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## Problem perception and public expectations in international institutions: Evidence from a German representative survey

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**SP IV 2010-302**

Problem Perception and Public Expectations in  
International Institutions—Evidence from a German  
Representative Survey<sup>1</sup>

Matthias Ecker-Ehrhardt<sup>2</sup>

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## Zusammenfassung

### *Die Wahrnehmung von Problemen und gesellschaftliche Erwartungen an Internationale Institutionen: Befunde einer Repräsentativumfrage in Deutschland*

Viele Arbeiten zum „politischen Kosmopolitismus“ begründen ihre Präferenz für starke internationale Institutionen mit deren Fähigkeit transnationale Probleme besser zu lösen. Überraschender Weise hat die Frage bislang kaum wissenschaftliche Aufmerksamkeit erfahren inwiefern die Bürger ähnlich denken. Das Papier leitet Thesen zu Struktur und Bedingungen eines solchen „öffentlichen politischen Kosmopolitismus“ ab und testet sie mit Hilfe einer Repräsentativumfrage deutscher Bürger. Es wird gezeigt, dass deren Einstellungen tatsächlich einem „Interdependenzmodell“ kosmopolitischer Politisierung folgen. Die Wahrnehmung transnationaler Interdependenz (sowohl im Sinne funktionaler wie auch moralischer Bindungen) fördert Überzeugungen, dass internationale Institutionen in der Lage sind daraus resultierende Probleme zu lösen. Das Interdependenzmodell zeigt auch über verschiedene Bildungsniveaus ein hohes Maß an Erklärungskraft und widerspricht damit der herrschenden Lehrmeinung, der zufolge kognitive Mobilisierung eine kritische Bedingung für kosmopolitischer Politisierung darstellt. Bemerkenswerter Weise, sind die im Interdependenzmodell spezifizierten Zusammenhänge zudem kaum von variierenden Graden subjektiver Vulnerabilität abhängig, d.h. der Wahrnehmung mangelnder Problemlösungsfähigkeit des Nationalstaats.

## Abstract

### *Problem Perception and Public Expectations in International Institutions: Evidence from a German Representative Survey*

Much of what can be subsumed under the label of “political cosmopolitanism” argues that some internationalization of political authority is desirable because of the superior capability of international institutions in solving transnational problems. Surprisingly, however, few scholars have asked whether ordinary citizens share this way of thinking. To address this question, falsifiable hypotheses about the quality and scope conditions of such a “public political cosmopolitanism” are derived from the literature and tested using the results of a representative survey of German citizens. I show that there is significant support for what I call the “interdependence model” of cosmopolitan politicization: German citizens’ perception of transnational interdependencies (in terms of functional sensitivity as well as moral commitments) fosters beliefs in the capability of international institutions to solve problems. This model has significant explanatory power over different levels of education, and thus disproves a common claim that cognitive mobilization is a crucial scope condition of cosmopolitan politicization. Remarkably, however, the relationships specified by the interdependence model are only marginally moderated by German citizens’ sense of their own vulnerability, i.e. their beliefs that the national government is incapable of solving such problems.

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## 1. Introduction

Academics and politicians have argued time and again that globalization has severely weakened the capacities of nation states to regulate social transactions and has made international institutions an attractive and viable alternative in times of “complex interdependence” (Keohane and Nye 1977, Zürn 2002). Following this line of reasoning, proponents of political cosmopolitanism (Held 1995, Falk 1995, Habermas 1998, Beitz 1999, Bohman 1999, Pogge 2001, Archibugi 2004, Beck 2006) agree that a democratic world order needs international institutions in order to provide global common goods such as security, wealth, justice and knowledge. But whether ordinary citizens share this way of thinking about the comparative advantage of internationalized governance in a globalized world has, surprisingly, rarely attracted the attention of empirical studies. This is problematic for normative as well as theoretical reasons.

From the normative view of political cosmopolitanism, the creation of powerful global institutions is not desirable at all if it means that people are merely subjugated under an inaccessible global technocracy (Archibugi 2004: 459). To uphold normative aspirations like autonomy, non-domination or consent, democratic procedures are needed (Held 1995); but democratic procedures alone cannot prevent the growth of an autocratic world order without a global citizenry willing and capable of holding empowered institutions accountable (Falk 1995, Grant and Keohane 2005). In this way, the idea of democratizing global governance ultimately requires a significant level of global *public political cosmopolitanism*, roughly defined as *support for a significant internationalization of political authority*. Moreover, the manner in which ordinary people reason about why and under what conditions a global level of political authority is desirable should be “cosmopolitan” in order to confirm the hope of some political philosophers’ that one can generate “a bottom-up movement while proposing a top-down strategy” (Urbinati 2003: 75, similarly Calhoun 2003)—and this for two reasons. First, even if one were to accept global institutions preceding a cosmopolitan citizenry for some protracted span of time, the idea of cosmopolitan democracy would gain in persuasive power by presenting empirical evidence that such a citizenry is in fact “in the making” (Archibugi 2004: 462) through an ongoing process of *cosmopolitan politicization*—a process that is capable of bringing about public political cosmopolitanism in the foreseeable future. Second, cosmopolitanism’s preference for “congruence” and “subsidiarity” implies a problem-specific attribution of political authority in a multi-level

setting, depending—inter alia—on the capability of (the lowest level of) institutions to solve problems. Consequently, public political cosmopolitanism has less to do with support for internationalized governance *per se* than with a specific logic of attributing political authority to different levels of a multi-level-governance.

Following this line of argument, I consider one of the core rationales of current cosmopolitan writing for why international institutions are desirable and ask whether citizens reason about global governance in this same way: that is, that the world has become an interdependent unit in which major problems (bads) and opportunities (goods) are transnational (regional or even global) in scope and that this quality of interdependence makes international institutions a desirable component of world polity. This rationale defines the baseline of what I call the “interdependence model” of cosmopolitan politicization. Moreover, in accordance with current cosmopolitan thinking, the public definition of political problems is expected to follow two distinct, though not necessarily exclusive, logics, namely, (i) the logic of functional interdependence, hinging on the perception of ecological, economic and social systems as global in scope and (ii) the logic of normative interdependence, characterized by universalism and perceptions of global responsibilities.

Both logics, I contend, are the key to understanding how different forms of “subjective globalization” (Robertson 1992) might engender public political cosmopolitanism minimally defined. In this way, an empirical test of whether these two logics hold with respect to citizens’ attitudes is of more than normative interest: it also fills a void in theorizing about public attitudes toward internationalized governance in more generalized terms. Current literature on relevant attitudes is mostly descriptive and refer to cosmopolitan variables—e.g. a sense of global belonging or support for certain institutions—as facets of a complex attitudinal syndrome (Norris 2000, Furia 2005, Mau et al. 2008). But looking for empirical relationships might tell us important things about the underlying mechanism and help us to reach a theoretically grounded understanding of political attitudes in a globalized world.

This paper is structured as follows: First, existing literature on political cosmopolitanism is summarized and set in the context of current research on changing attitudes toward globalization and political institutions. I then proceed from this discussion to consider various hypotheses about the possible link



between interdependence perceptions and beliefs in the problem solving capabilities of international institutions—what I call the interdependence model—and test these hypotheses using the results of a representative survey of German citizens conducted in 2008. I show that there is significant support for the interdependence model of cosmopolitan politicization. German citizens' perceptions of transnational interdependencies and the capability of global institutions to solve problems are indeed positively related (even among the less well educated). Moreover, the relationship is to some extent conditioned by vulnerability, i.e. the belief that the efficiency of the nation state at problem solving is low. Nevertheless, results for the European level diverge from expectations, suggesting that relationships implied by the interdependence model may not hold consistently over different levels of internationalized governance.

## 2. How cosmopolitans define the demand for international institutions

Why should people support the delegation of decision making power to international institutions? First of all, following a broad institutionalist consensus in current political cosmopolitanism, international institutions are indispensable parts of a global governance regime for a world characterized by the interconnectedness of social transactions, i.e. *functional interdependence*. Echoing the ideas from writings nearly a century old in IR theory and economics (cf. Baldwin 1980, Zürn 2002), the political significance of interdependence can be understood in a number of ways. The first is “globalization”, that is “the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa” (Giddens 1990: 64, Beisheim et al. 1999). According to this view, the transnational flow of goods, services, communications or people has a tremendous influence on the distribution of life chances all over the globe (Kapstein 2000, Scheve and Slaughter 2004). By creating a plethora of risks and opportunities, national communities are gradually transforming into a plurality of transnational (border transcending) “communities of fate” (Held 1997; for a similar argument, see Habermas 1998, Beck 2004, Bohman 2007). What thus becomes politically problematic is first of all “sensitivity interdependence” (Keohane and Nye, Jr. 1977, Baldwin 1980), i.e. the costs attached to mutual influences that are expected to shape and synchronize political agendas significantly in terms of transnational risks and crises (Beck 1999). Following this line of reasoning,

international institutions become desirable, then, because some of “the most fundamental forces and processes which determine the nature of life chances within and across political communities are now beyond the reach of individual nation-states” (Held et al. 1998: 21). Put differently, societies have become vulnerable (Keohane and Nye, Jr. 1977: 13) to the costs imposed by globalization, because national governments are incapable of regulating the transnational exchange of goods and bads (Cooper 1968, Rodrik 1997, Sassen 1998), and delivering “global public goods” (Kaul et al. 1999) unilaterally. Thus it is assumed that globalization not only defines the agenda of public issues, but also compels and propels the “advocacy of regional and global governance and [the] creation of political organizations and mechanisms that would provide a framework of regulation and law enforcement across the globe” (Held 2003: 523, similarly Habermas 1998: ch. 4, Zürn 2004).

Nevertheless, globalization as a source of functional interdependence is just one reason for political cosmopolitans to think carefully about the redistribution of regulative power from the national to the international level; a second is *moral interdependence*. From the vantage point of current cosmopolitanism, human suffering, inequality and oppression are problematic even without any economic or social transactions that impose material costs on agents somewhere else in the world. In this vein, political cosmopolitans build on a universalist ethic drawing upon a much broader tradition of cosmopolitanism, namely, the “acknowledgement of some notion of common humanity that translates ethically into an idea of shared or common moral duties toward others by virtue of this humanity” (Lu 2000: 245). Although some ethical accounts of cosmopolitanism have rightly been criticized for being apolitical (Dallmayr 2003: 434), the idea of moral interdependence has led to similar conclusions about the desirability of international institutions. Insofar as nation states have proven to leave the world vulnerable to a plethora of injustices, international institutional capacities are seen as highly desirable because they help us to implement human rights, fulfill our responsibility to protect or establish fairness in international trade (Pogge 1994, Zürn 2000, Dallmayr 2003, Kapstein 2000, Young 2004, Bohman 2007). In sum, then, much of current political cosmopolitan thinking is based upon an implicit duality of functional and moral interdependence to which these theorists appeal in making their case for international institutions. Here, the advocacy for international institutions hinges on the suspicion that the nation state is unable to efficiently tackle problems that arise as a result of interde-

pendence—be it in terms of costs of globalization or rising commitments toward a global public good.

It is important to note that the cosmopolitan case for internationalized governance typically goes beyond this argument of mere comparative efficiency on the “output side” (Scharpf 1997) of different institutional levels. International institutions are also deemed desirable as a means to secure the “congruence between decision-makers and decision-takers” (Held 2004: 371) of political authority. Consequently, international institutions find support only to the extent to which they enable and ensure the effective inclusion of all those affected by political decisions on the “input side” of global governance, in order to hold authorities truly accountable (Pogge 1994, Kaul et al. 2003, Grant and Keohane 2005, Karlsson 2008). It is for this very reason that contemporary cosmopolitans forcefully reject the idea of a highly centralized world state; rather, they envisage a multi-level system of governance in which “a division of powers and competences is recognized at different levels of political interaction and interconnectedness—levels which correspond to the degree to which public issues stretch across and affect populations” (Held 1995: 236). Because the delegation of power to international institutions implies, *ceteris paribus*, a comparably low “capacity of the citizen to participate effectively in governing” (Dahl 1999: 22), some explicit notion of subsidiarity informs most writing of political cosmopolitans (Pogge 1994, Held 1995, Kolers 2006, Bohman 2007). The empowerment of international institutions is justified only, it is assumed, in cases in which smaller institutions fail to deliver in terms of problem solving as well as inclusiveness. Decentralized deliberation and decision making is strongly preferred over the empowerment of a more centralized institution. Nevertheless it is widely acknowledged that a significant part of political authority must “move up the ladder” to the regional and ultimately global level because of growing transnational interdependence of a larger scope and the inefficiency of “smaller reach authorities” like the nation states which leave their citizens vulnerable.

### **3. A “cosmopolitan” citizenry? State of research and hypotheses**

For theoretical as well as normative reasons it is important to understand to what extent and under what conditions people’s expectations shift toward internationalized governance, as argued above. So what do we already know about this? The fact that international institutions have to cope with an increas-

ingly assertive transnational civil society is frequently understood to be a strong indicator for an emerging “cosmopolitan” citizenry who perceive problems globally and understand the importance of international institutions for solving them (Florini 2000, Anheier et al. 2001, Held 2002: 39, Young 2004). Although recent instances of high-profile activism may leave one with the immediate impression that a cosmopolitan citizenry is perhaps in the making (Zürn 2004, Tarrow 2005, Zürn and Ecker-Ehrhardt 2011 forthcoming), even the most euphoric observers must acknowledge, on deeper inspection, that this visible activism is far from ubiquitous, involving actually only a small subset of the world in terms of geographical and social scope. The weak representation of the political South is a case in point here (Jäger 2007). But even with respect to the highly industrialized countries of the political North, empirical evidence suggests that this transnational civil society is actually an elite phenomenon (Fisher et al. 2005) which is far less a demonstration of widespread politicization than proponents of cosmopolitan democracy suggest. It is therefore important to focus more on popular orientations in order to understand how ordinary people reason about why and under what conditions a global level of political authority is desirable.

To start with, do ordinary people perceive the world to be interconnected in terms of sensitivity interdependence? It is widely assumed that day-to-day experiences—be they firsthand or via the public media—have led to public perceptions of an extensively globalized world (Hannerz 1996, Rosenau 1997, Norris 2000). Indeed, globalization has entered the public discourse as the new buzzword and a variety of public opinion data suggest that most societies are already quite familiar with it (Eurobarometer 2004, Wolfe and Mendelsohn 2005). Nevertheless, research on what globalization means to ordinary people is scarce. Among a number British focus groups Urry and Szerezinsky (2002) found “a strong awareness of the global flows of money, commodities and pollution; of extended relations connecting them to other peoples, places and environments” (p. 472). Up to now, however, how the different perceptions of interconnectedness relate to the public definition of risks or opportunities (i.e. interdependence as sensitivity) has not been researched systematically. Evidence from public opinion research suggests that a majority in the OECD world evaluate globalization to be overall “a good thing”; nevertheless a significant share of the respondents shows at least some ambivalence or a negative attitude toward globalization (PEW 2007). Such results seem to be in accordance with cosmopolitan prem-

ises inferring a widespread understanding “of overlapping ‘collective fortunes’” (Held 2002: 38) in the respective societies. This non-specific evaluation of globalization is nevertheless not very telling and needs more thorough analysis in terms of specific policy areas and institutional implications.

To start with, survey research has repeatedly shown that most societies tend to support internationalized governance (Norris 2000, PEW 2003, WorldPublic Opinion.org 2007, Furia 2005). But in order to determine whether such support is due to a process of cosmopolitan politicization, we have to look for empirical relationships between perceptions of interdependence and the proclaimed shift of institutional demand from the national to the international level. Again, political cosmopolitanism assumes that international institutions are an important (and legitimate) political means of problem solving whenever issues are scaled up to the extent that the unilateral action of an individual nation state is insufficient to resolve them. But can we really expect ordinary citizens to be knowledgeable about such complex processes? Do they really reason along these lines of cosmopolitanism? Indeed, some initial evidence gives us reason to think that this might be so. Research on the economic voting problematique has successfully demonstrated that economic interdependence (in terms of integration of a specific society into the global economic system) dampens the strength of economic voting. Citizens begin to devalue economic performance as an indicator of their government’s functional capability or efficiency, if economic interconnectedness is (or is perceived to be) strong (Hellwig 2001, 2007, Fernández-Albertos 2006, Hellwig et al. 2008). Nevertheless, whether this relationship holds for other problem areas or is complemented by a significant rise in expectations vis-à-vis international institutions has, to my knowledge, not yet been investigated.

The same holds for the case of *moral interdependence*. Whether globalization ultimately leads to a broader scope of identities and commitments has been widely debated. The intuitive assumption is that a multiplicity of experiences and images can lead to an individual’s adopting a state of multiple belongingness to local, national, transnational communities or even humanity as whole. Nevertheless, many observers have pointed to the converse of this, namely, a strengthening of ethnocentric tendencies, chauvinism, and even xenophobia (Rosenau 2003, Kriesi et al. 2008). In this context, Eurobarometer research has been somewhat inconclusive regarding whether or not we are currently witnessing a growing sense of European identity (Duchesne and Frogner 1995,

Deflem and Pampel 1996, Wessels 2007). In the same vein, research has successfully demonstrated that popular attachment to humanity as a whole is widespread and therefore less elitist than often expected (Furia 2005). But again, whether or not we are actually witnessing a positive development toward cosmopolitan identity is clearly debatable and hinges in turn on whether one interprets the cosmopolitanism of younger respondents as a matter of generational and life-long affiliation (Norris 2000) or a life-cycle trend doomed to decline with age (Jung 2008). Research on cosmopolitan orientations has shown that a sense of global belongingness correlates positively with support for international institutions like the UN (Norris 2000, Furia 2005). According to the cosmopolitan position outlined above, this could be an indicator for citizens' favouring internationalized governance, fuelled by moral concerns about global inequality, oppression, or human suffering. Nevertheless, existing evidence is partial at best, because it cannot shed any light upon whether this support has anything to do with the attributed capability of institutions to resolve such issues.

Taken together, the state of research is inconclusive with respect to the specific causalities that underlie a shift in public expectations toward the international level. In accordance with my reading of cosmopolitanism I expect citizens' beliefs to be internally linked according to what I term the "interdependence model" of cosmopolitan politicization. In its most basic formulation I understand this model only to differentiate between the national and the international level, leaving the question of a stratified multi-level polity unspecified. Thus it captures the essence of cosmopolitan intuition, namely that a high level of interdependence across national-boarders nurtures hopes that internationalized governance can solve problems efficiently.

*H1: Perceptions of (a) functional and (b) moral interdependence of a transnational scope foster the belief that the internationalization of governance is desirable because of the problem solving capacity of international institutions.*

This hypothesis constitutes the baseline of the interdependence model of cosmopolitan politicization. Moving beyond this simplified distinction of national-international, one may nevertheless wonder whether the assumed link applies consistently over different levels of regional and global governance. A more

elaborate—and cognitively demanding—version of the interdependence model is captured in the second hypothesis.

*H2: (a) Perceived global interdependence leads to a shift of expectations toward the global level, while (b) perceived European interdependence works in favour of a perceived problem solving capability of European institutions.*

The cosmopolitan emphasis on vulnerabilities suggests that beliefs about the inefficacy of nation states at solving transnational problems constitute a scope condition of the proclaimed upward shift in public expectations toward a multi-level system of governance. I thus consider the interdependence model to be conditional on the perception of significant “vulnerability”—defined as a nation state’s lack of problem solving capabilities.

*H3: Beliefs about nation states’ inefficiencies moderate the relationship between interdependence perceptions and beliefs about the problem solving capability of internationalized governance. That is, the relationship is stronger, the more vulnerable citizens perceive themselves to be—i.e. the less problem solving capability they attribute to the nation state.*

But we usually expect a cosmopolitan belief system to be conditional on cognitive mobilization, too. Most notably, James Rosenau (2003) has emphasized an ongoing “skill revolution” which he plausibly expects to expand “people’s horizons on a global scale” (pp. 52–232 ff, Inglehart 1997). Therefore it is reasonable to expect interdependency perceptions to be positively related to “skills” and other similar mechanisms of cognitive mobilization like “education”. Most notably Hainmueller and Hiscox (2006) have argued that education implies an exposure to economic discourses which favour a specific understanding of the social as globalized and complex. Their focus on economic ideas can be extended to the perception of interdependencies and universal norms like human rights, which are part of the curricula of schools and universities in most democracies. In line with the interdependence model are a variety of studies which have shown that more educated individuals tend to lend greater support to international institutions (Inglehart 1970, Furia 2005, Hainmueller and Hiscox 2006), although these results are disputed by others like Janssen (1991), or Gabel (1998). From the perspective of the interdependence model this might suggest that the model holds over different levels of cognitive mobilization, such that the less skilled tend to expect less from international institutions because they do not perceive problems to be as globalized as the more skilled do.

According to Rosenau (2003), however, this cannot be simply taken as a given. The less skilled are expected to feel cognitively overwhelmed by perceived complexities and insecurities associated with global developments and to be especially prone to retreating to what he calls “private worlds” that are “marked by either alienation or passivity and are thus conceived as so disassociated from public affairs that they are not in any local or global world” (p. 42). What we can infer from this is that, given a particular lack of skills, the possibility exists that interdependence perceptions may not foster beliefs in the capabilities of institutions to steer globalization, but rather cynicism. Such a process would be obviously of acute importance for the theoretical as well as the normative reasons outlined above, because a “retreat to private worlds” implies a process of cosmopolitan “depoliticization”, which would clearly undermine the formation of a cosmopolitan citizenry supportive of internationalized governance. In light of this situation, I venture a last hypothesis that captures the intuition that skills determine a second critical scope condition of cosmopolitan politicization.

*H4: Relationships between beliefs in the problem solving capability of international institutions and perceptions of (a) functional or (b) moral interdependence depend on the level of skills.*

#### 4. Data and method

The interdependence model and related hypotheses about its scope conditions are tested using data from a representative survey of the German citizenry (Ecker-Ehrhardt et al. 2008).<sup>1</sup> This data is distinguished from that of previous research by its coverage of and comprehensiveness vis-à-vis interdependency perceptions and ascribed problem solving capabilities of a variety of international institutions. At the same time, the data is limited to just the German population. While the German case might be interesting in its own right, most research in this area favours comparative designs of the widest possible scope in terms of geography, economic development, and culture—and this for good

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1 The survey was commissioned by a group of researchers at the Social Science Research Center Berlin (Matthias Ecker-Ehrhardt, Wolfgang Merkel, Bernhard Wessels and Michael Zürn). Due to the complexity of the topic computer assisted personal (face-to-face) interviews (CAPI) were chosen. These were conducted by TNS Emnid Political and Social Research, a major German pollster. Results from a pre-test of about 30 interviews led to slight revisions of the instrument. Finally, a random, probabilistic sample of 4736 German adult citizens was selected of which 1560 were successfully interviewed (representing a 32.9 percent response rate) between 14 December 2007 and 21 January 2008.



reason (Norris 2000, Furia 2005, Jung 2008): to research cosmopolitanism as a social fact, it is argued, research gains by being as cosmopolitan as possible (Beck 2004). Nevertheless, I argue that we still can learn important things from a case study (Gerring 2007). Comparative research has demonstrated that many of the mechanisms that shape political attitudes are not unique to single societies but indeed have a general quality with respect to European societies (Eichenberg and Dalton 1993, Niedermayer and Sinnott 1995, Mau et al. 2008), the OECD world of advanced industrial societies (Dalton 2004, Inglehart 1997) and even beyond (Inglehart 2000, Norris 1999). Hence, I assume the German case to be a typical exemplar of European societies as regards its basic mechanisms of attitude formation. Moreover, I claim a significant degree of representativeness even vis-à-vis the larger population of advanced industrial societies. I invite further research to review this claim critically and hopefully increase our understanding through an inclusion of substantially different cases—especially from the least developed societies—and more diverse cultural settings.

Hypotheses are tested by regressing beliefs in the capability of international institutions to solve problems (“capability beliefs”) on measures of sensitivity perceptions, transnational commitments and a set of controls. Each of the measures used are discussed in turn; descriptives like mean, standard deviation and range are reported in the appendix (table 4). To start with, measures on *capability beliefs* are based on responses to the following question:

*Which institution do you think would be most appropriate for solving the following problems: (a) the German Federal Government, (b) a non-governmental organization, (c) a big corporation, (d) the European Union or (e) another international institution or actor? How about [issue area]?*

For cases in which the respondents chose e, a list of six further options was presented: the United Nations (UN), the World Trade Organization (WTO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Economic Summit Group of 8 (G8), the United States, and “others”. Multiple selections were explicitly allowed. This procedure resulted in a comprehensive matrix of 14 issue areas and 14 institutional options. The filtering logic of our question design was clearly on the mark, as our interviewers reported high accessibility of the questions. A set of 14 issue specific measures labelled *Global capabilities (specific)* count all mentions of the UN, WTO, IMF, G8 and the residual category “other international institutions” for one of the 14 issue areas (range 0 to 5). Additionally, an aggre-

gated measure labelled *Global capabilities (general)* is computed by counting respective mentions of institutions across all issue areas (range 0 to 70). To test for the more elaborated multi-level variant of the interdependence model, an additional measure labelled *European capabilities (general)* counts mentions of the main regional institution, viz. the European Union, over all issue areas.

The first set of explanatory variables measures *perceptions of functional sensitivity*. I define functional sensitivity contextually in terms of dependence, i.e. “[the] state of being determined or significantly affected by external force” (Keohane and Nye, Jr. 1977: 8). Put in this way, the operationalization of sensitivity perceptions of German respondents is straightforward. The question used from the survey reads as follows:

*Some people say that problems and processes in other countries have a strong influence on our situation here in Germany; others say that problems and processes in other countries have no influence on us. What kind of an impact do you think these problems in other countries have on the situation here in Germany—very big, big, medium, little or no influence at all?*

This question was posed separately for 14 problem areas. Respondents were then asked to indicate which regions they thought would be especially important (“*besonders wichtig*”) in this regard. In this case the question was posed for a reduced list of issue areas: only those areas were selected for which the respondent had previously stated that the influence on the situation in Germany was very strong, strong or medium. Respondents could choose between Europe, America, Asia and Africa as sources for the influence in question.

Measures of sensitivity interdependence count mentions of regions from which respondents perceive a medium, strong or very strong influence on the situation in Germany. A first set of issue specific measures labelled *transnational sensitivity (specific)* count mentions of Europe, Africa, America and Asia for each issue area separately. A second set of generalized measures count mentions of regions over issue areas. *Transnational sensitivity (general)* counts mentions of all regions across issue areas; the second and third measures differentiate between perceived influences from Europe (*European sensitivity*) and non-European regions (*global sensitivity*). All sensitivity measures have been recoded to range from 0 to 1.

*Measures of normative interdependence:* As already mentioned, cosmopolitanism usually operates with the idea of universal commitments. Consequently cosmopolitans have been prominently identified as those “whose primary allegiance is to the community of human beings in the entire world” (Nussbaum 1994: 3). Although cosmopolitanism seems to identify universal rights as the most powerful source of such allegiances (Lu 2000), a variety of communitarian writers have distanced themselves from such a view by pointing to the greater importance of more particular loyalties (see Erskine 2007 for a comprehensive discussion). Both camps focus on different modes of allegiances—ethical ones versus those fostered by group attachments—and their respective scopes. But we cannot rule out the case that some people will define international justice in terms of a “larger loyalty to the human species” (Rorty 1998); nor should we neglect the fact that people tend to apply a variety of norms selectively to local groups or fellow nationals (Lu 2000, Duchesne and Frogner 1995, Jung 2008). Accordingly, it was decided to ask our respondents about their normative obligations and affective attachments for a variety of levels, taking the cosmopolitan-communitarian dispute as starting point for a two-dimensional typology of origin and scope of allegiances.

For the “origin” dimension we identified two widely debated norms which are likely to indicate different levels of ethical interdependence. The first is the *norm to assist* someone else who is in desperate need. With respect to transnational politics, the moral significance of similar or related obligations is the starting point for a variety of humanitarian agencies and large-scale private donorship. Moreover, there is an ongoing debate about whether the international community has the “responsibility to protect” the populations of other states, especially if their own respective governments fail to protect them from harm in the event of war, catastrophe, or widespread suffering (International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) 2001, Linklater 2007). We expect the “duty to assist” (Rawls 1999) to be a highly accessible norm and an essential part of “minimal morality” (Walzer 1985) for many people. This assumption is supported by empirical research on individual motivations and helping behaviour (Montada et al. 1986, Bierhoff 2002). Thus the interviewees in our survey were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the following statement(s):

*I have a special moral duty to help other Germans/other Europeans/other people in the world who, through no fault of their own, have been thrust into a situation of severe hardship (sehr große Not).*

Political cosmopolitanism is most often identified with the perspective that “sees new political institutions as fundamental in addressing concerns for global justice” (Bohman 2007: 11). However, as Thomas Pogge (2001) has repeatedly argued, an obligation to assist nevertheless fails to address the issue of an unfair or unjust international order. John Rawls’ (1993) original notion of “justice as fairness” elaborates a cosmopolitan responsibility to change the international order itself, to make it just—i.e. to give everybody a fair chance to live under humane conditions. Such reasoning coincides with important arguments of those who identify themselves as part of the “global justice movement” (della Porta 2007); the basic rationale behind the notion of “justice qua equality of opportunities” is also a familiar topic in psychology research (Reichle and Schmitt 1998, Ross and Miller 2002), which has already demonstrated its empirical importance on the individual level (Montada et al. 1986). In other words, the norm of “equality of opportunities” is likely to be a source of empirical obligation. We formulated the following question(s) to indicate individual internalization of this norm:

*I have a special moral duty to make sure that all people in Germany/in Europe/in the world have the same opportunity to be able to live well.*

To be sure, this set of questions and the one above do not exhaust the palette of norms that may populate the universe of public morality. I nevertheless claim that they can be used in a valid and accessible way to indicate major tendencies as regards defining moral obligations with respect to different levels of “groupness.” Moreover, to complement the notion of affective-driven loyalties, we opted for a slightly reformulated version of the Eurobarometer question on personal attachments or affinities:

*Some people claim that they feel a special bond to Germans, Europeans or simply all of the people in the world; others claim, to the contrary, that they have very little or no such feelings toward any of these groups. Please tell me how strongly associated you feel to the following groups of people. How strong a bond do you feel to Germans/Europeans/all people regardless of which country or part of the world they come from?*

I constructed three measures of moral commitment based on the six variables representing “wider than national” obligations (viz. European, other/all people in the world)—a duty to assist, equal opportunities, and sense of belongingness. The *transnational commitments* index aggregates the values of all six variables. To test for the multi-level variant of the interdependence model (H2) measures for *European commitments* and *global commitments* indexes are computed by aggregating the values of the three variables of the respective levels. All measures range from 0 to 1; they are one-dimensional and show a high level of internal consistency (Cronbach’s *alpha* ranges from 0.77 to 0.86; the items correlate highly with the constructed scales, with *r* ranging from .62 to .87). Nevertheless it has to be acknowledged that correlation between measures of regional and global commitments are high enough ( $r = 0.84$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) to nurture doubts about whether respondents discriminate significantly between wider than national commitments. This is of obvious relevance for the evaluation of the more elaborate version of the interdependence model captured by H2, which assumes such a discrimination to make the case for consistent application of the interdependence model over different levels; I will return to this issue subsequently.

As controls I use the level of education as a proxy for cognitive skills (cf. Inglehart 1997, Rosenau 2003). The first dummy variable indicates respondents who have successfully passed the German secondary school completion examination, the *Abitur*; the second indicates those respondents who hold a *university degree* (which presupposes the *Abitur* in the German educational system). To account for *vulnerability* that derives from a lack of problem solving power on the national level, I construct a measure which counts all *non-mentions* of the German Federal Government across issue areas. Moreover, perceptions of the problem solving capability of internationalized governance as discussed above are explicitly differentiated from an *overall satisfaction with specific institutions*. I therefore control for overall satisfaction by using responses to the following sets of questions:

*All in all, how satisfied are you with the work of the following institutions and actors. Are you completely satisfied, more satisfied than not, more dissatisfied than not, completely dissatisfied?*

For overall satisfaction with global institutions, the values of the items for the EU, UN, WTO and G8 are added and rescaled to range from 0 to 1. Additional

controls are two variables on ideology: *right ideology* is measured by using respondents' self-placement on an eleven-point left-to-right scale; *postmaterialism* is measured by Inglehart's four-item version of the scale. Finally, *gender* (male = 1, female = 0) and *age* (in years) are introduced. (Again, information on the univariate distribution of measures used in the following models can be found in the appendix, table 4.)

With respect to model specification, all measures of perceived problem solving capability show the characteristic distribution of event count data with many zeros (as the modal value) and a decreasing density the higher the values. Therefore analyses are performed using Poisson regression and its generalized version—negative binomial—which allows for over-dispersion (cf. King 1989). Test statistics ( $\alpha$ -coefficients) indicate whether this more demanding specification is preferable; estimates for regular Poisson models are presented otherwise (indicated by a “–” in the  $\alpha$ -cell). Given the theoretical focus of the paper, estimates of the control variables are only examined if they are of theoretical interest.

## 5. Do citizens form attitudes according to the “interdependence model”?

I begin with an area specific test of H1a, i.e. the conjecture that perceptions of transnational sensitivity could foster the belief that international institutions in general are best at solving problems. According to this aspect of the interdependence model (outlined above), then, it is to be expected that the number of mentions of global institutions as the “most capable ... to solve problems” relates positively to perceptions of transnational sensitivity, i.e. the number of world regions from which respondents perceive an influence on the situation in Germany. Moreover, empirical evidence would be most convincing if (a) it suggests that this relationship functions thus in a variety of important issue areas and (b) if it functions issue specifically, i.e. in accordance with precisely defined problems and institutional capabilities. Table 3 presents estimates for a set of issue specific models that capture this logic of inference. Leaving the case of regional governance aside for the moment, I use the variable set *global capabilities (specific)* as the dependent variables, i.e. perceived problem solving capability of global institutions in specific issue areas. Presented in table 1 are those seven issue areas for which the greatest share of respondents perceived a transnational influence on Germany. Regression results strongly support H1a,

because the coefficients indicate a substantial, statistically significant relationship between perceptions of issue specific sensitivity and capability beliefs across the board. For example, estimates suggest that beliefs in institutional capability to solve economic problems increases by 52 percent for every additional region from which respondents perceive an influence on the German economy (holding all other variables constant). The respective percentages range from 34 to 35 for environmental problems, migration and criminality and from 18 to 14 for terrorism, peace and refugees.

Although the results for these areas might be the most interesting for proponents of political cosmopolitanism which focuses on economic globalization, environmental protection, migration and security issues, to make their case for internationalized governance, it should be pointed out that the interdependence model also holds for the rest of the 14 issue areas covered by the survey in almost the same way (as regards e.g. size of coefficients ranging between .416 and 1.575, all  $p > 0.001$ ). Therefore it seems safe to conclude that the interdependence model captures an important part of the empirical reality, at least with respect to the German citizenry and their perceptions of sensitivity interdependence.

To move on to a test of the normative part of the “interdependence model”—i.e. the conjecture that transnational commitments foster a shift of expectations to the international level (H1b)—I estimate a set of simplified models with the aggregated measure of *global capabilities* across all 14 issue areas. The results are in line with expectations. While of less substantial relevance than transnational sensitivity, commitments play a significant role in shifting public expectations to the international level: According to my estimates, beliefs in global capabilities increases by 9 percent for a standard deviation increase in transnational commitments. As before, beliefs in the problem solving capability of global institutions go up substantially if respondents perceive transnational sensitivity (about 42.9 percent for a standard deviation increase in sensitivity). Taken together these results strongly confirm my intuition that citizens may “tick” according to the interdependence model in its basic formulation (H1).

Table 1—Global capabilities and transnational sensitivity: area specific models

	Economy 1	Environ- ment 2	Migration 3	Terrorism 4	Criminality 5	Peace 6	Refugees 7
Transnational sensitivity	1.317*** (0.134)	0.994*** (0.112)	1.000*** (0.177)	0.660*** (0.095)	1.017*** (0.163)	0.559*** (0.086)	0.596*** (0.140)
Overall satisfaction	-0.312 (0.230)	0.132 (0.208)	-0.169 (0.260)	0.058 (0.163)	0.256 (0.283)	0.153 (0.147)	-0.057 (0.204)
Secondary school ( <i>Abi- tur</i> )	0.573*** (0.110)	0.274* (0.111)	0.058 (0.143)	0.163 (0.085)	0.466** (0.154)	0.150* (0.074)	0.053 (0.109)
University	0.008 (0.117)	0.100 (0.132)	0.348* (0.163)	0.028 (0.098)	0.157 (0.171)	0.051 (0.085)	0.382** (0.123)
Right ideology	-0.074 (0.197)	0.078 (0.185)	-0.071 (0.231)	-0.168 (0.151)	0.307 (0.257)	0.023 (0.131)	-0.072 (0.179)
Postmaterialism	0.055 (0.130)	0.031 (0.126)	0.147 (0.153)	0.207* (0.100)	-0.081 (0.168)	0.178* (0.087)	0.131 (0.119)
Age (years)	0.001 (0.003)	-0.002 (0.003)	-0.005 (0.003)	-0.001 (0.002)	-0.003 (0.003)	-0.000 (0.002)	-0.002 (0.002)
Male	-0.039 (0.082)	0.132 (0.081)	0.007 (0.101)	-0.004 (0.063)	-0.115 (0.109)	0.022 (0.057)	0.056 (0.076)
Constant	-1.109*** (0.230)	-1.236*** (0.232)	-1.157*** (0.267)	-0.624*** (0.171)	-1.763*** (0.284)	-0.593*** (0.151)	-0.766*** (0.208)
Wald chi <sup>2</sup>	178.537***	112.555***	47.829***	69.269***	72.436***	59.480***	45.574***
Overdispersion ( $\alpha$ )	-	0.358***	-	-	-	-	0.247***
Number of observations	1371	1371	1370	1364	1367	1366	1369
Log pseudo-likelihood	-1580.07	-1448.74	-1136.30	-1563.38	-1021.60	-1670.04	-1441.89

Note: robust standard errors in parentheses. \* $p < .05$  \*\* $p < .01$  \*\*\* $p < .001$  (two-tailed tests).

As discussed above, the internationalization of governance is most often justified with reference to the assumption that the nation state fails to tackle important problems in times of globalization. Vulnerability—the lack of the nation state’s capability to solve problems—has thus been proposed as a possible scope condition of the interdependence model (H3). I argue that, if citizens believe that their government has all of the possibilities to solve pressing problems, then expectations may not shift (or at least not with the same intensity) to the international level, even if transnational interdependencies are perceived to a significant ex-



tent. Turning to the vulnerability models in table 2, there is indeed some evidence which supports this notion. To start with, the coefficients of sensitivity measures are compared over subgroups of respondents who hold above-average or below-average beliefs in the problem solving capability of the German Federal Government. The coefficients are both positive and significant, but vary substantially: The estimated coefficient for the over-average subgroup indicates a 39 percent change towards stronger beliefs in the problem solving capability of global institutions per 0.1 change in perceived transnational sensitivity (i.e. 10 percent of its range), while the respective effect in the below-average subgroup is twice as large at about 86 percent. This difference translates into a significant positive effect of vulnerability on the relationship between sensitivity and the dependent variable (model 4). Given that below average beliefs in governmental capability indicate high vulnerability, this strongly suggests that the explanatory power of the interdependence model is indeed more pronounced among more “vulnerable” citizens. Nevertheless, this cannot be confirmed for normative interdependence. Here, the difference in estimated coefficients over subgroups is small and not in line with expectations. Results from the respective interaction model show that this difference does not indicate a significant interaction between vulnerability and normative interdependence. Therefore, we can conclude that vulnerability moderates the relationship, but only with respect to functional interdependence and not in terms of an overall constraining scope condition.

Turning to the “skill models”, results yield a similar picture (table 2). To recall the argument underlying H4, it was argued that the less educated may feel overwhelmed by the perceived complexities of a globalized world. Instead of shifting expectations about capable institutions upward, they may lose confidence altogether in the possibility of efficiently steering social processes by means of political regulation. This expectation is tested using information about respondents who did or did not successfully complete secondary school. The comparisons of estimated coefficients over subgroups suggest a substantial difference in the interdependence model’s explanatory power. In accordance with H4 less well-educated respondents diverge with respect to relationships between perceived sensitivity and capability beliefs. Nevertheless, this difference—although substantial and significant—seems to be unproblematic from the normative point of view of political cosmopolitanism: sensitivity relates significantly to stronger beliefs in the problem solving capability of internationalized

governance. The same holds for normative interdependence. Even in the case of the less well-educated we find a strong and significant effect of transnational commitments. The skills models therefore yield more good news for political cosmopolitanism, despite the difference in explanatory power of the interdependence model. A further divide between different levels of cognitive mobilization is worthy of note: the better educated show more favourable beliefs about the capability of global institutions than do the less well-educated (at least in terms of secondary schooling, but not with respect to higher education). Thus James Rosenau's notion of the "cynicism of the unskilled" finds empirical support, even if the interdependence mechanism of cosmopolitan politicization operates irrespective of levels of cognitive skills.

The insignificant (but still positive) coefficient estimated for the better educated subgroup is surprising and deserves some additional attention. A closer inspection of the data reveals a plausible reason for the deficiency in explanatory power of transnational commitments with respect to this subgroup. The estimated effect of transnational commitments in the aggregated model rests almost completely on the difference in capability beliefs between the weakly or uncommitted and the rest of respondents (who do not differ significantly regarding their capability beliefs, irrespective of whether they hold moderate, strong or even very strong transnational commitments). This results in a lack of covariance between capability beliefs and transnational commitments in the case of the well educated respondents, because this group shows a significantly lower proportion of uncommitted respondents by almost 50 percent (in the *Abitur* subgroup 21.1 percent of respondents have commitment values between 0 and .25; in the subgroup without the *Abitur* only 10.3 percent of respondents fall in this range of weakly committed). In other words, if education is held constant on a high level, we control for a critical amount of variance in the explanatory variable. I therefore take the small and insignificant (due to a low number of observations) estimate for transnational commitments among the *Abiturienten* as unproblematic with respect to the acclaimed explanatory power of the interdependence model as such.

Table 2—Testing for scope conditions: skills and vulnerability

	Baseline model 1	Vulnerability-Models			Skills-Models		
		Governmental capability		Interaction model 4	Abitur		Interaction model 7
		high 2	low 3		No 5	Yes 6	
Transnational sensitivity	1.802*** (0.172)	1.596*** (0.263)	2.259*** (0.234)	1.856*** (0.177)	1.579*** (0.212)	2.322*** (0.282)	1.818*** (0.170)
x Vulnerability				1.191* (0.593)			
x Abitur							0.790* (0.354)
Transnational commitments	0.412** (0.135)	0.469* (0.211)	0.376* (0.171)	0.436** (0.136)	0.571*** (0.166)	0.131 (0.237)	0.428** (0.136)
x Vulnerability				-0.365 (0.457)			
x Abitur							-0.438 (0.284)
Vulnerability				0.147 (0.098)			
Secondary school ( <i>Abitur</i> )	0.306*** (0.076)	0.269* (0.115)	0.278** (0.102)	0.272*** (0.075)			0.362*** (0.058)
University	0.088 (0.085)	0.121 (0.136)	0.094 (0.107)	0.104 (0.085)			
Overall satisfaction	0.012 (0.165)	0.295 (0.253)	-0.270 (0.210)	0.020 (0.167)	0.069 (0.203)	-0.166 (0.271)	0.009 (0.164)
Right ideology	0.158 (0.140)	0.311 (0.223)	0.054 (0.180)	0.176 (0.141)	0.159 (0.176)	0.136 (0.225)	0.143 (0.139)
Postmaterialism	0.118 (0.084)	0.240* (0.119)	-0.067 (0.120)	0.110 (0.086)	0.070 (0.106)	0.187 (0.135)	0.104 (0.084)
Age	-0.001 (0.002)	-0.001 (0.003)	-0.000 (0.002)	-0.000 (0.002)	-0.001 (0.002)	0.001 (0.003)	-0.000 (0.002)
Male	0.066 (0.055)	0.038 (0.080)	0.089 (0.075)	0.061 (0.056)	0.078 (0.069)	0.048 (0.090)	0.071 (0.055)
Constant	0.833*** (0.176)	0.626* (0.278)	0.988*** (0.231)	1.735*** (0.149)	0.834*** (0.223)	1.144*** (0.273)	1.841*** (0.144)
Wald chi <sup>2</sup>	206.14***	68.67***	178.96***	213.61***	79.05***	78.11***	222.77***
Overdispersion ( $\alpha$ )	1.070***	1.451***	0.664***	1.064***	1.284***	0.704***	1.065***
Number of observations	1292	699	593	1292	871	421	1292
Log pseudo-likelihood	-3960.90	-2141.79	-1782.35	-3958.17	-2565.78	-1375.72	-3958.70

Note: robust standard errors in parentheses. \* $p < .05$  \*\* $p < .01$  \*\*\* $p < .001$  (two tailed tests). All interacting variables are centred before calculating product terms.

Thus far we have seen that the interdependence model is of significant explanatory power with respect to citizens' beliefs in the problem solving capability of global-scale internationalized governance. I now turn to the final part of this analysis, the multi-level perspective and the question of whether citizens apply the interdependence model consistently over different levels of regional and global governance. To what extent do citizens differentiate between levels of internationalized governance and do they use their understanding of interdependence to form beliefs about the problem solving capability of these levels? Two expectations were formulated above: Perceived global interdependence should lead to a shift of expectations predominantly toward the global level (H2a), while perceived European interdependence is expected to work predominantly in favour of beliefs in the problem solving capability of European institutions (H2b). To test this extension of the interdependence model, interdependence calculations are introduced, which differentiate between the defined levels. Again, it should be noted that the normative obligations correlate strongly, which already points to a low degree of differentiation by respondents. To check for the robustness of estimates, a set of alternative models is specified with European and global measures separated and combined, respectively.

In the first set of models the aggregated measure of beliefs in global capabilities used thus far are regressed on revised interdependence measures. Specified in this way, the estimates presented in table 3 strongly support H2. First of all, both coefficients for global interdependence measures are positive and significant. With respect to model 1, coefficients indicate a 41 percent change in capability beliefs per 0.1 increase in global sensitivity (range 0-1) and a 5.8 percent change for an additional 0.1 increase in global commitments (range 0-1). The European equivalents become irrelevant in the combined model. Strong correlations between commitment measures translate plausibly into the suppression of the significant relationships between the dependent and European commitment measures in model 2. The same mechanism can be inferred from the estimates vis-à-vis measures of sensitivity interdependence. Taken together, the multi-level version of the interdependence model seems to capture a significant part of how beliefs in the problem solving capability of global institutions are distributed.

In the second set of regression models, the applicability of the extended interdependence model is tested with respect to the European Union. We are forced to acknowledge the fact that the measurement of general beliefs in the problem

solving capability of regionalized governance projected from beliefs about a single institution is far from optimal. We should nevertheless expect the interdependence model to work in this crucial case of regionalized governance. An inspection of the estimates for model 4 suggests that our expectations are borne out to some extent. The estimated coefficients suggest a 2.9 percent change in beliefs in the EU's capability per 0.1 change in European sensitivity and a 3.8 percent change for an additional 0.1 in global commitments. Estimates for the combined model 6, however, indicate that the initial inference from estimates may be biased, because global measures were omitted. Controlling for the multi-level aspect of interdependence perceptions, results point to a significant role of global sensitivity, while the effect of European sensitivity vanishes. This clearly contradicts my expectations formulated in terms of an extended multi-level model. While one would expect public perceptions of regional interdependence *ceteris paribus* to foster beliefs in the problem solving capability of regional institutions, we see that such a process is not reflected in the data. Instead, we see that beliefs in EU's problem solving power appear to be significantly related to the perception of external influences from non-European world regions, i.e. globalization. Whether this has to do with the EU's public image of a "bulwark against globalization" is a determination beyond this paper. Because of the obvious limits of this crucial case for a thorough test of an extended multi-level interdependence model, more evidence is needed to qualify doubts nurtured by the results presented here.

Table 3—The interdependence model in a multi-level setting

	Global Capabilities			European Capabilities (EU)		
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Sensitivity—global	1.627*** (0.155)		1.561*** (0.161)		0.826*** (0.113)	0.798*** (0.117)
Sensitivity—European		0.540*** (0.115)	0.180 (0.115)	0.256** (0.086)		0.081 (0.090)
Commitments—global	0.462*** (0.125)		0.622* (0.243)		0.198 (0.112)	-0.053 (0.192)
Commitments—European		0.439** (0.138)	-0.220 (0.259)	0.321** (0.113)		0.310 (0.197)
Overall satisfaction	-0.040 (0.164)	0.027 (0.175)	-0.025 (0.165)	-0.143 (0.099)	-0.122 (0.102)	-0.138 (0.102)
Secondary school ( <i>Abitur</i> )	0.289*** (0.076)	0.289*** (0.078)	0.295*** (0.076)	0.027 (0.064)	0.045 (0.065)	0.049 (0.064)
University	0.089 (0.086)	0.097 (0.090)	0.091 (0.087)	0.136 (0.072)	0.115 (0.072)	0.111 (0.072)
Right ideology	0.120 (0.139)	0.089 (0.145)	0.135 (0.140)	-0.070 (0.124)	-0.076 (0.124)	-0.064 (0.125)
Postmaterialism	0.108 (0.084)	0.096 (0.087)	0.107 (0.084)	-0.073 (0.065)	-0.058 (0.065)	-0.054 (0.065)
Age	-0.001 (0.002)	-0.000 (0.002)	-0.001 (0.002)	0.001 (0.001)	0.001 (0.001)	0.001 (0.001)
Male	0.060 (0.056)	0.053 (0.058)	0.067 (0.056)	0.131** (0.044)	0.148*** (0.044)	0.139** (0.044)
constant	1.037*** (0.166)	1.307*** (0.184)	0.972*** (0.182)	1.583*** (0.131)	1.479*** (0.123)	1.407*** (0.137)
Wald chi <sup>2</sup>	209.486***	86.988***	213.792***	42.308***	85.187***	85.142***
Overdispersion ( $\alpha$ )	-	1.163**	-	0.836**	0.803**	0.801**
Number of observations	1295	1300	1292	1289	1284	1281
Log pseudo-likelihood	-3968.31	-4029.49	-3956.99	-3807.25	-3775.08	-3767.22

Note: robust standard errors in parentheses. \* $p < .05$  \*\* $p < .01$  \*\*\* $p < .001$  (two-tailed tests)

## 6. Conclusions

Findings speak for the central role of interdependence in how “ordinary people” make up their minds about global governance. The public view on internationalized governance seems to match the interdependence model underlying most academic discourse, most notably IR institutionalism and political cosmopolitanism. First, beliefs in the problem solving capability of global institutions are strongly related to the perception of transnational interdependence—be it in terms of functional sensitivity for an external influence on the domestic situation or normative obligations that cross borders. Second, vulnerability has been shown to moderate this link to a significant extent. The more people think that their national government is inefficient in addressing problems, the stronger will be the correspondence between perceptions of interdependence and positive expectations towards global capabilities. Hence data supports my intuition that the interdependence model’s explanatory power is somehow conditional on the perception of significant vulnerability (defined as the lack of nation states problem solving capability). Third, even if we must acknowledge a tendency to be cynical about global institutions among the less educated, their views on internationalized governance nevertheless match the interdependence model to a remarkable extent: the more transnational the problems, the more global institutions are expected to address these problems efficiently. Therefore, a lack in cognitive mobilization (or “skill” as James Rosenau would have it) does not constitute a critical scope condition of the interdependence model.

The explanatory power of the interdependence model is good news for theoretical reasons, because it fills a void in current research on public opinion formation toward an emerging global polity. Nevertheless, even if this paper has successfully probed the plausibility of the model with respect to global institutions, it has been only partially successful in explaining beliefs in the problem solving capability of the European Union, as the only regional institution under investigation. The results for the regional level are puzzling in this respect. Perceptions of the EU’s problem solving capability can best be explained with respect to perceived global interdependence, but the notion of “European interdependence” seems to have no comparable significance. In this way the interdependence model seems to capture the most basic story of an upward shift in public expectations, but fails with respect to the attribution of capabilities in a multi-level-structure of governance. Whether this is an outflow of the European (Union’s) specificities or applies to citizens’ views on regional governance in general is

beyond this paper. Future research will have to address this issue, to evaluate the explanatory power of the interdependence model in a world characterized by multi-level governance structures composed of national, regional and global institutions.

These results are instructive for all of those academics who devote much thought to the possibility of a democratic world polity: Results suggest that ordinary people behave in a cosmopolitan way in the most basic and therefore most important sense of that notion. Given the preference of its major proponents for subsidiarity as the structuring principle, the right level of political authority is said to be conditional on the scope of problems in a “cosmopolitan democracy”. On this understanding, the cosmopolitan project may indeed be in line with a widely shared public understanding of how to distribute political authority. Assuming that the process of globalization will continue, results suggest that a growing awareness of global interdependencies will cause the cosmopolitan part of society to grow in virtue of an ongoing process of “cosmopolitan politicization”.

The findings of this study point to at least three directions for future research: First, future studies will have to operate with a far more comprehensive set of institutions—preferably including a variety of local, national and regional forms—evaluated by survey respondents in terms of institutional problem solving capability and set in the context of respondents’ perceptions of the most pressing problems which society faces. Second, we should remain cautious about testing the interdependence model using a more cosmopolitan research design that permits comparative analysis over different spatial, temporal and cultural contexts. With both aspects borne in mind, the priority task will be to chart more fully and develop our theory further, on citizens’ understanding of transnational interdependencies and the most efficient way to tackle problems in view of these interdependencies.

Finally, future research must place the interdependence model in the larger context of political legitimacy issues. The low explanatory power of the interdependence model with respect to the EU might already point to the fact that the model oversimplifies processes of opinion formation toward specific international institutions which have become salient objects of public opinion. To some degree, a critical limitation of the model might be its focus on the output side of political legitimacy. More specifically, one may suspect cosmopolitan politiciza-



tion not only to be related to the rising overall awareness of international institutions' capabilities, but probably also to the many criteria of good governance that these institutions fail to meet. Growing expectations towards internationalized governance in terms of problem solving obviously do not preclude existing international institutions like the WTO, IMF or UNHCR becoming the objects of widespread criticism because of their lack of transparency, inclusiveness, or accountability. On the contrary, growing beliefs in the problem solving capability of internationalized governance will presumably lead (and has already done so) to a significant increase in citizens' expectations of prudent policy on the output side as well as democratic control on the input side (Scharpf 1997, Zürn 2004, Ecker-Ehrhardt and Wessels 2011 forthcoming). Hence future research should help us to understand to what degree the emergence of new centres of power on the global level spawns a desire for control by those affected, and set the stage for a comprehensive theory of public legitimacy of internationalized governance.

## Appendix

*Table 4—Summary statistics for variables used in the analysis*

Variable	Observations	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Global capabilities indices (issue specific)					
Environmental protection	1526	0.623	0.931	0	5
Poverty and hunger	1516	0.904	1.189	0	5
Terrorism	1514	0.744	0.894	0	5
Peace	1530	0.893	0.959	0	5
Citizens and human rights	1530	0.535	0.797	0	5
Economy	1521	0.713	1.111	0	5
Migration	1521	0.388	0.740	0	5
Refugees	1521	0.604	0.867	0	5
Inflation	1517	0.640	0.999	0	5
Education/illiteracy	1520	0.403	0.741	0	5
Unemployment	1524	0.239	0.652	0	5
Social inequality	1515	0.413	0.864	0	5
Criminality	1512	0.333	0.676	0	5
Consumer protection	1523	0.169	0.518	0	5
Global capabilities index (general)	1450	7.570	7.991	0	70
EU capability index (general)	1450	6.361	4.996	0	14
Transnational Sensitivity indices (issue specific)					
Environmental protection	1534	0.542	0.355	0	1
Poverty and hunger	1527	0.343	0.303	0	1
Terrorism	1526	0.436	0.310	0	1
Peace	1522	0.466	0.333	0	1
Citizens and human rights	1527	0.360	0.334	0	1
Economy	1533	0.502	0.298	0	1
Migration	1527	0.405	0.271	0	1
Refugees	1526	0.390	0.275	0	1
Inflation	1512	0.370	0.281	0	1
Education/illiteracy	1525	0.249	0.286	0	1
Unemployment	1531	0.352	0.282	0	1
Social inequality	1520	0.351	0.309	0	1
Criminality	1528	0.426	0.314	0	1
Consumer protection	1517	0.249	0.272	0	1
Transnational sensitivity index (general)	1540	0.385	0.203	0	1
Global sensitivity index (general)	1540	0.336	0.222	0	1
European sensitivity index (general)	1540	0.532	0.285	0	1
Transnational Commitment index	1490	0.482	0.217	0	1
Global Commitment index	1495	0.458	0.232	0	1
European Commitment index	1503	0.506	0.218	0	1

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Variable	Observations	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Vulnerability index	1450	0.265	0.301	0	1
Satisfaction w/ global Institutions	1516	0.485	0.187	0	.96
Satisfaction w/ EU	1509	0.511	0.228	0	1
<i>Abitur</i>	1545	0.312	0.463	0	1
University	1545	0.162	0.369	0	1
Male	1560	0.529	0.499	0	1
Right ideology	1445	0.419	0.202	0	1
Postmaterialism	1540	0.469	0.337	0	1
Age	1560	46.181	15.921	18	89

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