

Legitimacy Politics

Once staunch advocates of international cooperation, political elites are increasingly divided over the merits of global governance. Populist leaders attack international organizations for undermining national democracy, while mainstream politicians defend their importance for solving trans-boundary problems. Bridging international relations, comparative politics, and cognitive psychology, Lisa Dellmuth and Jonas Tallberg explore whether, when, and why elite communication shapes the popular legitimacy of international organizations. Based on novel theory, experimental methods, and comparative evidence, they show that elites are influential in shaping how citizens perceive global governance and explain why some elites and messages are more effective than others. The book offers fresh insights into major issues of our day, such as the rise of populism, the power of communication, the backlash against global governance, and the relationship between citizens and elites. It will be of interest to scholars and students of international relations, political science, and experimental and survey research methods.

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Cambridge University Press & Assessment
978-1-009-22203-7 — Legitimacy Politics
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Frontmatter
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Elite Communication and Public
Opinion in Global Governance

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CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom
One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre,
New Delhi – 110025, India
103 Penang Road, #05–06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781009222037
DOI: 10.1017/9781009222020

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When citing this work, please include a reference to the DOI
10.1017/9781009222020

First published 2023

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.

ISBN 978-1-009-22203-7 Hardback

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Contents

<i>List of Figures</i>	page vi
<i>List of Tables</i>	viii
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	ix
<i>List of Abbreviations</i>	xii
1 Introduction	1
2 Legitimacy and Communication in Global Governance	26
3 A Theory of Elite Influence and Popular Legitimacy	60
4 Communication by Global Elites	90
5 Communication by Domestic Elites	118
6 Communication about Procedure and Performance	151
7 Communication about Authority and Purpose	177
8 Conclusion	207
<i>References</i>	227
<i>Index</i>	256

Figures

2.1 Citizen confidence in the UN and domestic government	<i>page</i> 30
2.2 Citizen support for the AU	33
2.3 Citizen trust in the EU	34
2.4 Citizen support for the Mercosur	36
2.5 Citizen confidence in IOs and domestic government	37
2.6 Elite confidence in IOs and domestic government	40
2.7 Elite confidence in IOs, by country	41
2.8 Elite confidence in IOs, by elite type	42
2.9 Legitimacy narratives in relation to the EU in news and social media	53
2.10 Legitimacy narratives in relation to the IMF in news and social media	55
2.11 Legitimacy narratives in relation to the UNFCCC in news and social media	56
2.12 Legitimacy narratives in relation to the UNSC in news and social media	57
4.1 Effects of communication, by elites	102
4.2 Effects of communication, by IO features	104
4.3 Effects of communication, by tone	106
4.4 Effect of negative government communication, by partisanship	108
4.5 Effects of communication, by elites and IOs	109
4.6 Effects of communication, by IO features and IOs	110
4.7 Effects of communication, by tone and IOs	111
4.8 Effects of communication, by elites and countries	112
4.9 Effects of communication, by IO features and countries	113
4.10 Effects of communication, by tone and countries	114
5.1 Percentage of partisans in Germany and the US	133
5.2 Partisan strength in Germany and the US	134

<i>List of Figures</i>	vii
5.3 Pretreatment opinions in the US, by partisan identification	136
5.4 Pretreatment opinions in Germany, by partisan identification	137
5.5 Effects of communication among partisans in the US	139
5.6 Effects of communication among partisans in Germany	142
6.1 Effects of communication about institutional qualities	166
6.2 Average confidence in IOs in the control group	167
6.3 Effects of communication about institutional qualities, by global organization	168
6.4 Effects of communication about institutional qualities, by regional organization	169
6.5 Political knowledge about IOs	171
6.6 Effects of communication about institutional qualities, by country	173
7.1 Example screen with survey instructions	186
7.2 Example screen with conjoint experiment	188
7.3 Internationalist attitudes in Germany and the US	190
7.4 Left–right ideology in Germany and the US	190
7.5 Effects of institutional qualities in the US	192
7.6 Effects of institutional qualities in Germany	193
7.7 Effects of authority in the US, by internationalism	197
7.8 Effects of authority in Germany, by internationalism	198
7.9 Effects of social purpose in the US, by partisanship	200
7.10 Effects of social purpose in Germany, by partisanship	201

Tables

4.1 Vignettes in the global elites experiment	<i>page</i> 98
5.1 Issue frames about NATO military spending	126
5.2 Issue frames about the UN Refugee Convention	126
5.3 Experimental conditions, NATO experiment in the US	128
5.4 Experimental conditions, NATO experiment in Germany	130
5.5 Effects of party cues among Democrats in the US, by partisanship strength and IO	140
6.1 Institutional sources of legitimacy	157
6.2 Hypotheses and corresponding treatments	161
7.1 Institutional qualities varied in the experiment	187

Acknowledgments

The inspiration for this book comes from a paradox: While international organizations are increasingly contested among political elites, who challenge and defend these institutions in the public debate, we know little about how such elite communication affects the way ordinary citizens view global governance. Are antiglobalist populists successful in influencing public perceptions of international organizations? To what extent can advocates of global governance push back and secure public support? And what are the logics and circumstances that shape whether citizens are receptive to such messages from political elites?

This book offers our answers to these questions, with a particular focus on how elites influence the popular legitimacy of international organizations. Legitimacy among citizens is a key resource for any political institution, contributing to effectiveness and democracy. Yet earlier research has overlooked how elites shape popular legitimacy perceptions. In this book, we contribute the first comprehensive analysis on this subject. For this purpose, we develop a novel theory of elite communication in global governance and explore empirically how elite messages affect citizen legitimacy beliefs toward international organizations in a broad comparative context.

Looking back to when we started this book project, its subject has only become more topical with time. We began our work on this book before Boris Johnson convinced the British public of the benefits of leaving the European Union, before Donald Trump rolled out an antiglobalist agenda as a United States president, and before liberal leaders rallied behind the World Health Organization in the fight against COVID-19. As we conclude our work, we resist the temptation to call ourselves prescient but admit that slowness in execution sometimes has its advantages. Looking forward, we see no reason why contestation around global governance would not remain a key feature of contemporary politics.

This book extends research that we have previously published in other outlets. Chapter 4 draws in part on an article in the *British Journal of Political Science*. Chapter 6 builds in part on an article in the *Review of International Studies*, coauthored with Jan Aart Scholte. We are grateful to Jan for allowing us to use part of our joint work for this chapter. For readers who would like to consult additional analyses we have conducted for the book, a supplementary online appendix, replication data sets, and associated code are available at <https://dataverse.harvard.edu/dataverse/legitimacypolitics> and on author homepages.

We have been fortunate to benefit from the intellectual generosity of a large number of people in our work on this book. To begin with, we are particularly thankful to our colleagues in the Legitimacy in Global Governance (LegGov) research program for stimulating discussions and constructive feedback throughout the writing of this book: Hans Agné, Bart Bes, Magdalena Bexell, Karin Bäckstrand, Farsan Ghassim, Catia Gregoratti, Kristina Jönsson, Jan Aart Scholte, Thomas Sommerer, Nora Stappert, Fredrik Söderbaum, Anders Uhlin, Soetkin Verhaegen, and Fariborz Zelli. This book complements other research by ourselves and our colleagues on sources, processes, and consequences of legitimacy in global governance.

In addition, we want to extend our gratitude to many other colleagues, who have commented generously on various versions of chapters in this book: Brilé Anderson, Philip Ayoub, Thomas Bernauer, Henning Best, Tobias Böhmelt, Melanie Coni-Zimmer, Klaus Dingwerth, Andreas Dür, Erica Gould, Kristina Jönsson, Aya Kachi, Judith Kelley, Bob Keohane, Mathias Koenig-Archibugi, Tobias Lenz, Björn Ljung, Dan Maliniak, Gary Marks, Christoph Mikulaschek, Naghme Nasiritousi, Dan Nielson, Christian Rauh, Jofre Rocabert, Bernd Schlipphak, Henning Schmidtke, Christina Schneider, Duncan Snidal, Theresa Squatrito, Stelios Stavridis, Mike Tierney, Mike Tomz, Felicity Vabulas, Kåre Vernby, Carl Vikberg, Lora Viola, Stefanie Walter, Ogi Zugic, and Michael Zürn. We also extend our thanks to Therese Christoffersson, Elisa Funk, and Ana-Sofia Valderas, who have contributed invaluable research assistance.

In developing our thinking on this topic, we have benefited extensively from feedback at seminars and workshops organized by German Institute for Global and Area Studies Hamburg, Stanford University, Stockholm University, University of Gothenburg, University of Oslo, University of Oxford, University of Zurich, and WZB Berlin Social

Acknowledgments

xi

Science Center, as well as panels held at conferences of the American Political Science Association, European Consortium for Political Research, and International Studies Association. We have also had the good fortune to be part of a stimulating and supportive local environment at Stockholm University, where the research group on global and regional governance deserves special mention. In addition, Jonas would like to thank Stanford University for a rewarding research stay in 2018.

We extend our great gratitude to Riksbankens Jubileumsfond (M15-0048:1) and the Swedish Research Council (2015-00948), whose generous funding has made this book possible.

We are most grateful to executive editor John Haslam and the publishing team at Cambridge University Press for their continuous support and professional handling of the book. Two anonymous reviewers for Cambridge University Press challenged us to further clarify the book's methodological choices and broader implications for research on contestation in global governance.

Finally, we wish to thank our families for putting up with us as we have worked hard on this book. While we have done our best to keep work and family time separate, we have not always succeeded. Your love and understanding means everything – we dedicate this book to you.

Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AfD	Alternative für Deutschland (Alternative for Germany)
AMCE	average marginal component effects
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AU	African Union
CDU	Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands (Christian Democratic Union)
CSO	civil society organization
CSU	Christlich-Soziale Union in Bayern (Christian Social Party)
EU	European Union
EVS	European Values Study
GAL	green, alternative, and liberal
G8	Group of Eight
G20	Group of Twenty
ICC	International Criminal Court
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IO	international organization
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
LGBTQ	lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	nongovernmental organization
NPD	Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands (National Democratic Party of Germany)
TAN	traditional, authoritarian, and nationalist
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

List of Abbreviations

xiii

UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
US	United States
USMCA	United States–Mexico–Canada Agreement
WB	World Bank
WHO	World Health Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization
WVS	World Values Survey

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