

Needs and Interests:

Understanding the British Public's Balancing of Aid Priorities

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There are distinct signs of ‘donor fatigue’ when it comes to the British public’s attitudes to foreign aid. Even when disabused of the illusion that the foreign aid budget accounts for a hefty slice of government spending, a majority of people would like to see it reduced below the 0.7% share of national income to which recent Conservative-led governments have committed. A common cry among those who would like to spend less is that “charity begins at home” – indeed, this was part of the title of one of the petitions submitted to the UK government during the 2010-15 parliamentary term. It is not surprising that aid would be seen by the public as a nationalised version of charitable giving – after all, it is frequently justified in humanitarian terms, and any suggestion that aid is going to countries in less than dire need triggers fresh controversy.

Yet, if the public does see foreign aid simply as a form of charity, it has a narrower conception than governments and scholars in the field, both of whom perceive a wide variety of more self-interested motivations for aid donation. The purpose of this paper is to examine how the public react when alerted to that rival conception or justification of foreign aid. How would they allocate aid faced with a trade-off between altruism and the national interest? What drives individual differences in preferences among those two motivations? And what does this imply about the malleability of public opinion on the role and scale of aid budgets? Foreign aid is an increasingly politicised issue on which public opinion matters, and so the answers to these questions should be relevant to policymakers. At the same time, it is in many ways a remote issue on which citizens’ opinions are not much elaborated or even informed. Answering these questions therefore addresses broader academic debates about how far foreign policy attitudes are firmly staked in personality and ideology as opposed to swaying in the political and media winds.

Needs versus interests in foreign aid

There is a clear consensus in the literature that donors pursue egoistic political, strategic, security or economic goals with foreign aid, evidenced especially by quantitative studies on how bilateral aid is allocated (Alesina and Dollar 2000; Berthélemy, 2006; Younas 2008; Hoeffler and Outram 2011). However, aid also has a clear moral dimension (see Lumsdaine, 1993). The ‘head’ versus ‘heart’ arguments for development aid are neatly summed up by the UK PM David Cameron. In 2012 he stated that “There is “an argument of the heart” and of the “head” in favour of continuing to supply aid to the developing world’. He noted that the ‘argument of the heart is even when things are difficult at home we should fulfil our moral obligations to the poorest of the world’ but that ‘there are also good arguments of the head,’ where taxpayers can visualise their money is going to “save lives”, whilst aid also helps prevent countries collapsing, causing Britain “problems of mass migration, pandemics and climate change’ (The Telegraph, 2012²). We see this need versus self-interest debate in discussions about US aid (Milner and Tingley, 2011), German aid (Dreher et al, 2015), Australian aid (Corbett and Dinnen, 2016) and Danish aid (Olesen and Pederssen, 2010).

However, previous comparative studies have tended to take as their dependent variable the level rather than the inferred motivation of aid. Nonetheless, it is worth reviewing these because their concern with ideology makes them relevant for our subsequent assessment of public opinion. The primary focus has been on whether left-right ideological differences between parties can explain the variations in aid levels that have occurred in the 50 years since the creation of the OECD DAC, the global body that monitors aid levels in a group of OECD states. The first major study along these lines was carried out by Imbeau (1988; 1989). He found that the crucial issue was ‘which

² <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/9768940/Cameron-UK-has-a-moral-obligation-to-help-worlds-poor.html>.

ideology is translated into policy choices' rather than just ideology. This conclusion was used to explain why in 1966 'aid was the fact of rightist donors' such as the USA, the UK and France-these were the only Western states that had a coherent aid policy. Once states such as Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden developed their aid policies, greater cross-national comparisons were possible. Lumsdaine (1993) adopted this policy choice explanation to conclude that higher levels of foreign aid is one way that left-oriented governments distinguish themselves from their conservative opponents. The general conclusion, albeit a tentative one, was that aid levels tended to be higher from those states with either a left-wing (Therien and Noel 2000) or Christian Democratic government (Lumsdaine 1993), whilst right leaning parties traditionally support spending cuts in this area (Therien and Noel (2000); Tingley 2010). A survey of the 17 members of the DAC for 13 years (1983–1995) by Breuning and Ishiyama (2003) found that the proportion of parliamentary seats held by left parties was the only variable in their model that provides a statistically significant explanation of the dispersion of development aid. Reviews by Round and Odedokun (2004) argued against this conclusion, but this paper finds that 'there is evidence within the comparative politics literature that partisanship based on ideological divisions gets translated into the budget process, including foreign aid budgets' (Travis, 2008).

Therien and Noel (2000) conducted a study of foreign aid for 16 OECD DAC states between 1980 and 1991. The explanation for higher levels of spending by left governments was that as these governments would project policies for the developing world that reflected their greater commitment to equality and solidarity at home. Therien and Noel argue that aid policy reflects a political discourse on the left that links welfare institutions and social spending. Therefore countries with higher levels of domestic social spending, stronger leftist political parties, and more popular support for international redistribution have larger aid budgets (Therien and Noel, 2000). Therien and Noel's

argue that there is a positive relationship between domestic public opinion's support for welfare redistribution and foreign commitments to redistribute.

Tingley (2010) builds on these findings that domestic political factors play a role in determining aid flows and recipients by once again examining the role played by parties and ideology. He also concludes that ideology appears to matter more for aid to poorer developing countries and multilateral institutions than aid to wealthier developing countries. Tingley concludes that 'as governments become more conservative, the share of GDP committed to foreign aid effort declines' (Tingley, 2010, p.?). Indeed Tingley argues that conservative governments are less likely to favour aid as it 'represents interference by the government with both the donor and recipient economies' and 'might crowd out investment opportunities in recipient countries' (2010, p42). Generally, these conclusions are supported by the case studies in the literature. Fleck and Kilby who found that (2010) who find that more conservative US governments to give more aid to trading partners, while more liberal US governments give more aid to countries needy countries. The only exception is evidence to suggest that in some cases parties on the right are influenced by moral arguments made usually by religious supporters. This conclusion about the influence of the right is supported by the work of Travis (2010) and Milner and Tingley (2011). The situation is historically very similar in the UK (see Killick, 2005), although the evidence from Australia is more mixed (Rosser, 2008).

Aid and public opinion

If there are links between party ideology and aid levels, one could posit that we would see a similar ideological division amongst the voters. It does seem clear that public awareness of development issues is not very sophisticated and that in many cases there is a disconnect between elites and public opinion, with elites tending to favour increased levels of aid (Otter, 2003; IDS, 2010). Marc Stern (1998) finds that the most important

determinants of support for aid are the level of compassion in a society and the public perception of aid effectiveness. This last point relates to whether the public believe “their aid” is making a difference on the ground and forms a crucial plank of the DAC peer reviews. Interestingly, there is no correlation in the literature between income levels and economic growth rates and aid flows (Van Heerde and Hudson 2010).

Otter (2003) argues that the range of factors involved in aid policy make the policy area ‘possibly unique’ and therefore usual rules related to public opinion influence may not apply. He shows this by identifying in some cases how aid spending went up despite public opinion seeming to demand cuts. This conclusion is supported by Mayer and Raimondos-Møller (2003) in their work on the median voter and aid, although recent research by Heinrich et al (2016) appears to suggest that the 2008 economic crisis has seen politicians cut aid spending in many countries as a result of lower public support for aid. Within this broad conclusion we do see clear differences. Recent by Lu and Breuning (2014) and Hicks et al (2016) argues that gender has an influence over support for aid. Both studies find a positive relationship with female representation in the national legislature and increased aid spending, although there is a debate as to whether this is a result of gender equality in the donor state rather than women’s values (see Lu and Breuning, 2014; Hicks et al, 2016).

In the UK until 2010 we see evidence that supports the literature reviewed above. Labour tended to support increasing development spending, whilst the Conservatives tended to cut spending in this policy area. Labour created separate agencies for international aid, which were then abolished by the Conservatives on their return to power. Olsen (2001) reviews the public opinion data on aid in the 1990s and he finds that the level of knowledge of development aid among the British mass public was extremely limited (see also Hudson & van Heerde-Hudson, 2012). Crucially, ‘increasing aid’ received the lowest score on the indicators ‘very important’ or ‘fairly important’,

when aid was put alongside ten other priorities. Issues such as environment, road traffic and the provision of housing came first. He argues that in the British case the development community can be described as an 'issue network', although NGOs played an important role as opinion-formers (Olsen, 2001).

It was therefore surprising when, on entering office in 2010, the Conservative Party committed itself to an ODA target of 0.7% despite cuts to every other government department except health. It was also surprising to see the party maintain the status of Dfid as a separate development agency (see Heppell and Lightfoot, 2012). However, these decisions do support the argument that development policy is elite driven. 57% of the public in a Chatham House poll believe that such assistance should be reduced, whilst an IDS poll found that 63% believe that DFID should carry its share of the cuts. The Chatham House report highlights a perception gap between the public and opinion formers, with the latter more generally in favour of aid. The survey by Van Heerde and Hudson (2010) also shows hostility to aid amongst traditionally Tory papers (see also Cawley, 2015). This hostility has been increasing as the cuts bite and has been echoed by some backbench Tory MPs (see Barker, 2011).

Public opinion on aid *motivations*

Gone are the days in which foreign policy opinions were thought (e.g. by Almond, 1950; Erskine, 1963) to be mostly what Converse (1964) called 'nonattitudes': that is, top-of-the-head responses from a public largely unconcerned with and ignorant of foreign affairs. For decades the received wisdom, this 'minimalist' view of the public's foreign policy opinions has now been convincingly challenged such that foreign policy attitudes are now considered much worthier of study. The challenge is based on 'low-information rationality' (Lupia and McCubbins, 1998; Sniderman et al., 1991). While acknowledging the minimalist premise that citizens lack pre-packaged attitudes on foreign affairs, these

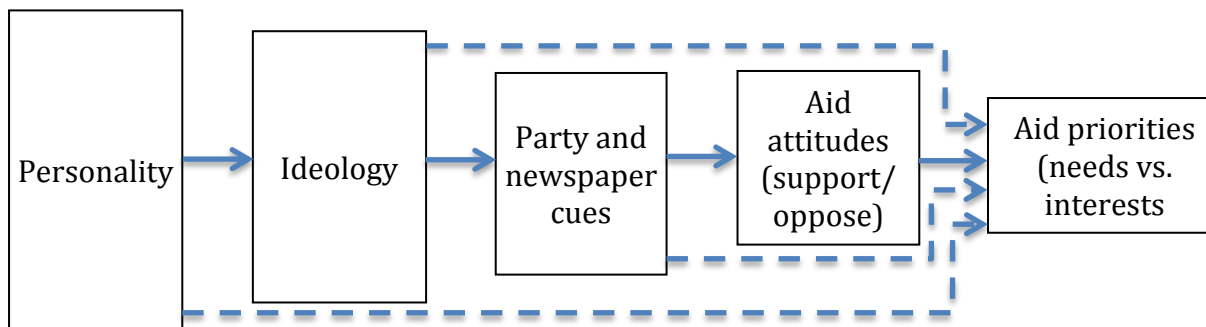
authors argue that citizens can nonetheless form opinions by finding a link from the issue to an existing attitude, value, or predisposition of some kind. Thus it is now widely recognised that citizens can and do form meaningful and reasonably stable foreign policy attitudes – which can then in turn shape partisan preferences, candidate evaluations, and thus voting behaviour (e.g. Aldrich *et al.*, 1989, 2006; Clarke *et al.*, 2006). This is especially true when – as with foreign aid – the issue becomes more politicised and when – again, as with foreign aid – there are clear links to more familiar domestic policy issues such as government spending. Put simply, this makes it easier for citizens to know where to look when called upon to find an attitude towards foreign aid. Paxton and Knack (2012) and Clarke *et al.* (2014) set out a range of relevant predispositions in this context, including social trust, egalitarianism, religiosity, ethnocentrism and national pride.

Yet two of the lessons of minimalism remain pertinent. One reason why foreign policy attitudes often proved fickle was that, because these issues were not very familiar, people lacked a consistent basis for answering questions about them. Various predispositions or values might be relevant; which was invoked would vary across time, often depending on the context set by the last night's news or the prior questions in the survey (see Zaller and Feldman, 1992). Second, when less familiar with or knowledgeable about political issues, citizens are prone not to invest cognitive effort in finding a relevant value or predisposition but instead to find a shorter route to judgement. Prominent among such heuristic devices are cues from elite debate, such as from trusted parties or media sources. Provided that these messengers have stable opinions, then citizens taking their cues will too. But the proviso reminds us that that stability is misleading or at least conditional. Citizens whose attitudes are derived from external cues rather than internal predispositions are more open to persuasion.

Both of these points are particularly relevant in the case of motivations for aid. Most reasonably politically aware citizens will have considered whether they support the

principle of foreign aid and the closely related question of whether they would like it to be increased or reduced. Probably rather fewer will have considered where to strike the balance between interest-driven and altruistic aid. Responses to a survey question about that issue may therefore have a top-of-the-head flavour, as respondents reach for a simple cue or for one of the many potentially relevant values and attitudes bearing on the question. In the remainder of this section, we set out those likely cues and predispositions under the headings indicated by the simple model in Figure 1.

Figure 1: A simple model of public opinion on aid motivations



We will discuss these in reverse causal order: that is, beginning at the right-hand side of the diagram. There are clear parallels between this dependent variable and the broader question about support for the principle and extent of aid. So those asked to consider the interest-needs balance seem likely, in a straightforward application of what Sniderman et al. (1991, ch. 6) call the likability heuristic, to derive priorities from their general attitude to foreign aid – with ‘interests’ the next-best option for those who oppose aid spending in the first place. However, this depends partly on how citizens define aid given for more self-interested purposes. If, sticking to the more familiar charitable conception of aid, they file interests-driven spending under foreign policy, trade policy, defence or some other heading, then attitudes and priorities more or less blur into one. But the two are at least logically separable. Someone taking a more

isolationist, ‘charity begins at home’ line might oppose foreign aid in general but reason that, if it is going to be spent anyway, it should be targeted on where it would address the severest need. Someone else might be strongly in favour of increased spending on foreign aid but precisely because of its potential to advance Britain’s national interests. In consequence, then, we might expect citizens’ needs-interests stances to be healthily correlated with but not determined by their broader aid attitudes.

That is one reason why we need to consider the other elements in the Figure 1 model, elements which might – as indicated by the dashed lines – explain variance in citizens’ interests-needs prioritising beyond their general attitudes towards aid. The other reason has to do with the causal logic here. If the same differences in personality and partisanship drive both aid attitudes and aid priorities, then some of the bivariate association between the latter two variables will be spurious. We should not misattribute to a simple and aid-specific likability heuristic a correlation that instead belongs within a broader constellation of foreign policy attitudes.

There are some parallels in the argument that can be made about the partisanship and media exposure variables that are a stage further back in Figure 1’s causal model. First, as factors influencing general support for foreign aid, these have the potential for indirect effects on our dependent variable. Second, they may well also have direct effects. Political parties in Britain (as elsewhere) differ – broadly but far from exactly in line with their left-right stance -- in the importance that they attach to humanitarian concerns relative to national interests. These differences are reflected in partisan gaps in public foreign policy preferences, as for example when Conservative voters are more willing than Labour voters to countenance military intervention to protect Britain’s oil interests but the gap reverses when the motivation for action is humanitarian. If partisan heuristics are deployed by those considering the needs-interests dilemma with foreign aid, we would expect parallel differences. The same is true of media sources, notably the

press. Some British newspapers are if anything more partisan even than the parties themselves, and most take a discernible stance on the same humanitarianism vs. national interests continuum described above (van Heerde and Hudson, 2010). It is a moot point whether we would describe their readers as taking heuristic cues from these newspapers or as more lastingly persuaded by them. For present purposes, what matters is the potential for press effects on citizens' aid priorities.

However, mention of left-right and humanitarianism alerts us to the same danger of spurious association that we highlighted above in the case of the foreign aid heuristic. Any positing of media effects is rightly greeted with the question: do readers believe X because they read the Daily Y, or do they read the Daily Y because it suits those predisposed to believe X? The same can be said about partisanship: if those supporting a left-wing party espouse a left-wing policy, this cannot be attributed to partisan heuristic reasoning without holding constant the ideological position that might drive both party and policy choice. This helps to explain why Clarke et al. (2014) found that partisanship effects in their models of foreign aid were non-significant when attitudinal and value variables were included in the specification.

The next question, then, concerns which are the ideological predispositions that might drive this specific foreign policy attitude. Looking at foreign aid more generally, Paxton and Knack (2012) point out that the 'foreign' and 'aid' elements activate different ideological dimensions, and we would expect the same here. We would expect needs to be given a higher priority by those on the left and interests to be given a higher priority by those scoring higher on nationalism. Things are less clear-cut with patriotism. Ostensibly, this also suggests a concern for the nation and its interests. However, holding the 'outgroup hate' of nationalism constant, the 'ingroup love' of patriotism often works in the opposite direction – as, for example, when Herrmann et al. (2009) find that patriotism inhibits militarism (see also Viki and Calitri, 2008). Mayda and

Rodrik (2005) posit a mechanism for these effects, suggesting that patriotism can foster a confidence in the nation's ability to intervene positively on the world stage. Finally, we would expect those scoring higher on international trust to be readier to intervene abroad and to see greater compatibility between the interests of their own and of other countries (Brewer et al., 2004; Paxton and Knack, 2012).

It might be wondered where a sentiment like international trust comes from. Here we can borrow Paxton and Knack's approach and distinguish its 'international' from its 'trust' component. The latter has less to do with the explicitly political arena of foreign affairs and more to do with a general individual disposition to trust others – including much closer to home. This brings us to the first stage in the causal chain: personality. Social or personal trust is the first of three personality variables that have not only been shown to have ideological consequences but are liable more directly to shape aid priorities. The second two, social dominance orientation (SDO) and right-wing authoritarianism (RWA), comprise what has been rather dramatically called the 'lethal union' because together they strongly affect a variety of militarist and ethnocentric attitudes (Altemeyer, 1998). SDO hinges on the acceptance of inequality in a competitive world and, as such, is likely both to inhibit humanitarianism and to encourage the pursuit – as ruthless as necessary – of (national) self-interest. Meanwhile, the RWA scale tends to separate those who react to humanitarian crises by a projection of blame onto the sufferers rather than the guilt that often drives needs-based aid.

The distinction between personality and ideological variables is blurred. Right-wing authoritarianism, for example, is regarded as a personality variable by many authors (e.g. Pratto et al., 1994; McFarland, 2010) and as an ideological dimension by others (e.g. Evans et al., 1996; Hodson and Costello, 2007). While measures of RWA and SDO may avoid explicitly political content, ultimately they ask respondents to comment on the external rather than their own internal world. This is why such variables tend to have

stronger effects on political attitudes – including foreign policy opinions – than do purer measures of personality such as the ‘Big Five’ (see e.g. Rathbun et al., 2016). The reason why the latter are not considered in this paper is more prosaic, however: they were not included in the survey on which our analysis is based.

Data and measures

Our dependent variable is measured in two surveys, one from 2010 and one from 2015. While there are some very minor differences in the wording of the question and in the scales making direct comparison difficult, we still believe that comparison between the two variables can provide us with broad insights into any changes in attitudes towards the strategic direction of British aid policy. However, our main concern is with modelling aid attitudes and for that we rely on the 2010 dataset which offers an unusually rich array of personality and ideological variables.

Those 2010 data come from an Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)-funded three-wave panel survey of the British public’s foreign policy attitudes.³ Fieldwork took place in January-February of that year. This was not a traditional panel design intended to capture change; the intention was rather to divide a long instrument into manageable chunks, and to field these at very brief intervals so that the entire process of data collection took less than a month.

The 2015 dataset was collected as part of Political Studies Association (PSA) contest where members of the PSA were asked to submit questions on topics that were felt the current election polls were ignoring. A PSA sub-committee would select the top 5 questions and put them in a poll, our question was one of those 5. As such we were not in total control of the surrounding control variables and there were no personality

³Foreign Policy Attitudes and Support for War among the British Public’, Economic and Social Research Council (RES-062-23-1952).

trait variables included in the dataset. However, there was an extensive array of control variables that do allow for multivariate analysis. The total sample size was 1,664 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 3 and 4 May 2015.

Both surveys were administered over the internet by YouGov, whose several hundred thousand panel members formed the sampling frame. Most YouGov panelists are actively recruited (using targeted campaigns via non-political websites) rather than volunteering for the panel. Similarly, respondents are not able to choose in which surveys to take part: they are either sampled for a given data collection or not. The company also has an impressive track record of sampling and weighting to achieve representative samples of the British electorate. In order to compare the dependent variable marginal, we use weighted figures. The modelling is based on unweighted data.

Dependent variable measures

In 2010, the question was asked as follows: “Some people say that Britain's foreign aid should simply be distributed to the countries which are most in need of help. Others say that we should put our own national interests first when deciding how to distribute foreign aid in the developing world. On a scale from 0 ('according to need') to 6 ('according to our national interests'), which number best represents your view about how aid should be distributed?” In 2015, respondents were asked to locate themselves on a six point scale with 1 indicating that aid should only be sent to those most in need and 6 indicating that aid should only be sent for UK national interests. We discuss the implications of a missing neutral category.

Independent variables:

Party Identification: We control for party identification using dummy variables for the main political parties. We include party identification variables for Conservative, Labour,

Liberal Democrat, Green, United Kingdom Independence Party and the Nationalist Parties of Scotland and Wales. The baseline group are non-identifiers.⁴

Newspaper readership: The main daily newspapers were classified as left-wing tabloids (Mirror, Record), right-wing tabloids (Sun, Star, Mail, Express), left-wing broadsheets (Guardian, Independent) or right-wing broadsheets (Times, Telegraph, Financial Times). Non-readers are the reference category.

Right-Wing Authoritarianism (RWA): The RWA measure is based on four questions taken from the British Social Attitudes libertarian-authoritarian scale developed by Evans *et al.* (1996). (reverse-scored items are asterisked).

- People who break the law should be given stiffer sentences
- People in Britain should be more tolerant of those who lead unconventional lives*
- Young people today don't have enough respect for traditional British values.
- People should be allowed to organize public meetings to protest against the government*

Social Dominance Orientation (SDO): The SDO measure is based on four questions (reverse-scored items are asterisked).

- We would have fewer problems if we treated people more equally*
- Some people are just more deserving than others
- It is not a problem if some people have more of a chance in life than others
- No one group should dominate in society

⁴ It might be argued that we are over-controlling here, since party identification is likely to be at least partly causally posterior to personality factors like SDO and authoritarianism. That makes this a conservative test of the effects of those variables.

Social Trust: Some people say that most people can be trusted. Others say that you can't be too careful in your dealings with other people. Using this scale, where 0 means 'most people can be trusted' and 6 means 'you can't be too careful in dealings with people', which number best represents your opinion?

Patriotism: Is measured with a short battery of four Likert items using the standard five-point agree-disagree format.

- If people criticise Britain, I get upset or angry
- Being British is a very important part of who I am
- I consider myself typically British

Nationalism

- I would rather be a citizen of Britain than any other country in the world
- Generally speaking, Britain is better than other countries
- I would support my country right or wrong

Left-wing ideology: This is also based on a quartet of British Social Attitudes questions (Evans *et al.*, 1996).

- Ordinary people get their fair share of the nation's wealth*
- There is one law for the rich and one law for the poor
- There is no need for strong trade unions to protect employees' working conditions and wages*
- It is government's responsibility to provide a job for everyone who wants one

International Trust: Generally speaking, would you say that Britain can trust other

nations, or that Britain can't be too careful in dealing with other nations? The scale runs from 0, 'you can trust other nations' to 6 'you can't be too careful'.

Control variables: All models include controls for age, gender, education, social class and religiosity. The results for these are not shown because they are exactly in line with previous research and are not our main focus here anyway.

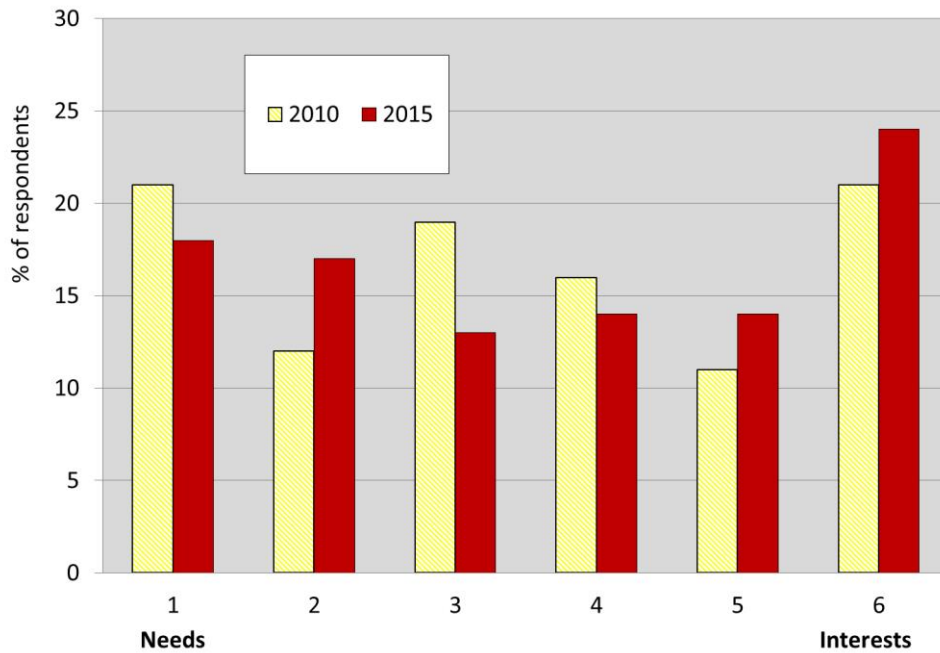
Results

We begin by charting responses to our dependent variable question, comparing the 2010 and 2015 surveys. The simplest means of comparing is simply to eliminate the neutral category that was offered in 2010.⁵ With that adjustment made, Figure 2 shows the change in the variable's distribution over time. These changes are not much more than would be expected through stochastic variation but there is a just-about-discernible shift towards the interests end of the scale, with increases in both the 'top' two categories. This is confirmed by two sets of summary statistics: an increase in the mean scale score from 3.47 to 3.61; and a turnaround from a 52-48 majority for the needs side (1-3) of the scale in 2010 to a 52-48 majority for interests in 2015. All this is consistent with the hardening in public attitudes towards foreign aid suggested in the earlier discussion. But the differences are small enough that there seems limited cost in our having the full set of predictors available only for 2010. This does not look a radically different time as far as these attitudes were concerned. Equally importantly, and with that prediction in mind, both years offer plenty of variation in opinion for modelling. The general tendency is towards polarisation rather than centring on the uncertain middle ground, reinforcing the

⁵ There is evidence from elsewhere that the omission of such categories can induce respondents to admit to what are seen as less socially desirable attitudes (Berinsky, 2002; Johns, 2005). This would probably lead us to expect a small shift towards interests from needs, even had public opinion not shifted on the question. On the other hand, the fact that opinion was split around 50:50 on this topic in both years suggests that 'interests' was hardly a spiral-of-silence position.

impression that these are not nonattitudes even if the specific issue might have been given little prior thought.

Figure 2: Change in responses to needs-interests question, 2010-15



We turn now to our modelling of respondents' aid priorities on the needs-to-interests scale. Given that this dependent variable is on a seven-point scale and, as just noted, not troublingly skewed along it, we use OLS to estimate the models. Table 1 presents the results of a sequence of regressions, beginning with the personality variables and then adding in turn each stage in the causal model in Figure 1. Since our primary concern is in the relative importance of the predictors, we report standardised coefficients in the table.

Table 1: Standardised coefficients from OLS regression models predicting support for interests-based aid

	<i>Model 1</i> <i>Personality</i>	<i>Model 2</i> <i>+ ideology</i>	<i>Model 3</i> <i>+ party and</i> <i>media</i>	<i>Model 4</i> <i>+ aid</i> <i>support</i>
Authoritarianism	.25**	.20**	.17**	.09**
Social dominance orientation	.21**	.20**	.18**	.13**
Social trust	-.13**	-.11**	-.10**	-.07**
Left-wing		-.01	-.01	-.01
Nationalism		.03	.04	.06*
Patriotism		.07*	.05	.01
International trust		-.13**	-.12**	-.09**
Party ID (base = other/none)				
Conservative			.02	.00
Labour			-.01	.01
Lib Dem			-.07**	-.06**
UKIP			.06**	.01
Newspaper (base = none)				
Left-wing broadsheet			-.03	-.00
Left-wing tabloid			-.01	-.01
Right-wing broadsheet			-.01	.00
Right-wing tabloid			.03	.04
Foreign aid support				-.35**
Adj. R ²	.19	.21	.22	.31
N	2,064	1,954	1,954	1,795

All three personality variables in Model 1 have significant and relatively strong effects in the expected direction. Authoritarianism is the most powerful predictor of support for aid driven by national interests but both of the others play a notable role. The R² represents a big step up from the 0.03 recorded in the socio-demographics only model. Overall, these results suggest that aid priorities are quite firmly grounded in personality factors that are in large part non-political and certainly not directly related to the foreign aid issue itself.

Variance explained increases by only two percentage points in Model 2, suggesting that aid priorities have little to do with the more explicitly political ideological variables. International trust, probably the least obviously ideological of these, has the

strongest effect and predictably encourages a more altruistic aid policy. It may be that such trust is dampened by nationalism, in which case the latter's effect might be understated in Model 2. Nonetheless, the collectively meagre impact of nationalism and patriotism suggests that, insofar as support for a national interests-based aid policy is based on a kind of chauvinism, this is less to do with national favouritism and more to do with a personality-driven generalized prejudice (McFarland, 2010). A parallel argument can be made about the most interesting feature of Model 2, namely the non-effect of left-right ideology. Controlling for the broader acceptance of inequality that is central to SDO, there is no sign that sympathy for the poor and support for redistribution in the domestic context encourage a needs-based aid policy. Again, then, any association between left-wing attitudes and foreign aid is grounded in deeper personality rather than in a heuristic application of domestic policy preferences to the foreign aid context.

It is a similar story with Model 3. R^2 improves negligibly and there is no significant effect of supporting a left-wing party or reading a left-wing newspaper. The same is true even of right-wing tabloids, indicating that the *Sun* and *Daily Mail* are preaching to the converted insofar as they argue for interests- rather than needs-driven aid. The only noteworthy new effects in Model 3 are the contrasting impacts of supporting the Liberal Democrats, then probably the most internationalist of the major parties, and UKIP or the BNP, ostentatiously the most nationalist. The fact that these effects do not much attenuate the personality coefficients suggests that there is something specific about the persuasion or heuristic cueing of these parties. In contrast, any association between mainstream party support and aid attitudes looks spurious, caused by the predispositions driving the two.

Finally, in Model 4 we add a measure of support for foreign aid. This is a five-point scale on which respondents could deem current aid spending levels to be 'much

too high' or 'much too low', with 'about right' as the middle point. Not surprisingly, this variable has a clearly significant effect. Perhaps more surprisingly, its standardised coefficient of 0.35 is not that far short of its bivariate association with the dependent variable of 0.49. So relatively little of the association between aid attitudes and aid priorities is spurious. While personality goes some way to predispose people for or against aid in general and needs-based aid in particular, those aid attitudes are in large measure independent of personality, ideology and so on – and that gives them the scope for a hefty independent effect on aid priorities. If the public's broader attitude towards aid were to change, then, we would expect their needs-versus-interests priorities to change, too.

Summary and implications

One of our primary interests in this paper was to assess how far aid priorities are rooted in deep-lying personality and individual differences, as opposed to open to shorter-term influences like partisan and media cues. The answer is that priorities look quite deeply-rooted. While citizens may not often have considered the needs-interests trade-off, they have enduring values that lead them to clearly-held and (though we lack individual-level evidence on this) probably fairly stable priorities. Even if the powerful influence of general aid attitudes provides some potential for change, we can see (from the appreciable weakening of personality effects in Model 4) that those attitudes are themselves rooted in personality and ideology, and as such not prone to rapid change.

Two immediate methodological developments would bolster these inferences. First, structural equation modelling would provide a cleaner measure of the causal relationships between our core sets of variables. Second, a more qualitative or at least open-ended approach would help us to understand much better what respondents are thinking about when answering the core dependent variable question. In particular, we

suspect that respondents understand much better what aid-for-needs looks like compared to aid-for-interests.

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