

Donor Political Preferences and the Allocation of Aid:
Patterns in recipient type

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Abstract: National executives in Western democracies are not unilateral deciders: they lead parties with long-term policy priorities and manage challenging multi-party coalitions. Leaders of donor states use foreign aid to pursue their goals, including enacting policy output consistent with party ideology or bargaining the ability to control aid policy away to a coalition partner. Because coalition governments empower partisan actors with distinct preferences and preferences for international engagement condition the effect of left-right ideology, we predict left-pro-internationalist governments prefer aiding the neediest recipients while right-internationalists emphasize trade opportunities. In particular, we find that the party preferences of the minister directly responsible for foreign aid, the Development Minister, predicts aid allocations. Our analysis contributes to a theory of foreign policy change as the outcome of complex domestic bargaining and negotiations.

The standard story connecting donor ideology to foreign aid holds that conservative governments led by a singular executive use aid to support trade and leftists give to states in need. Yet recent events highlight complications for this straightforward narrative. Coalition governments such as the German grand coalition between left-leaning Social Democrats and conservative Christian Democrats under Chancellor Merkel in 2017 balance the goals of actors with diverging preferences over how to use aid at a time of growing unrest with international institutions and globalization more generally. Likewise, conservative leaders such as Donald Trump and Boris Johnson steered parties formerly globally-engaged away from foreign aid and withdrew from internationalism more generally. This challenge is not limited to conservative leaders. Former UK Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn substantially reduced discussion of international obligations in the party's policy statements (Volgens et al. 2020). These examples illustrate the challenge of applying solely "strategic" or "altruistic" motives to collective actors with multiple, and at times competing, policy goals that often require the support of other parties to maintain parliamentary confidence. Moving beyond broad left-right differences and addressing competing demands within coalition governments offers substantial benefits for understanding foreign policy.

We reconsider governments' foreign policy goals¹, conceptualizing ideology as a multi-dimensional concept that varies both within the same party over-time and between parties in parliamentary coalitions. Foremost, as the German coalition example demands, we turn to theories of ministerial governance to understand foreign policy as the outcome of a collective agreement. Multiparty governments balance competing demands from parties for differing levels and forms of international engagement (Laver and Shepsle 1996). As policy compromises characterize negotiations over and maintenance of coalition bargains, we expect that the party preferences of the cabinet minister controlling the foreign aid portfolio will have an outsized impact on aid allocations, consistent with theories of "ministerial discretion" (Goodhart 2013).

Second, like past studies, we move beyond the contention that left-right positions alone determine preferences over economically strategic vs equity-enhancing foreign aid; politicians' orientation towards international politics conditions the effect of preferences for how much aid to give and how to deliver it (Greene and Licht 2018). We add that these dimensions also shape to *which recipients* donors will most generously allocate aid. Recipient need motivates internationally-engaged governments of the left and those on the right invest in good trading partners. However, leaders advocating parochial, anti-internationalist agendas prior to joining government provide less aid

¹ In this paper, we conceptualize the Prime Minister or Development Minister's preferences as representing the goals of the parties they come from. Future analyses with more granular preference data than is currently available will be able to further explore this dynamic by exploring not only differences between parties, but also differences between members of the same party (Ceron 2019).

overall, regardless of their preferences on the left-right economic dimension, with aid to the neediest states most negatively affected. This logic predicts that both the Republican Party and UK parties' shift towards more isolationist positions would reduce aid across the board, with trade relationships offering recipients some insulation.

To examine hypotheses linking governments' multi-dimensional ideologies to their foreign aid provision we analyze decisions to allocate to some *types of recipients* rather than others. Our analysis uses tobit models of allocation decisions from 28 donors to 150 potential aid recipients over nearly 40 years. Our analysis of dyadic aid flows reveals evidence consistent with our arguments: using the development minister's preferences as the measure of government ideology, the internationalist dimension significantly conditions the effect of left-right ideology and recipient need increases the probability and magnitude of aid flows *only* from left-pro-internationalist governments.

This research holds implications for studies of coalition governance, foreign influence, political development, and the domestic causes of policy change. Like theories of coalition formation assuming strong influence for cabinet ministers, we find that accounting for the partisan control of the development minister reveals a clearer effect than studies assuming a unified executive. By linking multiple dimensions of politicians' ideology to aid allocation patterns, our theory produces expectations of cross-sectional and temporal variation in foreign policy decision-making processes. Rather than assuming some countries are just more altruistic than others, or that the structure of the international system drives donors' interests, we place causal importance in the same place that politicians do: the policies they profess to care about. The role of ideology in donors' relationships with recipients likely colors more than just the allocation process.

Furthermore, these results add to studies of domestic policy change emphasizing the complex structure of governments' ideology. Given the strong strategic incentives for states to use foreign aid as a coercive tool and aid's relatively low public salience, it marks an unlikely policy area to find evidence that the specific goals of those actors controlling government lead to meaningful political change. This analysis suggests that taking account of governments' complex policy goals can demonstrate the effect of party priorities on government outcomes. The theory and evidence, therefore, contribute to our understanding of domestic actors' complex and sometimes unexpected role in the policy-making process (Bevan, John and Jennings 2011, Dietrich 2020).

Multidimensional Preferences, Collective Governance, and Multiple Actors

Literature on allocation decisions traditionally dichotomized donors' interests: donors either cared about humanitarianism, hoping to improve conditions within the recipient state, or their motives were economically or politically strategic, aiming for profit or geopolitical influence (Dudley and Montmarquette 1976, McKinlay and Little 1977). While some wrung their hands in despair that political motives rendered aid ineffective at reducing poverty, political scientists shrugged that states are essentially

egoistic actors whose geopolitical and security concerns clearly outweigh any moral imperatives to help the poor (Alesina and Dollar 2000, Morgenthau 1962). Analyses uncovered donors who allocated aid based on need – generally the Nordic countries plus a few others – and “egoistic” donors, whose allocation decisions reflected geopolitical interests more than recipient need (Berthelemy 2006). More recent tests, however, suggest most donors allocate aid at higher rates to *both* countries that need it and countries of geopolitical interest (Hoeffler and Outram 2011).

Although some scholars successfully employ this dichotomous view of donor preferences and behavior (Adhikari 2019; Dietrich and Murdie 2017), our theoretical position has more in common with those who see *all* donors as strategically motivated. Foreign aid is a foreign policy tool (Heinrich 2020; Palmer, Ok, Wohlander, and Morgan 2002). We agree that meaningful recipient development and donor strategic interest are not diametrically opposed (Bermeo and Leblang 2015, Bermeo 2017, Cheng and Shahryar 2021), despite that presumption in aid-for-policy thinking (Bueno de Mesquita and Smith 2007). Moreover, donor goals are varied and *variable*.

Our theory joins a line of inquiry aimed at *within-donor* as well as cross-sectional variation in aid allocation. Dynamic expectations linking state preferences to behavior require abandoning the state-as-unitary-actor assumption and adopting liberal perspectives that governments represent the interests of diverse constituents (Moravcsik 1997, 518). Favored explanations such as regime type and survival-motivated leaders seeking to please their differently-sized winning coalitions (Bueno de Mesquita and Smith 2007), though, provide little leverage: the pool of OECD donors are stable, consolidated democracies with winning coalition to selectorate ratios constant over the time period of interest. Instead, we build on a line of foreign policy research that emphasizes governments’ revealed ideological preferences and a rich comparative politics literature on coalition policymaking.

Likening it to an international wealth redistribution policy, Noël and Therién (1995) tie preferences over foreign aid to the traditional left-right spectrum. Microfoundations for this contention are strong. Multiple surveys locate large, consistent correlations between self-reported economic ideology and support for existing and expanded foreign aid allocations: conservatives report systematically less approval of foreign aid programs from their governments (Chong and Gradstein 2008; Milner and Tingley 2013; Paxton 2011). Dietrich, Milner and Slapin (2020) also find this reflected in explicit policy statements about foreign aid in party manifestos.

Despite the intuitive appeal of the argument that government ideology predicts foreign aid allocations, studies do not consistently find leftist governments allocating more generous levels or more altruistic patterns of foreign aid compared to the stingier or more strategic programs of conservatives (Tingley 2010, Brech and Potrafke 2014, Dreher, Nunnenkamp and Schmaljohann 2015, Heinrich and Kobayashi 2020). Much of this confusion, we contend, stems from overlooking an equally important ideological determinant of attitudes towards foreign aid: the extent to which international affairs

are viewed as a vital and important part of the government's role versus an expensive, elite distraction from the needs of the domestic population (Greene and Licht 2018).²

In the following section we provide a theory of foreign aid allocation built on the assumption that executives are representatives of collective decision-makers influenced by more than just institutional constraints and personal characteristics. National executives in democratic countries also act as *party leaders* that must also account for a range of domestic constituents and the country's latent capabilities (see also Paper #2 and Paper #4). This motivates them to provide policy outputs that demonstrate ideological commitment to the party elite and rank and file among their voters. Greene and Licht (2018) demonstrate that the customizability of foreign aid sectors offer an opportunity for leaders to engage in this work. Herein, we add further political flesh to the deciders at the heart of foreign policymaking. We highlight that democratic leaders, notably in many aid giving countries, are also frequently *government leaders*, responsible for holding together a parliamentary working majority of votes sometimes only with support from other parties. In this capacity, the executive may bargain away the ability to unilaterally set preferences on some policy areas, allowing a coalition partner to control issues important to *their* constituents. When coalition leaders cede power over foreign aid policy, the preferences of the party that controls the relevant ministry will better explain ensuing aid allocations. We contend that analytical frameworks ignoring coalition politics further lead to inefficiencies in empirical studies of party preferences and aid allocation.

Aid Allocation in Service of Ideology and Coalition

Though rarely central to international relations (IR) theory, political parties are the primary groups that organize legislatures and executives in democratic governments. Parties hold dynamic policy goals that vary substantially, sometimes more than voters and experts notice (Adams, Ezrow, and Somer-Topcu 2011), between elections, offering a path to explaining within-unit variation in countries' foreign policy behavior. Presidents and PMs, serve both as national executives, making decisions for the country, and as *leaders of parties*, pursuing policies that keep party legislators in line and which speak to the demands of partisan constituents. The need to establish and maintain legislative confidence, also limits the ability of a single executive to unilaterally decide policy. Given the motivations to win elections and to maintain party order, we expect such leaders to implement foreign policies consistent with their election campaigns (Carey 2007, Whitten and Williams 2011, Thomson, et al. 2017, Bevan and Greene 2018). This assumption requires consideration of both the preference dimensions revealed by party statements and the make-up of multiparty coalitions. Below, we first discuss the role of political parties in the construction of governments

² Other corners of the IR literature have long considered the importance of attitudes towards foreign engagement, most notably the public opinion literature (see Rathbun et al. 2016 for a recent review) and American foreign policy discussions of grand strategy (see Chaudoin et al. 2010).

and then connect two key dimensions of party preferences to the characteristics of aid recipients.

Most foreign policy studies interested in government ideology assume that the preferences of the president's or prime minister's party *are* the preferences of the government (e.g. Brech and Potrafke 2014, Milner and Tingley 2010). In practice, executives, though, cannot unilaterally determine policy when governing requires support from and the management of a cabinet of parties with differing preferences over multiple dimensions. Although institutions empower individuals with specific powers, many democratic systems require parliamentary approval of the executive and cabinet ministers, who often can be removed by a simple majority vote of the parliament (Huber 1996). Coalitions also exist in multiparty presidential contexts where executive cabinet appointments require legislative approval (Carey 2007). Smaller parties are required to not only make a government, but are also in the position to break them (Laver and Shepsle 1996). In coalition contexts, policy cooperation becomes endemic to democratic governance; when no party commands a majority of the parliament (around 20% of our donor sample), leader survival – so central to IR theories of decision-making – means *coalition survival*. Because policy negotiations shape which parties enter the coalition, we argue that the party controlling the minister in charge of the foreign aid policy portfolio, hereafter the development minister (DM) (Fuchs and Richert 2018), holds considerable sway over the allocation of aid.

Literature on policy-making under coalition government contains two perspectives on the policy impacts of coalition compromise. Both schools, though, emphasize coalition parties' differing preferences. Most scholars assume that parties prioritize their preferences when negotiating for cabinet positions, embedding the resulting policy compromises in official agreements (Laver and Shepsle 1996). Cabinet parties that fail to achieve control of ministries associated with their electoral priorities face voter punishment (Greene, Henceroth, and Jensen 2020; Klüver and Spoon 2020). The makeup of coalition cabinets, therefore, reflects the policy priorities of the parties involved. The positions assigned to coalition partners matter: the preferences of the parties and individuals that make up the cabinet affect the policies adopted by national governments (Bevan and Greene 2018; Thomson et al. 2017).

Coalition perspectives assume, in sum, that the power of coalition partners to withhold support and bring down governments means that their positions must be incorporated. Government, in such circumstances, pursues a set of negotiated preferences. Take, for example, the German Social Democrat-led (SDP) cabinet formed in coalition with the Green Party (Die Grüne) and Free Democrats (FDP) following elections in September 2021. Although the three parties in the coalition all made substantial positive statements in their campaigns towards international engagement, Die Grüne gave the issue more attention than any other (Volkens et al. 2020). Consistent with studies of coalition formation, they successfully negotiated for major portfolios related to international engagement in the resulting coalition, including the defense and foreign affairs ministries (Greene and Jensen 2019).

The two coalition perspectives diverge, however, on how coalition party preferences translate to policy output. The first envisions something like a weighted average: expressed preferences reflect the relative influence and interests of coalition parties. According to the second, a larger party bargains away control over issue areas, allowing ministers of coalition parties to pursue potentially divergent policies, in turn for their support on others. We'll consider each perspective further, below.

Without a functioning majority, both the sitting executive and any policies they pursue can be overturned by opposition in the legislature. Because parties' relative seat share contribution to the parliamentary majority and their relative ideological positions affect their ability to threaten coalition survival, they provide some indication of their relative bargaining power (Laver and Shepsle 1996). This logic implies that larger parties and the selection of the Prime Minister (PM) impact governmental policies such as foreign aid, but that smaller coalition parties also draw the policies in their preferred direction, relative to their seat contribution. A proportionality norm in the number of cabinet portfolios a party receives relative to its overall cabinet seat share contribution reflects this relationship (Ecker and Meyer 2019, Bergman, Ecker and Müller 2013). Further, publicly-released coalition agreements reveal detailed policy statements on the issues the parties most disagree on, reflecting the difficulty of negotiation and desire to lock in mutually acceptable positions (Eichorst 2014). Using the German example, foreign policy choices would reflect a balance between Die Grüne's goals with those of the FDP and SPD. As Die Grüne contributed approximately 28% of the cabinet's majority in the Bundestag, their goals would be counter-balanced by those of the SPD's 49% and FDP's substantially more conservative 22% of cabinet seats.

Alternatively, multi-dimensional spatial theories of coalition politics argue that cabinet ministers hold nearly dictatorial influence over policies within the minister's portfolio (Laver and Schofield 1990; Laver and Shepsle 1996). Parties negotiate for cabinet positions that, at least symbolically, reflect their priorities, expecting to produce ideologically-consistent policies for their constituents (Alexiadou 2016; Bäck, Debus, and Dumont 2011). Coalition parties – even small ones – that feel their preferences have been ignored can end the government, risking extended new policy negotiations between parties or even snap elections. Thus smaller parties, well-placed within cabinets based on their relative ideological preferences, can have an outsized impact on policy relative to their seat share. This perspective would expect the selected minister of foreign affairs, Die Grüne's Annalena Baerbock, to exercise substantial leeway over foreign policies such as foreign aid. Unless the SPD prefer to join in a coalition with the substantially more conservative Christian Democrats, policy delegation to coalition partners is the price of controlling the executive Chancellor's position.

Both perspectives on coalition governance indicate that chief executives' partisan preferences alone will sometimes fail to explain policy output. This becomes most likely, according to the multi-dimensional spatial perspective, when the coalition features different parties in the chief executive and foreign aid positions. This likely happens because the coalition partner identifies the development portfolio with ideologically-relevant policy output in which the executive's party is less interested.

Therefore, the ministry's output better reflects the preferences of the minister in charge than of the PM.

We propose the following hypothesis:

H1: When coalitions feature different parties in charge of the Prime Minister and development minister portfolio, patterns of foreign aid allocation better reflect the preferences of the development minister.

Building on the logic of coalition formation and termination, we argue that coalition partners' preferences shape policy. The party in control of a cabinet ministry holds outsized influence over the portfolio assigned to that minister. This leads us to pay close attention to the preferences of the DM. In the next section, we consider how the same factor that leads parties to negotiate over cabinet ministers, party ideology, affects which potential recipients leaders will prefer.

Ideology and Aid Recipients

Modern party systems formed to represent competing economic goals during the industrial revolution (Lipset and Rokkan 1967). As social democratic parties formed to represent the goals of workers, conservative parties organized to protect the status-quo interests of those owning capital and influence. Resulting electoral competition led those parties on the economic left, such as social democratic and communist parties, to emphasize issues and positions related to the development of the welfare state, protection of worker's rights and reduction in class inequality more broadly. In contrast, parties from more elite and conservative origins tolerated greater inequality in economic and social policies to maintain the status quo (Mair 2007). This "economic" dimension of political ideology undergirds most political competition in the advanced democratic states. But aggregated party left-right positions cannot tell us everything we need to know: some issues imperfectly correlate with this dimension and as its dominance in politics unravels in response to voters' concerns over globalization and international institutions (Bakker, Jolly and Polk 2012, Karreth, Polk and Allen 2013).³

The issues and positions expressed in parties' election campaigns reflect multiple dimensions of conflict. Substantial theoretical and empirical work considers parties' broad ideological foundations through party family categories (Fuchs and Richert 2018; Hibbs 1978; Lipset and Rokkan 1967). For our purposes, party labels alone are of limited use. Research examining parties' policy goals reveals considerable variation across foreign policy issues for parties within the same family. For example, it is easy to contrast relatively internationally focused social democratic parties such as the UK Labour Party under Tony Blair with more domestically oriented parties like the 1980s Finnish Social Democrats. Focused on issues related to their historical reputations

³ Equating left-right with "economic" for ease of presentation, we do not intend to reduce the dimension to the ideal role of the state in domestic economic policies and welfare provision. Left-right preferences over equity-enhancing policies matter here (Mair 2007).

(Petrocik 1996, Egan 2013, Stubager and Slothuus 2013) and issues broadly important in the electorate (Green-Pedersen and Mortensen 2012, Spoon and Williams 2017), parties' policy statements during election campaigns reflect their strategic electoral context and position in government (Greene 2016). Ultimately, historical party family and estimates of left-right ideological placement alone poorly predict parties' policy positions on a host of issues and behaviors in government (Bäck, Debus, and Dumont 2011), particularly as citizens and elites in many democracies take stronger positions on historically secondary dimensions of conflict related to post-materialism, globalization, immigration, and international institutions.

The rise of populist rhetoric by parties of the left and right further exemplify this dynamic. Parties using populist appeals have mobilized voters over identifying global elites as the cause for the problems of the common man (Mudde 2007). These appeals are often explicitly nativist in nature (anti-international in our terms), particularly appeals made by parties of the radical right (e.g. de Cleen 2018). Populist parties need not be explicitly nationalist, however, as appeals mobilize voters on multiple identities as the "true people" in contrast to an unaccountable global elite and feckless national government. As a rhetorical strategy, populists such as Donald Trump emphasized grievances with the international system (Hafner-Burton, Narung and Rathbun 2019; Boucher and Thies 2019) and desire to change the approach towards a more neomercantilist rather than neoliberal approach (Helleiner 2020). Indeed, international institutions seen as antithetical to the goals of many populist parties such as the European Union have also seen support from so called "populist market liberals" (Verbeek and Zaslove 2017; Destradi et al. 2021). Populists in government have been found to increase the diversity of their international partners rather than withdraw from the international sphere (Destradi and Plagemann 2019) and through coalition participation reduce overall aid flows to countries sending substantial immigrants to the donor country (Suzuki 2023).

The underlying causes of populist success relate to a broader unravelling in the structure of ideologies cross-nationally at the same time as new dimensions such as globalization become politicized (Walter 2021). Increasing domestic diversity, the growth in prominence of international institutions and globalization reduced the importance of the left-right dimension of conflict on the content of election campaigns (Keman 2011, Karreth, Polk and Allen 2013, Kriesi, et al. 2008). For example, attitudes towards European Union integration in domestic politics have emerged as a dominant second dimension of conflict within many European countries, predicting electoral support for parties and resulting government coalitions (Bakker, Jolly and Polk 2012, Karreth, Polk and Allen 2013). In multi-party settings, election campaigns and related policy statements target audiences with distinctive policy goals that may be less salient to the broader public, as smaller parties benefit from making narrowly targeted policy claims (Spoon 2011).

The issues and distinct positions that parties stake out in an election structure the policies they seek to implement in office. Governments use easily implemented policies to claim credit or demonstrate their efforts consistent with the issues prominent in their

campaigns and important to their constituents (Paper #2). Foreign aid portfolios provide such an opportunity. As has been suggested in the literature for decades (Noël and Theriën 1995), foreign assistance parallels domestic redistribution of wealth – the paramount issue in the left-right economic ideological divide. But, foreign aid also resonates with a competing dimension of ideological conflict: attitudes towards engaging with the international community. To explain advanced democratic donors' behavior, then, we need information about their leaders' preferences on the internationalism dimension as well.

As parties' ideologies feature varying combinations of positions related to issues, comparative studies of electoral competition and parties' policy statements distinguish statements on an internationalism dimension from other policy areas such as environmental policy or labor policies. We illustrate the types of rhetoric classified as pro- or anti-international for ideal-typical left and conservative ideologies in Table 1.

Table 1. Exemplary Language from Party Platforms

Economic Ideology		
Internationalism	Left	Right
Pro	<p>“We are proud that Labour MPs passed the historic law that commits Britain to spend 0.7 per cent of our gross national income on international development. Labour will use that commitment from the British public to transform the lives of the world’s poorest people, whilst ensuring value for taxpayers’ money. ... We will rebalance the budget to focus funding on the world’s poorest countries.”⁴</p>	<p>“A Conservative government’s approach to foreign affairs will be based on liberal Conservative principles. Liberal, because Britain must be open and engaged with the world, supporting human rights and championing the cause of democracy and the rule of law at every opportunity. But, Conservative, because our policy must be hard-headed and practical, dealing with the world as it is and not as we wish it were.”⁵</p>
Anti	<p>“We know the evidence that equal societies fare better on social indicators, are happier and more harmonious, and enable more sustainable economies. Yet we forge ahead with channeling wealth into the hands of an elite few. It is little surprise that in</p>	<p>“This year our national debt is climbing towards 100 percent of GDP, the highest for nearly six decades. ... “fiscal circumstances” can allow a departure from the 0.7 percent target, so one decision was temporarily to reduce our aid budget to 0.5 percent of national income.”⁷</p>

⁴ 2015 British Labour Party Manifesto, p. 80 (Volkens et al. 2019).

⁵ 2010 British Conservative Party Manifesto, p. 109 (Volkens et al. 2019).

⁷ Boris Johnson Speech to the House of Commons, <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/pm-statement-on-overseas-development-aid-motion-13-july-2021> (Accessed July 16, 2021)

almost every city in the world
extreme wealth and poverty now
co-exist side by side.”⁶

Table 1’s excerpts show that the internationalism dimension separates foreign policy priorities of parties with similar economic policy preferences. On the left, for example, internationalism positions shape whether we see international redistribution championed as a poverty-reduction tool or maligned as reinforcing the corrupt, global elite, “...channeling wealth into the hands of an elite few.” In the US Republican Party or UK Conservative Party, leadership changes that shifted the party toward more nationally-focused policies also affected governments’ aid priorities. Greene and Licht (2018) translate this interaction of governing parties’ economic and internationalism preferences to expectations over sectoral aid decisions -- portfolios loaded with democracy aid versus trade-sector aid, for example. Sector is, however, only one togglable aspect of foreign aid.

Indeed, eligible recipients vary in their ability to satisfy donor governments’ ideological agendas. Previous work diagnosed donors as either humanitarian or strategic in their motivations by observing correlations between recipient characteristics and aid flows.⁸ Instead, we argue that all donors use foreign aid to serve their domestic political goals for winning elections and controlling government, whether those include alleviating inequality and suffering, bolstering trade relationships for export-oriented industries, or, as we discussed above, managing a governing coalition. Recipients’ characteristics determine which needs they potentially serve, and thus which governments will be most eager to send aid flows their way. We simplify analysis by considering two prominent features of aid recipients, their *need* and *strategic importance*.

Need is a fairly straightforward concept, though it can be measured many different ways. Aid’s poverty-alleviation function identifies the neediest countries as those whose populations live in the direst economic circumstances. Strategic importance, however, has distinct dimensions. Researchers conceptualized egoistic donor behavior via aid channeled to countries with geopolitical salience, markets for donor exports, immigration flows, alliance ties, or regime type. While we entertain some alternatives in the appendix, the left-right ideological dimension lends itself most directly to discussing trade importance: recipients become more strategically important as the volume of goods they purchase from the donor increases.

We argue that need and strategic importance interact with donor governments’ ideology. The economic dimension clearly suggests that left governments will derive

⁶ Statement by 2018 Labour Party Shadow Secretary of State, MP Kate Osamor. <https://labour.org.uk/press/labour-announces-international-development-plan-reduce-inequality-kate-osamor/> (Accessed July 16, 2021). Although aspects of this statement can be seen as pro-welfare policy generally, the statement clearly links capture of governments by corrupt, foreign elites to growing inequality.

⁸ Studies also consider domestic politics of “recipient” countries and political vulnerability with regard to foreign policy and coup promotion (e.g. Paper #1).

greater utility from redistributing wealth to needy recipients to reduce overarching inequalities. Earlier studies effectively assumed all leftists share a pro-international position, emphasizing connections between peoples regardless of nation. Instead, we distinguish pro-internationalists from their parochialist counterparts. Redistribution to impoverished foreigners is a very hard sell to nativist voters, whose concerns are the economic well-being of the *domestic* population. Responding to their voters' perception of scarce resources, the anti-international left uses anti-globalist language, blaming corrupt elites for squandering aid (see Table 1). As cutting aid out entirely would be rather a radical achievement, we do expect there to still be small amounts of aid outgoing. Trade ties may squeeze some generosity from left-anti-internationalist governments; countries which purchase donor exports, and thus bolster donor employment, offer left anti-internationalists a politically tolerable narrative for international redistribution.

For economic conservatives, we expect a similar logic to drive anti-internationalists' decisions, though with stingier overall aid allocation. Conservative ideologies generally favor private rather than public solutions. This logic is highlighted by the anti-internationalist quote from the Conservative Party that cut aid in the name of fiscal responsibility. Rightist ideology will also activate the importance of strategic interest in driving aid allocations for pro-internationalist parties. The desire for global engagement, though, may mean that need can also increase probability of allocations from this type, as they may use aid more ambitiously, allocating more aid overall, with less reticence to fostering newly developing markets. Table 2 summarizes expectations for each ideal party type.

Table 2. Theoretical Expectations Relating Ideology and Recipient Characteristics to Aid Preferences

Internationalism	Economic Ideology	
	Left	Right
Pro	Higher levels of allocation overall	Higher levels of allocation overall
	Need increases allocations	Strategic interest increases allocations more than need
Anti	Lower levels of allocation overall	Lower levels of allocation overall
	Strategic interest modestly increases allocations	Strategic interest modestly increases allocations

While ideal types help to organize our discussion above, real parties in the real world diverge significantly from these caricatures. Our logic overall highlights that leftward ideological movement will increase the likelihood of aid allocation when combined with pro-internationalist preferences, while rightward movement will decrease it, particularly when combined with anti-internationalist preferences. Anti-internationalism will drive down foreign aid. Recipient characteristics will mediate these effects. Need will magnify the redistributive tendencies of left-pro-international

parties, while strategic ties will ameliorate the stinginess of conservatives and the hostility of parochialists. This logic leads us to propose the following hypotheses.

H2a: As donor internationalism increases with leftist preferences, allocation to needy recipients increases relative to less internationalist and less leftist donors.

H2b: As donor internationalism increases with rightist preferences, allocation to strategically important recipients increases relative to less internationalist donors and less rightist donors.

H2c: As donor anti-internationalism increases, allocation to any type of recipient decreases relative to more internationalist donors.

In summary, we argue that donors hold complex, multi-dimensional preferences that vary over time according to those parties and politicians in power. Governments' foreign policies reflect the pledges and statements expressed through the governing parties' election campaigns. Furthermore, coalition negotiations reserve distinct influence over aid provision for the party controlling the DM. Although left-right economic preferences play a key role, a government's willingness to engage in international politics moderates them. We agree that left governments will allocate aid to governments for humanitarian support and conservative governments to foster trade, but *only* when they express greater support for international engagement in preceding election campaigns. Parties with little emphasis on international engagement or that express explicitly isolationist views will be less likely to provide aid to either recipient type.

Research Design

To assess our hypotheses, we construct a dyadic dataset of OECD donor states and aid-eligible recipients, as defined by the World Bank's sliding GNI/capita thresholds, from 1973 to 2010 (OECD DAC 2015). The dataset combines information from AidData (Tierney, et al. 2011) and the Comparative Manifestos Project (CMP) (Volkens, et al. 2011). We operationalize our dependent variable, aid magnitude, as the log of one plus total dyadic ODA commitments in billions of 2011 US\$. As our expectations suggest a similar effect of covariates on probability of aid and magnitude of flows, the frequently used Tobit model addresses our needs (Bermeo 2017; Bermeo and Leblang 2015). Clustered standard errors on the dyad and donor fixed effects reflect our interest in within-donor variation while accommodating the dyadic data structure in a way that allows evaluation of recipient-static variables.

Our expectation that need plays a greater role as the executive's ideology moves towards left-internationalism and trade as it moves towards the right and towards anti-internationalism calls for a complex specification. H2 thus requires an interaction between recipient characteristics and the two distinct preference dimensions of

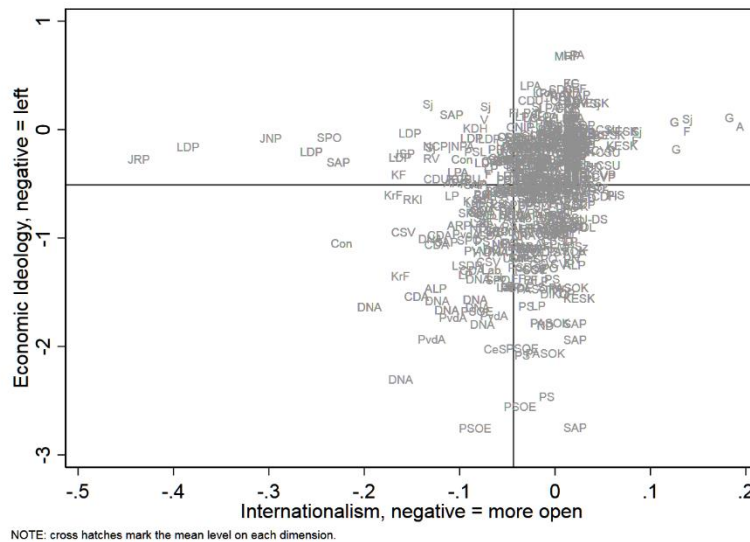
politicians. Given this requirement, our Tobit models feature a high-order interaction effect. They contain many coefficients, each one reporting a highly conditional, difficult to interpret relationship. Therefore, we focus our discussion on substantive quantities of interest calculated via simulation procedures. The appendix contains full results and extended discussion of the interaction effects.

To assess H1, we first compare the fit of a model using the chief executive’s ideology scores to one using the DM’s.⁹ When the PM’s party controls the DM, data are identical between models. When delegation has occurred, though, economic and anti-internationalism variables will hold the DM’s scores rather than the PM’s. If the DM “wins” in these coalition situations, then the fit of the model using her scores rather than the PM’s should be superior to that using the PM’s.

Operationalization of Independent Variables

We tap the economic and international preference dimensions of politicians using the RILE and internationalism scales from CMP. To gather this information for the minister in charge of foreign aid, we cross-referenced Fuchs and Richert’s roster of “development ministers” with CMP and coded the ideological positions for all cases where the DM party differs from the PM’s (Fuchs and Richert 2018). Following Lowe’s rescaling procedure, we log both dimensions to avoid overestimating parties’ extremism (Lowe, et al. 2011). We refer to the internationalism dimension as Anti-Internationalism; the more negative the scale, the more open are the party’s preferences towards global engagement. Distinguishing parties along the mean of each dimension, grid lines in Figure 1 illustrate that parties exist in each of the four ideal-type quadrants.

Figure 1. Distribution of Parties across Ideological Dimensions



⁹ For brevity, we refer to all chief executives as Prime Minister (PM).

Next, we distinguish the need and strategic importance of potential recipient states. To model H2, we interact proxies for these characteristics with the ideology interaction effect. Binary operationalizations make interpretation of the interactions feasible. We grouped each donors' potential annual recipients into quintiles using lagged infant mortality data from the World Bank and lagged value of exports purchased from the donor (Barbieri and Keshk 2016, World Bank 2021). We then tagged the worst 20% in terms of infant mortality with the indicator for *need* and top 20% in terms of export purchases with the indicator for *strategic*. Importantly, need and trade importance are not mutually exclusive. Therefore, the fully-specified interaction between donor ideology and recipient characteristics must include terms with *need*×*strategic*.¹⁰

Controls for other recipient characteristics include: population, logged real GDP per capita (Gleditsch 2002), democracy-autocracy score (Marshall, Gurr and Jagers 2019), oil production (Ross 2013), and whether it currently holds a rotating seat on the UN Security Council (Dreher, Sturm and Vreeland 2009). On the donor side, we control for economic growth (Gleditsch 2002) and coalition status. For dyads, we include the estimated ideal point distance from UNGA voting records (Bailey, Strezhnev and Voeten 2013) and a cubic polynomial of the years receiving or not receiving aid. We also control for past aid flows due to inertia.

Results

Given the high-order interaction effects in our Tobit model, each constitutive coefficient reflects a highly conditional relationship. Our discussion, therefore, focuses on measures of substantive and statistical significance relevant to assessing our hypotheses. Please see Table A5 in the online appendix for full reporting. We begin by considering evidence relevant to our first hypothesis: do DM's demonstrate influence over aid decisions? To assess this, we compare the fit across models employing the PM's versus the DM's preferences using Bayesian Information Criteria (BIC) scores. The smaller statistic is preferred, and the bigger the difference the more confident we can be in the superiority of one model over another. As reported in Table A5, the DM model receives a score more than 62 points smaller than the PM model. This difference exceeds the threshold for "very strong" support in favor of the DM model by more than six times (Raftery 1995). When the DM hails from a different party, her ideological positions better capture government preferences over foreign aid than do the prime minister's.

Given the strong support for the DM model and H1, we use its parameter estimates to illustrate results for our hypotheses regarding ideology's effect on allocation across recipient types.¹¹ We performed a simulation which calculated three measures of substantive and statistical significance of each ideological dimension's

¹⁰ See Brambor, Clark, and Golder 2006 on proper specification of interaction effects and the online Appendix for details on the specification.

¹¹ We provide interpretation for the PM-model in the online appendix. Results are substantively similar, but less efficient.

conditional effect: the marginal effect, the probability of aid allocation, and the expected value of aid allocations conditional on positive allocation.¹² Using observed values for the vector of control variables, we looped over a set of values covering the range of economic ideology and anti-internationalism, calculating quantities of interest for each type of recipient. At each of 1000 iterations we performed a random draw of coefficients, calculated the quantities of interest, and collapsed to the average estimate across control variable vectors. We then used this simulated sampling distribution to calculate 95% confidence intervals as ± 1.96 standard errors around the mean. These simulations produce a wealth of nuanced information, which we report in great detail in the appendix. To highlight key findings, we present a subset of the simulated quantities below.

We begin our discussion with the marginal effects of conservatism and anti-internationalism, presented in Figures 2 and 3 respectively.¹³ Each figure provides 95% confidence bands around the mean estimated instantaneous effect of moving an ideological dimension rightward from the average DM's position across the full range of the other ideological dimension. The gray shaded areas indicates the conditional effect when recipients are trade-partners; the black-outlined area outlined, when they are needy states. These marginal effects quickly illustrate the statistical significance of the highly conditional effects as well as providing the background to understand the patterns in the more substantively interesting quantities discussed later.

Consistent with our expectations, Figure 2 illustrates that the effect of conservatism on aid is (1) almost always negative,¹⁴ (2) statistically significant for most values of internationalism, (3) significantly larger when combined with recipient need compared to trade ties, (4) significantly conditioned by the value of internationalism. It is worth expanding on points 3 and 4 above. In these graphs, the magnitude on the Y-axis tells us the direction of the variable's effect on aid propensity while the slope of the effect indicates how much the magnitude varies across the range of the conditioning variable. Figure 2's upward sloping, but almost universally negative, effects thus tell us that moving to the right exerts a larger impact on aid when the government is *pro-international* than when it is *anti-international*. In other words, anti-internationalists of all economic stripes will look more alike than will pro-internationalist governments. The larger value of the marginal effect of RILE when combined with recipient need indicates, as we suspected, that conservatives would find the narrative of redistribution unappealing. The steeper slope of the effect with need suggests, again, that we will see

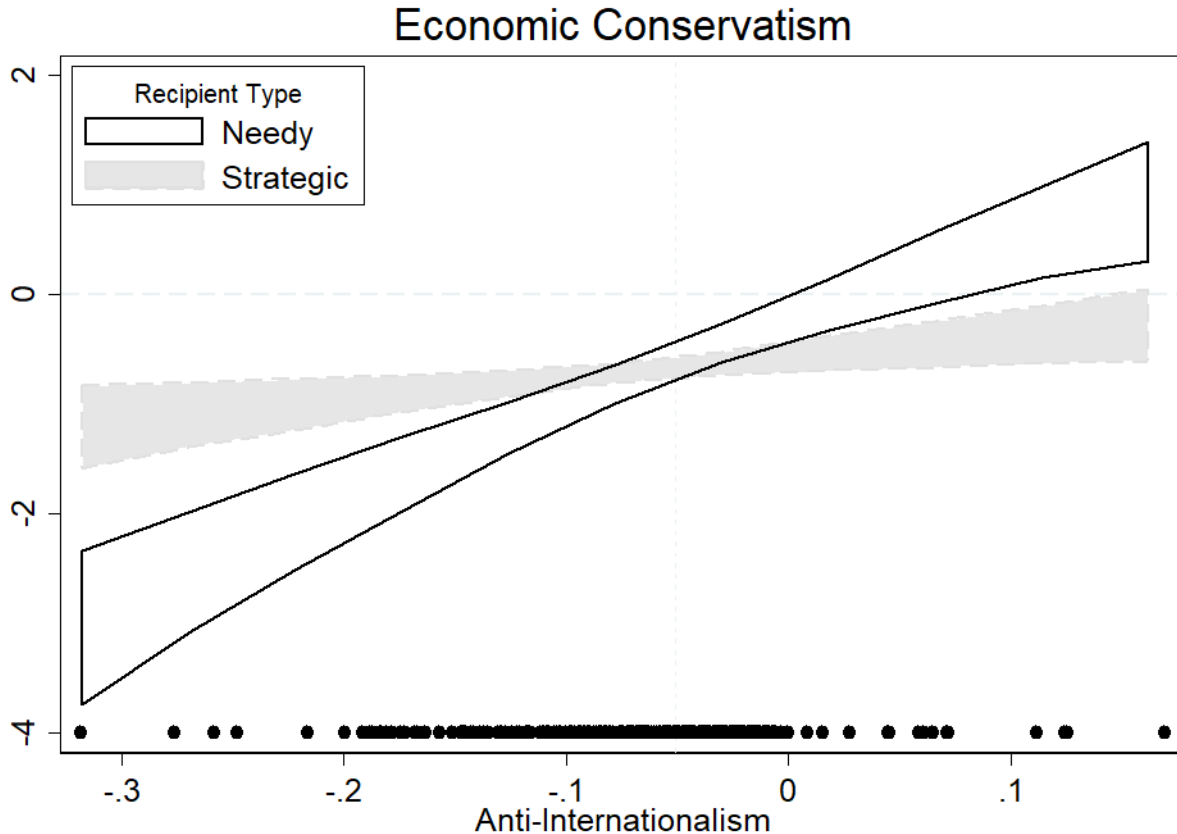
¹² See Sigelman and Zeng (1999) for formulas. The appendix includes marginal effects to precisely assess statistical significance.

¹³ The marginal effect may be more difficult to interpret substantively, but quickly summarizes statistical significance. Because we've held each dimension at about its mean value, the marginal effect gives the average effect on the latent continuous dependent variable of an instantaneous move to the right of the mean.

¹⁴ At the very far right of the anti-internationalism dimension, the model estimates marginal effect of an instantaneous move to the right of average on conservatism as positive. This combination of values – extremely anti-international while average on RILE – does not exist in the observed sample and so should not be given much weight.

the biggest distinction in behavior towards needy states at the pro-internationalist rather than the anti-internationalist side of the ideological spectrum.

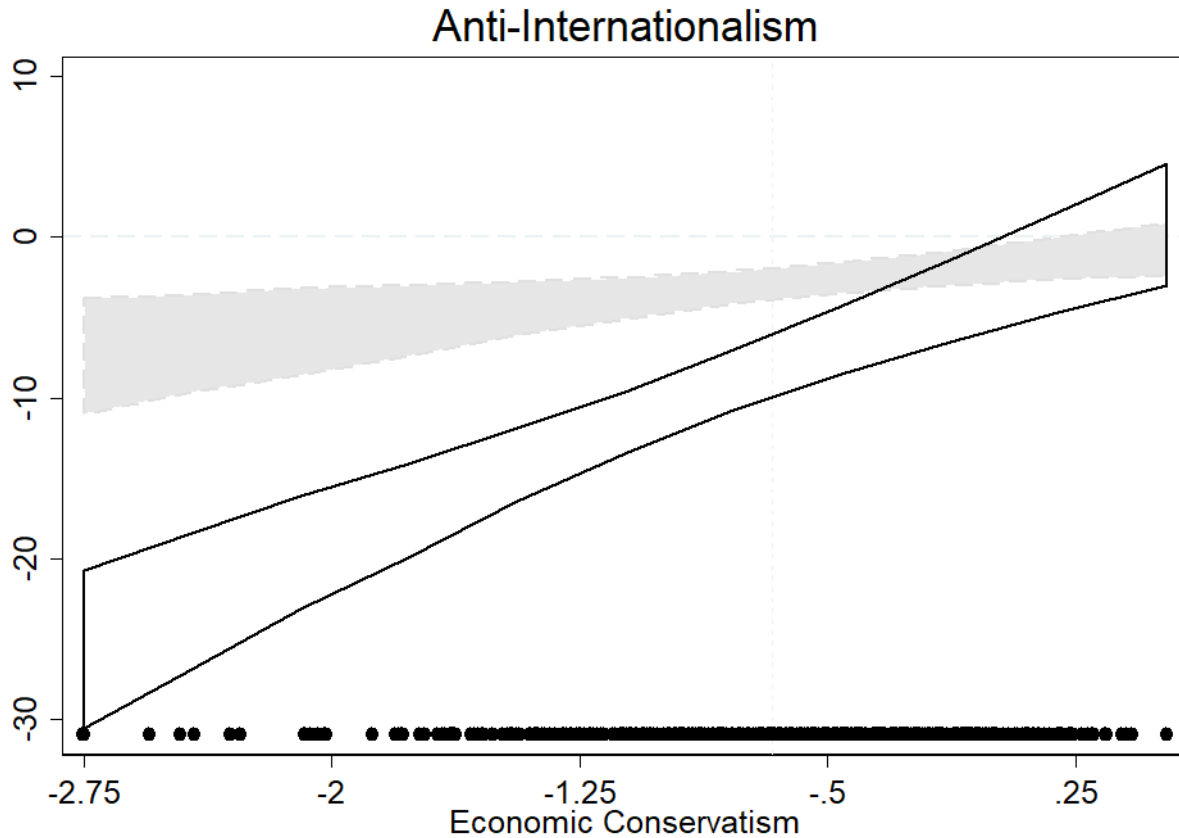
Figure 2. Marginal Effect of Ideological Conservatism on Aid Propensity



Note: Areas provide 95% confidence intervals around mean estimate from simulation described in the text. Rug plot gives the in-sample values of conditioning variable. Effect is calculated at the average level of the conservatism dimension.

Figure 3 provides the effect of moving an average DM's anti-internationalism to the right across the full range of economic positions and the two recipient types. From this figure we learn that the estimated effect of anti-internationalism on aid propensity is (1) negative and large in magnitude, (2) statistically significant across the bulk of economic positions, (3) significantly larger when combined with recipient need rather than trade ties, (4) significantly conditioned by economic ideology, but only modestly so when combined with trade ties. The largest negative effects of anti-internationalism, then, should be expected when combined with leftist governments and needy recipients.

Figure 3. Marginal Effect of Anti-Internationalism on Aid Propensity

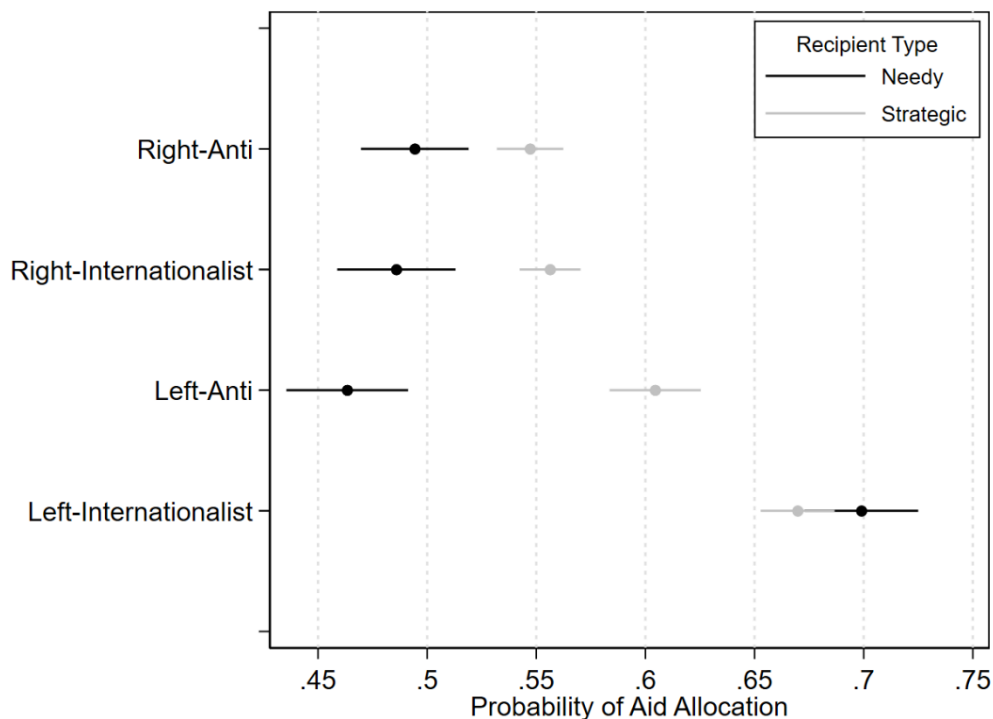


Note: Areas provide 95% confidence intervals around mean estimate from simulation described in the text. Rug plot gives the in-sample values of conditioning variable. Effect is calculated at the average level of the anti-internationalism dimension.

Combined, the findings illustrated in Figures 2 and 3 jibe with the logic of our arguments about the ability of aid recipients to fulfill the electorally-motivated desire of politicians to enact policies consistent with their ideology. Needy recipients only appeal to left-internationalists, who draw a parallel between the poor abroad and the poor at home. Moving to the right on internationalism flips the leftist ideology on its head, with aid to other countries becoming a drain on resources needed at home or even a corrupt globalist policy. For politicians on the right, aid is generally less appealing already, so adding anti-internationalism has a less dramatic effect on preferences, compounding rather than transforming them. A less expected finding highlighted here is the relative magnitude of the marginal effects across dimensions; the effect of anti-internationalism dwarfs that of economic conservatism. While not implied in our hypotheses, this finding makes intuitive sense for this policy and emphasizes the importance of considering more than just the traditional left-right distinction when modeling governments' foreign policy behavior.

While marginal effects provide an excellent summary of our findings, we find predicted probabilities and expected values evaluated at specific values of the independent variables useful as well. Figure 4 contains point estimates and confidence bands for the predicted probability of needy (in black) and strategically important (in grey) recipients receiving a positive aid allocation from a donor government for ideal-typical combinations of donor ideology.¹⁵ These predicted probabilities illustrate striking evidence in favor of H2a’s prediction that the combination of leftist and internationalist ideology would increase generosity to needy recipients. A state in need can bet on getting aid from left-internationalists with a probability of 70%. Moving to

Figure 4. Predicted Probability of Positive Aid Allocation by Ideology and Recipient



Note: spikes indicate 95% confidence interval around mean estimate from 1000 iterations of the simulation described in text. We use the following left-right economic ideology and anti-internationalism scores, respectively: left-internationalist (-2.09, -0.174); left-anti-internationalist, (-2.09, 0.066); right-internationalist (0.524, -0.174); right-anti-internationalist (0.524, 0.066).

¹⁵ We used values near +/- 2 standard deviations of the mean of each economic dimension to identify left and right, respectively. Using relatively extreme values, without going to maximums allows us to typify the results without distorting them. The appendix includes graphs with alternative values used to identify the “ideal types”. The appendix also includes contour plots reporting probabilities across the full-range of both dimensions of the ideology interaction and all four potential types of recipients.

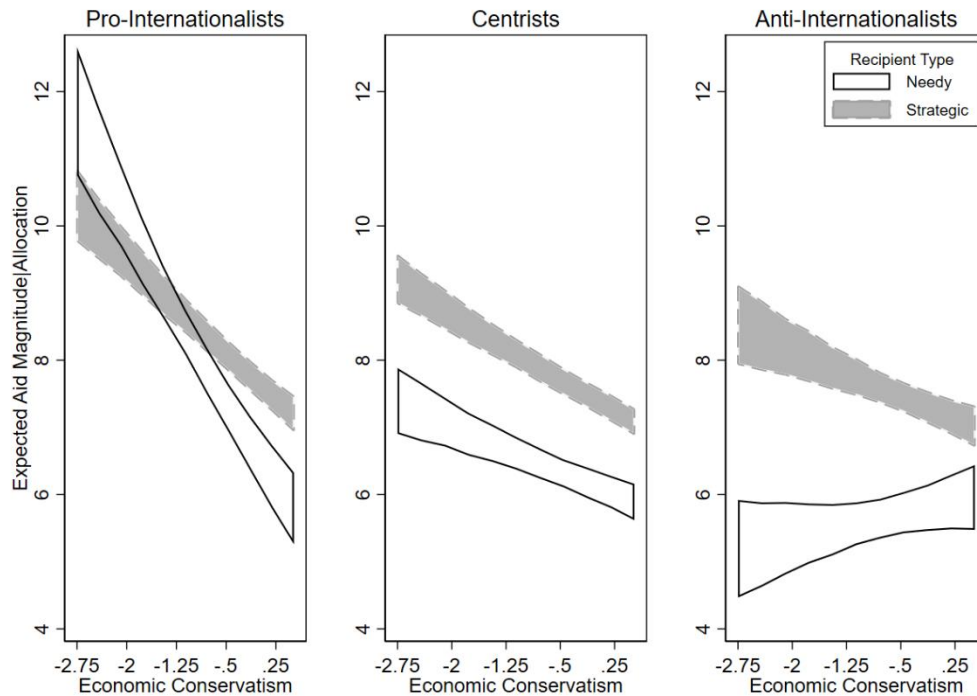
the right on either dimension drops the probability to just below 50% (left-anti-internationalists 95% CI=0.43,.049, right-pro-internationalists 95% CI= 0.46, 0.51).¹⁶ Consistent with H2b, trade partners are more likely to receive aid from right-internationalists than are needy recipients. The probability of aid to strategic recipients is higher for right-internationalists than for their anti-internationalist counterparts, but this difference is not statistically distinguishable. The language of H2b suggests we should see a higher probability of aid to strategic recipients from the right-internationalists than from left-internationalists. This clearly is not supported: conservatism's effect powerfully drives down the probability of aid allocations, despite high internationalism scores. Finally, H2c predicts lower allocation across recipients as anti-internationalism increases. This clearly holds on the left-side of the economic spectrum. Due to the weakening effect of anti-internationalism at the right end of the economic spectrum illustrated in Figure 3 above, the findings are less definitive when comparing the ideal types on the right.

We further unpack this dynamic by considering the magnitude of resources each type of government can be expected to allocate *conditional* on providing some positive aid. In Figure 5 we provide expected aid at three values of the anti-internationalism dimension (pro=-0.174, centrist=-.03, anti=0.066) across the full range of economic ideology. The black outline provides 95% confidence around estimated allocations when recipients are needy; the grey shaded area, when trade partners. Moving to the right on economics drives down the amount of aid from all governments for all types of recipients, until anti-internationalism reaches quite extreme levels (see Figure 2 above). The largest negative effect of conservatism occurs for DM's with pro-internationalist ideology. Increasing anti-internationalism, for its part, produces large, significant decreases in expected allocations to needy states, particularly from leftist DM's. A far-left DM's expected allocations to needy states drop by 37% when we move from a pro-internationalist to a centrist position, while trade partners' expected allocations drop only about 11%.

Altogether, our analysis finds compelling evidence consistent with our argument. An investigation of model fit indicates that incorporating the DM's preferences improves the explanatory power of the model, consistent with our first hypothesis. As predicted by the second set of hypotheses, an anti-international dimension moderates the impact of economic ideology on preferences for using foreign aid for strategic or welfare based motivations. Extensive sensitivity analyses presented in the appendix reveal the results to be robust to alternative methodological choices.

¹⁶ As reported in the appendix, Figure A5 right panel, an even more dramatic distinction exists when using a more extreme definition of ideal types. At the maximum, left-internationalists allocate aid to needy states with 90% probability; to trade partners, with 70%.

Figure 5. Expected Aid Magnitude by Recipient and Ideology



Note: Areas depict 95% confidence bands around mean estimated conditional expected magnitude from the simulation procedure described above.

Discussion

Our model of domestic politics differs from typical IR models, which often conceptualize leaders as constrained primarily by the (relatively) static rules of turnover and enfranchisement. Certainly, some theories carve out room for electoral pressures, but these elections nearly always eschew ideological content, with voters caring about “competence”, or their material share of policy outputs (see Arena and Niccoletti 2014). Scholars of elections and policy change relax strong assumptions on parties’ needs to appease a hypothetical median voter by conceptualizing parties’ more distinctive, issue-focused constituencies. They distinguish between parties that focus on winning electoral pluralities such as those in the US or UK versus those that actually benefit electorally from taking strong positions on niche topics such as many smaller parties in parliamentary regimes (Spoon 2011). Smaller parties with distinctive positions on multiple ideological dimensions often play kingmaker roles for coalitions in multi-party systems. As we find for the DM, coalition parties can have substantial policy influence through the cabinet positions they control.

We incorporate these ideas into our “leaders,” but we are making a very traditional IR theory point: all donors are strategic. All government actors behave in what they perceive to be their self-interest, and wield the policies they can control in

egoistic ways. However, consistent with theory in comparative politics, we argue that what serves a politician's interests varies by their electorally-motivated ideological positions and their intra-coalition politics, like studies focused on domestic audience constraints (e.g. Paper #2).

By drawing on the comparative literature's discussion of multi-dimensional political conflict, we add nuance to the foreign policy literature on government ideology and foreign aid. We argue that internationalism conditions whether leaders see a parallel between domestic and international redistribution of wealth. Unexpectedly, we find that economic conservatism's miserly impulse overpowers this internationalist dimension. While previous work suggested mixed findings in the literature stem from failing to incorporate the possibility of pro-internationalist rightist governments, this analysis suggests that anti-internationalist leftists actually pose a greater problem for earlier analyses. This finding highlights the substantial politicization of globalization in many large donor countries in the 2000s most recently embodied by leaders such as Donald Trump, Boris Johnson and the growth of anti-EU sentiment in many European countries. Although the anti-international left is often less emphasized than the populist and far right, anti-globalist sentiment provides common ground between conservative and leftist movements (Kriesi et al 2008; Ezrow and Xezonakis 2011; Kriesi 2014; Suzuki 2023).

For comparative scholars, this research offers additional evidence on the impact of parties' election campaigns on public policy and further extends perspectives exploring the impacts of parties in coalition settings. Like studies of election pledges and constituency representation, we find evidence consistent with the argument that parties' professed policy priorities even hold consequences for lower-salience policy areas such as foreign aid (Soroka and Wlezien 2010; Thomson et al. 2017; Greene and Licht 2018). Furthermore, our evidence indicates that taking account of coalition negotiation outcomes and the individuals selected for cabinet positions improves our understanding of the resulting policy changes, consistent with studies of coalition formation (Laver and Shepsle 1996; Alexiadou 2017; Klüwer and Spoon 2020). The influence of development ministers on the aid allocation process supports a line of research in international relations and foreign policy aimed at understanding elite figures below the chief executive (Modelska 1970; Flores 2009; Saunders 2017; Fuchs and Richert 2018). Future research could significantly improve our understanding of the links between ideology and foreign policy outcomes by continuing to develop theory on the strategic balance within domestic politics. Key elements to be explored include the stability of coalitions, the distance between coalition partners – particularly the PM and the DM – and the political harmony between donors and potential targets.

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