
France	0.902 0.297	57.5	32.8	7.1	2.6	983
		565	322	70	26	
Germany	0.886 0.317	55.5	30.3	7.6	3.4	1532
		878	480	120	54	
Greece	0.902 0.297	48.3	39.6	6.7	2.8	974
		483	396	67	28	
Hungary*	0.893 0.310	45.3	39.8	8.9	1.4	968
		460	404	90	14	
Ireland	0.946 0.227	52.3	35.2	3.7	1.4	939
		531	357	37	14	
Italy	0.858 0.349	29.3	47.7	9.5	3.3	936

		306	497	99	34	
Latvia*	0.932 0.252	44.3	44.9	5.1	1.4	970
		449	455	52	14	
Lithuania*	0.958 0.202	65.0	24.7	2.9	1.1	966
		670	255	30	11	
Luxembourg	0.936 0.246	66.5	23.3	5.0	1.2	482
		334	117	25	6	
Malta*	0.955 0.207	57.4	28.2	3.2	.8	448
		287	141	16	4	
Netherlands	0.883 0.321	46.9	40.0	7.4	4.1	986
		470	401	74	41	
Poland*	0.953 0.213	40.5	45.9	3.7	.6	907
		405	459	37	6	
Portugal	0.883 0.322	30.5	50.1	9.6	1.2	945
		316	518	99	12	
Romania*	0.869 0.338	35.7	37.4	7.1	4.0	884
		375	393	74	42	
Slovakia*	0.932 0.252	53.8	36.8	5.0	1.6	985
		545	373	71	16	
Slovenia*	0.897 0.305	51.7	36.3	6.8	3.3	1005
		529	372	70	34	
Spain	0.931 0.254	52.8	31.6	3.2	3.1	910
		530	317	32	31	
Sweden	0.923 0.267	59.5	31.8	5.4	2.6	1009
		607	324	55	23	
United Kingdom	0.889 0.314	52.6	30.7	7.3	3.1	1244
		699	407	97	4.1	
Sample	*0.911 0.285*	*50.0*	*36.2*	*6.2*	*2.3*	*25444*
		13440	*9728*	*1651*	*625*	

Note: * are new donor countries.

Appendix 2. *Summary statistics*

Variable	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Preferences for conditionality (dummy)	25444	0.9	0.3	0	1
Generosity	25071	1.9	0.5	0	3
Age	26856	48.6	18.3	15	98
Gender	26856	1.5	0.5	1	2
Education	26469	17.4	6.8	0	74
Durables	26739	6.9	1.6	0	8
Political orientation	21345	5.3	2.2	1	10
Perception of corruption	26080	3.2	0.9	1	4
Governance (2007-2011)	26856	1.14	0.62	–0.31	2.21
Growth (2007-2011)	26856	0.8	1.4	–2.4	4.2
Gini coefficient (2007-2011)	26856	29.6	4.0	23.4	36.4
Number of colonies	26856	4.9	10.3	0	39

Appendix 3. *Bivariate correlations*

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
Conditionality (dummy) (1)											
Generosity (2)	−.200										
Age (3)	.008	−.022									
Gender (4)	.017	.026	.023								
Education (5)	−.011	.034	.217	.000							
Durables (6)	.051	−.012	.072	−.024	.047						
Political orientation (7)	.029	−.055	−.025	−.023	−.011	.061					
Corruption perception (8)	.039	−.079	.018	.032	−.130	.043	−.009				
Governance (2007-2011) (9)	−.009	.072	.113	−.016	.139	−.095	−.026	−.411			
Growth (2007-2011) (10)	.036	.021	.027	.015	.039	.030	−.001	−.035	−.098		
Gini coefficient (2007-2011) (11)	.010	−.026	−.092	.003	−.130	−.007	.023	.235	−.583	−.323	
Number of colonies	−.024	.012	.038	.000	−.054	−.068	−.063	.018	.189	−.191	.236

Table 1. *Estimation of preference for conditionality*

	(1) Full sample	(2) Full sample	(3) Sample of old donor countries	(4) Sample of new donor countries
Individual level variables				
Age	0.003	0.002	0.002	0.002
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.002)	(0.003)
Gender	0.078	0.078	0.059	0.137
	(0.050)	(0.050)	(0.060)	(0.092)
Education	−0.010*	−0.010*	−0.008	−0.017*
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.008)
Durables	0.116***	0.116***	0.139***	0.066*
	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.019)	(0.027)
Political orientation	0.036**	0.037**	0.042**	0.026
	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.015)	(0.020)
Corruption perception	0.133***	0.146***	0.079*	0.356***
	(0.032)	(0.031)	(0.036)	(0.062)
Country level variables				
Governance		0.511**	0.352	1.359***
		(0.156)	(0.247)	(0.205)
Growth		0.163**	0.093	0.204***
		(0.056)	(0.139)	(0.048)
Gini coefficient		0.086**	0.066	0.120***
		(0.026)	(0.054)	(0.020)
Nr of colonies (log)		−0.208**	−0.130	
		(0.063)	(0.088)	
Constant	0.313	−2.188	−1.516	−3.991***
	(0.233)	(0.935)	(1.738)	(.859)
Country dummies	Yes	No	No	No
Number of countries	27	27	15	12
Number of observations	19847	19847	12350	7497
Log likelihood	−5831.3	−5872.2	−4006.5	−1847.8
Wald χ^2	337.3***	119.2***	77.1***	81.7***

Note: All models are multilevel mixed–effects logistic regressions with random effects. The dependent variable is a dummy variable for the preference of conditionality (1 = in favor of conditionality, 0 = otherwise; the sample mean of the dependent variable is .911 with a standard deviation of .285). Standard errors are in parentheses. * p<.05, **p<.005, ***p<.001.

Table 2. *Empirical estimation of generosity*

	(5) Full sample	(6) Full sample	(7) Sample of old donor countries	(8) Sample of new donor countries
Individual level variables				
Age	−0.003***	−0.003**	−0.002*	−0.003**
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Gender	0.077***	0.071***	0.068**	0.085**
	(0.019)	(0.020)	(0.025)	(0.031)
Education	0.007***	0.007***	0.008***	0.003
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Durables	0.0001	−0.005	−0.010	0.005
	(0.015)	(0.014)	(0.023)	(0.013)
Political orientation	−0.031**	−0.033***	−0.054***	−0.004
	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.012)	(0.009)
Corruption perception	−0.052*	−0.077***	−0.104***	0.039
	(0.024)	(0.019)	(0.025)	(0.030)
Country level variables				
Governance		0.129	−0.035	0.039
		(0.070)	(0.047)	(0.100)
Growth		0.025	0.024	0.072***
		(0.021)	(0.034)	(0.019)
Gini coefficient		0.005	−0.008	0.012
		(0.010)	(0.012)	(0.009)
Nr of colonies (log)		0.028	0.001	
		(0.021)	(0.020)	
Cut 1	−2.284	−2.036	−2.877	−1.268
	(0.185)	(0.448)	(0.375)	(0.450)
Cut 2	−1.391	−1.150	−2.034	−0.316
	(0.159)	(0.438)	(0.374)	(0.397)
Cut 3	1.296	1.515	.629	2.405
	(0.182)	(0.453)	(0.357)	(0.435)
Country dummies	Yes	No	No	No
Number of countries	27	27	15	12
Number of observations	19615	19615	12256	7359
Log pseudo-likelihood	−13068.0	−13163.1	−8094.5	−4983.7
Wald χ^2		119.0***	95.5***	
Pseudo R^2	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.01

Note: All models are multilevel ordered probit models with robust clustered standard errors. The dependent variable is *Generosity*. Standard errors are in parentheses. * $p<.05$, **$p<.005$, ***$p<.001$.

Data source: Eurobarometer 76.1 (2011)

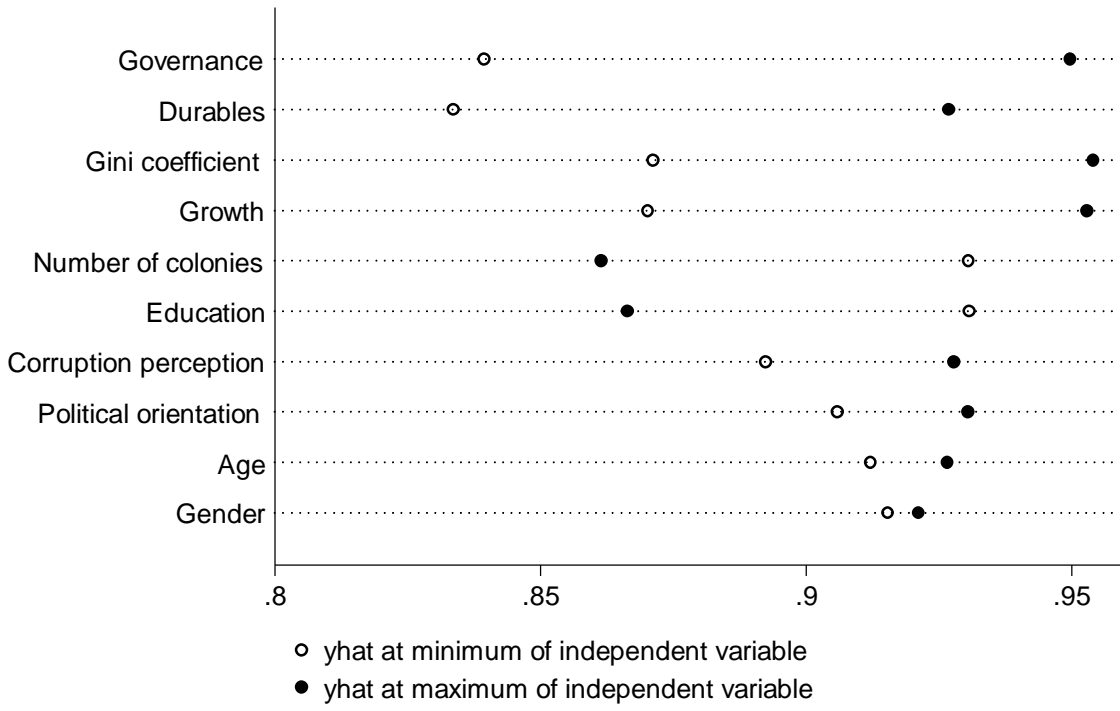Figure 1. *Support for conditionality and foreign aid.*

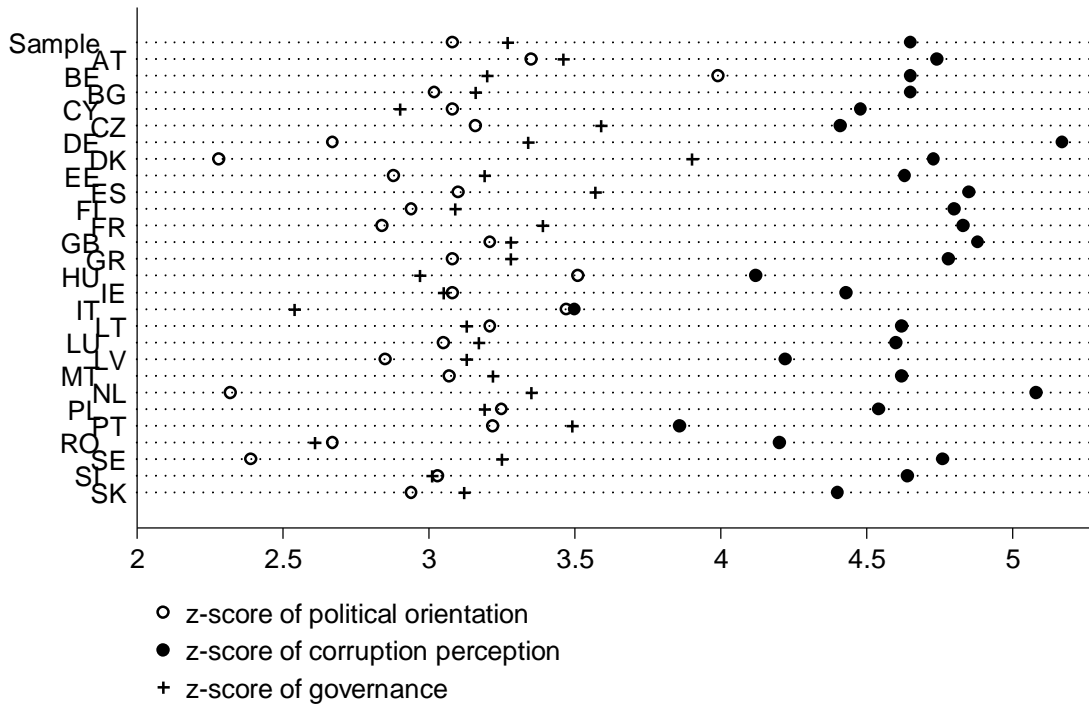Figure 2. *Marginal effects for conditionality.*
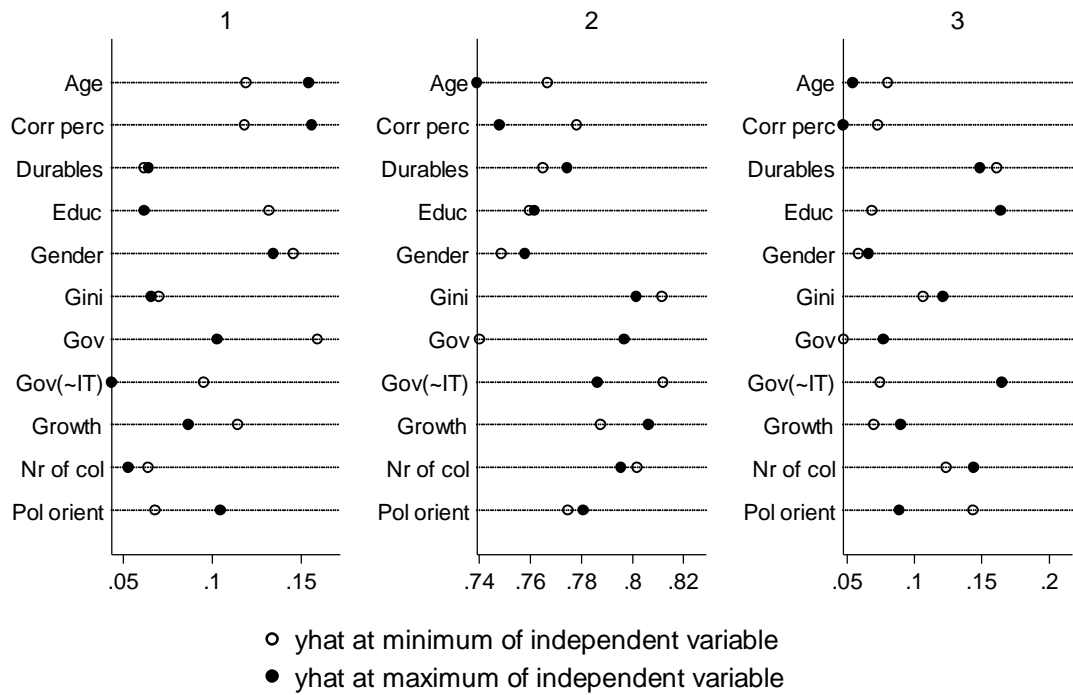
Figure 3. *Jackknife estimation of model 2.*
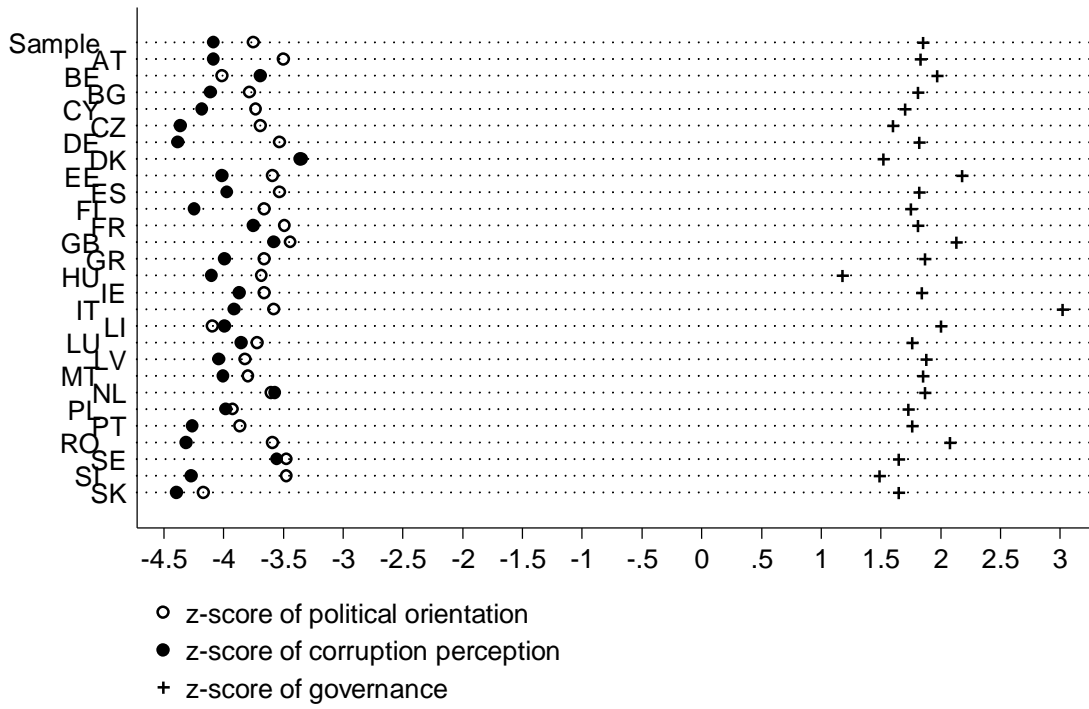
Figure 4. *Marginal effects for generosity.*

Figure 5. *Jackknife estimation of model 6.*