

Security Through Solidarity: How Populism Reshapes Global Governance

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Information and International Cooperation



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THE WORLD BANK



Information May Be Biased or Withheld

- China and the U.S. refused to provide details about COVID-19 to the World Health Organization
- U.S. injected partisan bias into reports about climate change
- Canada and Brazil withheld sensitive information from the World Trade Organization ([Carnegie and Carson 2020](#))

Project Overview

- **Question:** What happens when member states refuse to supply accurate information to IOs?
- **Theory:** IOs broaden their information base by sharing more information with one another

Project Overview

- **Method:**

- ① Original dataset of information sharing between development IOs 1956-2018
- ② Case study of U.S. under President Trump

- **Key Finding:** IOs sign more and deeper information sharing agreements when key member states withhold information

Information Is Essential to IOs' Operations

- IOs rely on member states for information, apply expertise, and make policy recommendations ([Keohane 1984](#); [Dai 2002](#))
 - Such expertise is often more important than material support ([Clemens and Kremer 2016](#))
- IOs rarely collect their own information (e.g. IAEA inspections)

Cutting Off Information Constrains IOs

- May be preferable to more observable intransigence (e.g. withholding funds or blocking nominees)
- May also afford states the appearance of compliance

Populists Oppose IOs

- Prefer “outsiders” to globalists / lifelong bureaucrats ([Busby et al. 2019](#))
- IOs staffed by members of untrustworthy global elite ([Bearce and Scott 2019](#); [Copelovitch and Pevehouse 2019](#))
 - *Nativists*: information is key national advantage
 - *Redistributionists*: IOs benefit elites over masses
- Populists may attack IOs by either withholding information or injecting bias into it

Main Argument

- IOs respond to informational shortfalls by cooperating with other IOs
- *Information sharing*: exchange of otherwise private knowledge
 - Costly because information can be sensitive, it may require institutional change, and member states may object
 - IOs share only when confronting major threats, as when major stakeholders elect populists

Hypothesis: IOs sign more and deeper information sharing agreements when their major stakeholder is led by a populist

Main Argument

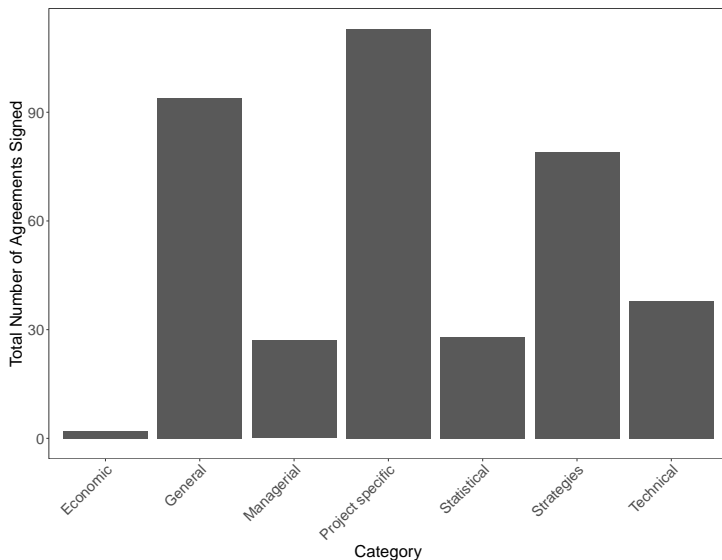
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Original Dataset

- Information sharing agreements signed between development IOs 1956-2018
 - ① Number of agreements signed by each IO in a given year
 - ② Number of informational categories they span
- Development is representative of many economic areas in terms of sensitivity of information

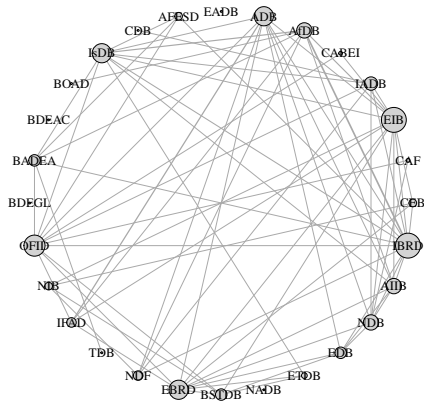
Information Sharing Categories



Who Shares Information?

Cooperation Over Time

Cooperation by IO

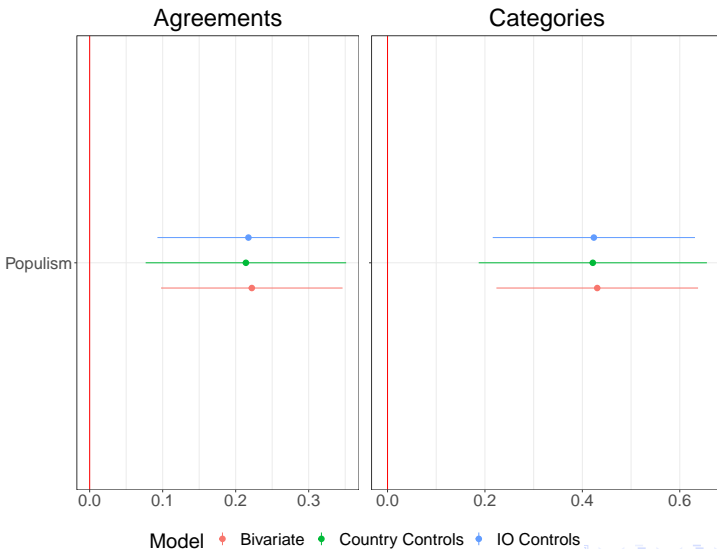


Cross-National Analysis

- *Unit of analysis*: IO–year
- *Dependent variables*: number of agreements signed and number of informational categories covered
- *Independent variable*: indicator for populist leadership in most powerful member state 1990-2018
 - Tony Blair Institute
 - BYU populism database
- *Specification*: OLS; IO, year, and agreement type fixed effects
- *Covariates*: Number of members; IO age; Polity2; GDPPC

Regression Results

Robustness Checks

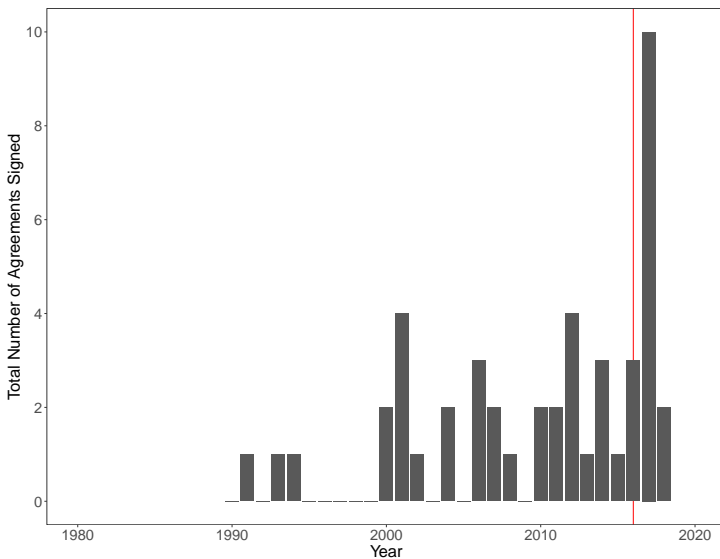


Regression Table

	Number of agreements			Number of categories		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Populism	0.260*** (0.077)	0.257*** (0.077)	0.241*** (0.084)	0.487*** (0.128)	0.482*** (0.128)	0.450*** (0.143)
Number of Members		0.004 (0.005)			0.006 (0.008)	
IO Age		0.005 (0.004)			0.004 (0.007)	
Polity			-0.005 (0.006)			0.001 (0.011)
GDPPC			0.180 (0.117)			0.239 (0.201)
N	727	727	694	727	727	694

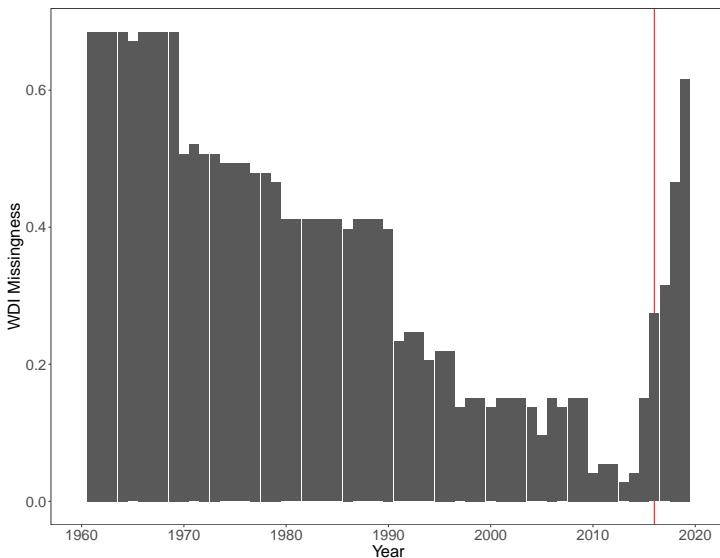
***p < .01; **p < .05; *p < .1

Case Study: The U.S. Under Trump



Case Study: The U.S. Under Trump

Average Suppression



Summary and Contributions

- IOs share information to insulate themselves from member state attacks
 - Existing work focuses on how cooperation allows IOs to circumvent gridlock ([Abbott et al. 2015](#)) and prevent forum shopping ([Clark 2020](#))
- IOs are more than passive actors carrying out will of powerful states ([Mearsheimer 1995](#))
- Future of global governance may not be as bleak as some anticipate

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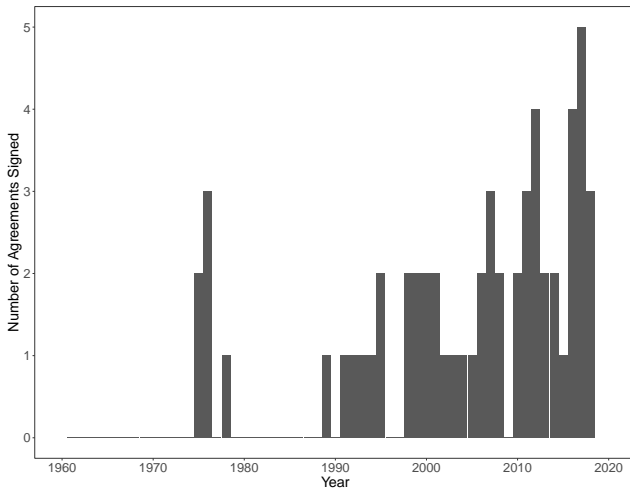
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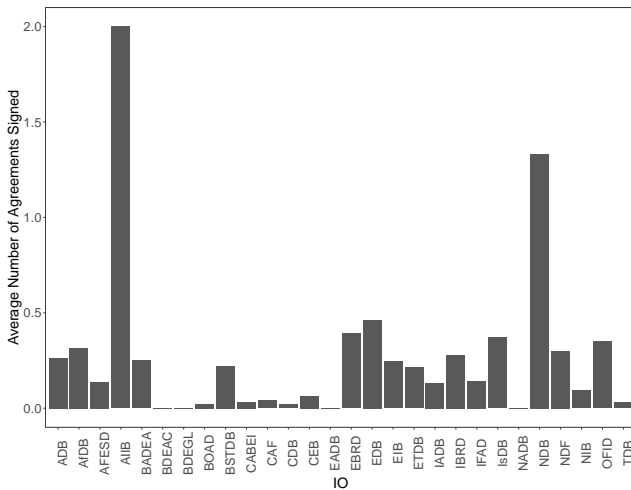
Information Sharing Over Time

Network Plot



Cooperativeness by IO

Network Plot



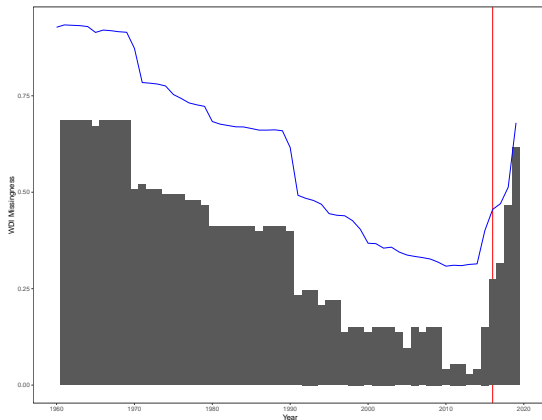
Robustness Checks

Figure Results

- Major stakeholder fixed effects
- Time trend added
- Poisson specification
- All covariates together

U.S. Suppression Compared to Mean

Suppression Plot



- From 2016 to 2019, U.S. missingness increased by 35 percentage points. On average, other countries experienced only a 22 percentage point increase