

# Codebook Explanation

The explanatory dataset consists of eight causal pathways for each of the 48 case studies: two explanations for the general readiness of a state to support international cooperation in a particular case, and two on its willingness to support a substantive broadening, geographical widening, and institutional deepening of this cooperation (cf. the codebook descriptive data).<sup>1</sup>

All explanations can be attributed to one of 18 causal pathways. To put it in a nutshell: the 18 possible causal pathways indicate whether a particular state preference is determined by interests, institutions, or ideas; whether these interests, institutions, or ideas come from a domestic, national, or international source; and whether they have a positive or negative effect on the willingness of a state to cooperate with other states.

A simple system of abbreviations can be used to codify these causal pathways.

	Positive impact	Negative impact
Interests from a domestic source	DomIntPos	DomIntNeg
National interests as defined by the Government	NatIntPos	NatIntNeg
Interests from an international source	IntIntPos	IntIntNeg
Normative ideas from a domestic source	DomIdPos	DomIdNeg
Normative ideas at the national level	NatIdPos	NatIdNeg
Normative ideas from an international source	IntIdPos	IntIdNeg
Institutions at the sub-national level	DomInstPos	DomInstNeg
Institutions at the national level	NatInstPos	NatInstNeg
International institutions	IntInstPos	IntInstNeg

Table: Causal Pathways for Preference Formation

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<sup>1</sup> It is necessary to consider two explanations for each dimension, because often the attitude of a state (e.g. indifference) is the result of one explanation having a positive, and another explanation having a negative effect.

Firstly, state preferences on international cooperation can originate from the three familiar levels of analysis: domestic, national, international. Secondly, they can be determined by three different sources: material interests, institutional frameworks, normative ideas.<sup>2</sup> This leads to nine possible combinations of factors. Since each combination can either have a positive or a negative impact on the willingness of a state to cooperate with other states, we are left with an inventory of 18 possible causal pathways.

For example: If the US Government supports free trade because this is what leading industrialists demand, then this is an example for the causal pathway ‘domestic interests with a positive impact’. If the British Government is opposed to the automatic extradition of criminal offenders to the United States because the death penalty is seen as incompatible with the British constitution, this is an example for ‘national institutions with a negative impact’. If the German Chancellor, under the impression of the global outcry after September 11, vowed unconditional solidarity to the United States in its war against terrorism, this was an example for ‘international ideas with a positive impact’.

To guarantee a maximum of analytical precision, let us draw a simple operational distinction between material interests, institutional frameworks, and normative ideas. A state preference is determined by interests, institutions, or ideas to the extent that the relevant decision makers are concerned with any of the following categorical questions:

1. Is the anticipated outcome beneficial or detrimental due to its consequences?
2. Is the anticipated outcome easy or difficult to reconcile with existing institutions?
3. Is the anticipated outcome right or wrong on moral or normative grounds?

To the extent that a state preference is determined by the first question, the state acts from material interests (‘If we don’t defeat drugs, our young generations will be endangered’). When the second question is in the foreground, institutional frameworks are the key determinant (‘Due to our basic legal principles, we cannot accept entrapment as a drug enforcement technique’). Finally, normative ideas are the source of national preferences whenever the position of a state is determined by questions of right or wrong (‘Drugs are a dangerous social poison, and we must fight this evil scourge’).

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<sup>2</sup> On interests, institutions and ideas see Goldstein and Keohane 1993; Garrett and Weingast 1993.

While an inventory of 18 causal pathways allows for quite a lot of variation, critics may nevertheless debate the adequacy of the framework. There are borderline cases where interests, institutions and ideas are hard to distinguish. Moreover, some important items are absent from the list. For example, the category of “ideas” is limited to normative ideas and does not cover epistemic ideas. Landmark events like September 11<sup>th</sup>, which arguably can have an impact on state preferences, are not explicitly mentioned. Furthermore, national preferences may also be determined by political culture. Different actor constellations such as expert communities, professional diplomats or nongovernmental organisations, are also absent from the list; and so on, and so forth.

Against these and similar objections, I would argue that borderline cases are kept to a minimum by the clear formulation of the categorical questions. As far as epistemic ideas and landmark events such as September 11<sup>th</sup> are concerned, they do not have an immediate causal impact. Only to the extent that they affect material interests, touch institutional frameworks, or upset normative ideas, do they influence the political process. A similar argument can be made about political culture and actor constellations. They do not have an immediate impact on national preference formation. Rather than operating as independent causal factors, they promote the material interests, favour the institutional frameworks, or transport the normative ideas that determine state preferences. In short, the mentioned 18 causal pathways are the *proximate* causes that influence national preference formation. This is not to deny that there may be other *remote* causes.

## References:

- Goldstein, Judith, and Robert O. Keohane (eds) (1993) *Ideas and Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions, and Political Change*, Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press.
- Garrett, Geoffrey, and Barry R. Weingast (1993) ‘Ideas, interests, and institutions: constructing the European Community’s Internal Market’, in Judith Goldstein and Robert O. Keohane (eds) *Ideas and Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions, and Political Change*, Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, pp. 173-206.