Public Acceptance of International Redistribution in High-Income Countries

Adrien Fabre*

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Abstract

Using an original survey of 12,000 respondents representative of eleven high-income countries, I examine public support for global redistribution and climate policies. Although global inequality is not a salient concern, political programs that address it are more likely to be preferred. In every country, majorities accept nearly all global policies tested, including those that would redistribute 5 percent of global income or entail personal costs for respondents. Survey experiments demonstrate the robustness of support. In particular, an information treatment shows that support for global policies causally increases among respondents who perceive them as likely; an effect opposite to warm glow.

*CNRS; CIRED. E-mail: adrien.fabre@cnrs.fr.

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The issue of North-to-South transfers of resources and power permeates negotiations in many areas, including debt restructuring, development assistance, tax cooperation, UN reform, and climate finance.[1] In all international fora, Global South countries seek a more equal world order. Indeed, redirecting just 1% of high-income countries' output to low-income countries (LICs) would mechanically double their national income.[2]

Public attitudes in high-income countries (HICs) are key to understanding whether globally redistributive policies would be politically feasible. Recent large-scale surveys reveal worldwide support for a globally coordinated tax on billionaires (Cappelen et al. 2025b), a democratic world government for global issues (Ghassim & Pauli 2024), climate action at the global (rather than national) level (Dechezleprêtre et al. 2025), as well as globally redistributive climate or tax policies (Fabre et al. 2025).

Despite strong stated support even in HICs, international redistribution is rarely discussed in public debates, let alone advocated by policymakers. Fabre et al. (2025) conduct survey experiments in the U.S. and four Western European countries to understand this mismatch, focusing on a "Global Climate Scheme" (GCS) costly to these countries. The authors reject hypotheses that support for the GCS might be overstated: they find no social desirability bias in a list experiment, 6 out of 10 respondents prefer a political program that includes the GCS over one that does not, and most respondents are willing to sign a petition in favor of the GCS. While the authors find support reduced by 11 percentage points (p.p.) following a (fictitious) negative media campaign —an effect size similar to the actual decrease in support for the "Green New Deal" after it was publicly debated (Gustafson et al. 2019)— a campaign effect of this magnitude would not generate majority opposition to policies favored by three-quarters of the population, such as a globally redistributive wealth tax. Therefore, Fabre et al. (2025) conclude that support for global redistribution is genuine, and another hypothesis is needed to explain the lack of prominence of this issue. A promising candidate is "pluralistic ignorance": the underestimation of public support. Indeed, pluralistic ignorance has been documented regarding climate

[1] The (re)distribution of resources between countries is debated in different official fora, such as the G20, the OECD's Base Erosion and Profit Shifting project, the Conference on Financing for Development, the International Maritime Organization, the Global Solidarity Levies Taskforce, the UN Framework Convention on International Tax Cooperation, and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. Appendix C.1 provides references on official initiatives for global redistribution.

[2] The GDP per capita of high-income countries (HICs) is 28 times greater than that of low-income countries (LICs) at Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) and 68 times greater in nominal terms, from World Bank 2024 data. Given that 625 million people live in one of the 25 low-income countries and 1.42 billion people in high-income countries, 1% of HICs' GDP corresponds to 60% of LICs' GDP using PPP values and 153% using nominal data.

action (Andre et al. 2024a,b; Mildenberger & Tingley 2019), the billionaire tax (Cappelen et al. 2025b), and the GCS (Fabre et al. 2025). Nevertheless, pluralistic ignorance has not prevented climate policies or a national wealth tax from entering public debates, suggesting that other mechanisms may be at play concerning global redistribution.

In this paper, I conduct a pre-registered large-scale survey to examine whether global redistribution policies are robustly accepted and to investigate the reasons for their lack of prominence. I test several hypotheses. Surveying eleven HICs, I test whether international policies are accepted by majorities in countries considered conservative and not yet surveyed on this topic, such as Japan, Poland, Russia, Saudi Arabia, and Switzerland. Recognizing that some key countries would likely not participate if these policies were implemented, I test how acceptance is affected when a climate scheme or a wealth tax is international but not truly global. I explore three potential mechanisms that could explain the preference–prominence gap. First, I test for pluralistic ignorance. Second, I analyze the salience of global redistribution, and whether it is a vote-determining issue. Third, I test for "warm glow", whereby people delude themselves into supporting hypothetical policies in order to ease their conscience, notably by testing whether the support is only claimed for as long as the policies are deemed unlikely. Finally, I explore a variety of international policies, ranging from the plausible to the radical.

Throughout the paper, I make a distinction between *support* and *acceptance*. I use the term *support* to refer to the absolute share of *Somewhat* or *Strong support* on Likert scales, and *acceptance* to refer to relative support —specifically, the support share among non-*Indifferent* responses. Although binary (*Yes*/*No*) questions are typically worded in terms of "support", I generally report their results using the term *acceptance*. This approach avoids mistaking passive consent for active support among respondents who could not choose a neutral option.

I find majority acceptance in every country surveyed for almost all globally redistributive policies tested. Policies currently discussed in international negotiations are accepted by large majorities. The most supported policy is the 2% tax on billionaire wealth proposed by Zucman (2024), with 81% acceptance in the pooled sample. Proposals such as debt relief for vulnerable countries, developed countries contributing 0.7% of their GDP in foreign aid, an expansion of the UN Security Council, or the Bridgetown initiative (expanding sustainable investments at low interests rates in LICs) all garner at least 70% acceptance overall.

Radical proposals are also widely accepted. Majorities in every country agree that

"governments should actively cooperate to have all countries converge in terms of GDP per capita by the end of the century", and that globally coordinated climate policies are preferable to the status quo, even if they entail completely electrifying cars by 2045 and doubling the prices of heating fuel, flights, and beef. Overall, I find 64% acceptance for a progressive income tax that would finance poverty reduction in the Global South, which would collect 5% of world income from the global top 3%, with marginal tax rates ranging from 15% above $80,000 per year to 45% above $1 million. Relatedly, in an interactive task where respondents design their preferred global income redistribution, nearly half choose a redistribution that would make them poorer (versus less than 10% choosing one that would make them richer). The average custom redistribution entails over 5% of world income in transfers from the rich to the poor.

Before respondents could infer the survey's topic, they had to complete an open-ended field, a conjoint experiment, and a budget allocation task. When asked to allocate the revenue from a global wealth tax among five spending items, 87% of respondents allocate a positive amount to the global item (public services in LICs). This item receives an average preferred share of 17.5% of the revenue, slightly below an equal split of 20%. This indicates that most people prioritize sustainable development abroad less than the average issue, but still consider it worthwhile.

While policies to address global inequality are widely accepted, they have low salience. Indeed, this topic is rarely mentioned in open-ended fields at the beginning of the survey, where respondents were asked to write about various considerations. Respondents' top concern is the cost of living, and their most frequent wish is for greater purchasing power. While inequality is most often regarded as the greatest injustice —with some inconclusive indications that these responses relate to inequality at the global level— global inequality almost never appears among issues respondents consider important but neglected in public debate. The low priority placed on global redistribution may explain why it is seldom discussed in public debates, despite widespread acceptance of related policies.

Despite its low salience, global redistribution may be a vote-determining issue for some people, as the conjoint experiment suggests. In this task, respondents express their preference between two political programs, each composed of policies randomly selected from those prominently debated in their country. When a program includes a *global tax on millionaires with 30% of the revenue funding LICs*, the likelihood of that program being preferred increases by 5 p.p., while *cutting development aid* reduces it by 3 p.p. A direct question confirms that some voters might change their vote intention if a candidate cam-

paigned on sustainable development: 36% of respondents report they would be more likely (versus 17% less likely) to vote for a party if it participated in a global movement for climate action, taxes on millionaires, and poverty reduction in LICs. In a related question, 68% of respondents (and 52% of the 561 millionaires[3] who responded) state they could actively participate in such a movement (either by signing a petition, attending a demonstration, going on strike, or donating to a strike fund).

What if a sustainable development policy is international but not global? Acceptance decreases only slightly. In the case of a wealth tax with 30% of revenue financing LICs, acceptance is reduced from 74% to 68% when the policy is implemented only by some countries (e.g. the EU, the UK, and Brazil) rather than all countries. Likewise, acceptance of an International Climate Scheme (ICS), defined as a cap-and-trade with equal per capita allocation of emissions rights, decreases from 68% to 65% when participating countries shrink from a group covering 72% of world emissions to one covering 33% of emissions.

I identify pluralistic ignorance through an incentivized question that asks respondents for their belief regarding support for the Global (version of the) Climate Scheme, either among their compatriots or in the U.S. In Japan and in European countries, there is majority support for the GCS, yet most people believe there is not. Overall, the median respondent underestimates support in their own country by 16 p.p. and non-American respondents underestimate support in the U.S. by 22 p.p. Pluralistic ignorance may be an important reason why global solidarity solutions are neglected.

To test whether support might drop if the prospect of global policies materializes (a form of *warm glow*), I manipulate the belief that large international transfers are likely in the next fifteen years. More specifically, I inform a random half of the respondents that "countries have agreed to demonstrate some degree of solidarity in addressing global challenges", providing diverse examples including the adoption of a shipping levy at the International Maritime Organization that should partly finance LICs, developed countries' commitments to finance climate action in developing countries, and the study by the G20 of a coordinated tax on billionaires. The information treatment increases the belief that transfers are likely by 7 p.p. from a baseline of 33%, and it also *increases* the share of global policies supported by 1 p.p. An IV estimation shows that the share of policies supported causally increases by 18 p.p. when people believe that international transfers are likely, consistent with the non-causal effect estimated by OLS. In other words, I find

[3]Millionaire is understood as having a net wealth of at least one million dollar or the equivalent in other currencies, cf. Question 15.

no evidence of *warm glow*. On the contrary, the effect goes in the opposite direction compared to the *warm glow* hypothesis: if people believed that a global policy were likely, they would be more likely to support it (which can be interpreted as a *status quo* bias).

Finally, I test respondents' broad values to verify their consistency with global redistribution. The majority of respondents agree that "helping countries in need is the right thing to do". However, only a minority is convinced that it is in HICs' long-term interest to do so, or that it is their historical responsibility. Similarly, there is no majority support for reparations for colonization and slavery in the pooled sample. These results suggest that support for global solidarity is driven by a sense of empathy and duty rather than guilt or interest.

Universalism has been identified as one of the best predictors of voting behavior (Enke 2020) and ideology (Cappelen et al. 2025a; Enke et al. 2023), particularly in Western countries (Cappelen et al. 2025a). I use a new question to measure universalism, asking respondents which group they advocate for when they vote. 45% choose a universalist response (either "Humans" or "Sentient beings (humans and animals)"), while 32% opt for their fellow citizens. Using a variance decomposition, I find that universalism is a stronger predictor of policy attitudes than sociodemographic variables such as income, country, or even vote choice, echoing the results of Enke et al. (2023). Besides, there is a majority of universalists in Europe, Saudi Arabia, and among left-wing voters.

This observation aligns with the cross-national differences observed in synthetic indicators: Saudi Arabia, Italy, and Spain exhibit the highest levels of support for global redistribution, while Japan, Switzerland, the U.S., and Poland show the lowest.

By studying in depth the support for global policies, this paper departs from the usual methodological approach of attitudinal surveys. In general, academic surveys focus on estimating effect sizes of some treatment on political attitudes, or identifying the sociodemographic factors and the beliefs that correlate with attitudes (e.g. Alesina et al. 2018; Douenne & Fabre 2022; Kuziemko et al. 2015). The magnitude of support for a given proposal is often deemed unsuitable for satisfactory estimation, because such attitudes are viewed as weakly held, inconsistent, or unstable. The measure of support is usually left to non-academic pollsters, who rarely apply all academic best practices: transparency, representative sampling, neutral and precise question wording, comparison with existing literature, and the use of multiple questions and complementary methods to correctly interpret the results. However, although estimating the extent of support is challenging, this question seems too important not to be addressed using scientific methods. Further-

more, Ansolabehere et al. (2008) refute common perceptions regarding policy attitudes, showing that they are as stable and nearly as predictive of vote choice as party identification. In this paper, I examine support for various policies, approach the question from diverse angles, and run a battery of pre-registered tests to check the reliability of stated support estimates.

Related literature. Previous cross-country surveys consistently find strong public support for globally redistributive policies (Cappelen et al. 2025b; Fabre et al. 2025) or global democratic governance (Ghassim & Pauli 2024).

The first questions on respondents' considerations contribute to an extensive literature in political science on "issue salience" —the priority attributed to a given issue. Issue salience is now widely acknowledged as a key factor in determining voting behavior (Dennison 2019; Edwards et al. 1995; Egan 2013; Krosnick 1988; RePass 1971). Furthermore, according to open-ended responses, the "most important issues" relate to the economy and healthcare (Wlezien 2005). Although climate change and hunger appear in the top five problems when the question is framed at the global rather than national level (Yeager et al. 2011), public acceptance of sustainable development policies may be overshadowed by more pressing concerns in voters' choices.

Although this paper focuses on multilateral policies, it relates to the literature on attitudes toward foreign aid. Kaufmann et al. (2019) and Fabre et al. (2025) find that, despite substantial overestimation of aid amounts, desired aid exceeds perceived aid in most countries. Hudson & van Heerde (2012) provide a critical review of the literature and show that the strong support for poverty alleviation largely stems from intrinsic altruism, in line with Eurobarometer data (Cho 2024).

Nair (2018) finds that Americans underestimate their rank in the global income distribution by 27 percentiles on average and overestimate the global median income by a factor of 10, which lowers their support for foreign aid. Similarly, Fehr et al. (2022) find that 9 out of 10 Germans express support for global redistribution, even though respondents underestimate their position in the global income distribution by an average of 15 percentiles.

Finally, the paper contributes to the literature analyzing dispositions towards free-riding on climate action and the ways in which support for climate agreements depends on their country coverage. Using conjoint analyses in Western countries, Beiser-McGrath & Bernauer (2019b) demonstrate that climate agreements with broader country cover-

age are more likely to be preferred. In Germany and the U.S., Gampfer et al. (2014) also find stronger support for funding climate action in low-income countries when the cost is shared with other countries. Nevertheless, surveys consistently show that people support their country taking unilateral climate action, even in the absence of such action in other countries (Beiser-McGrath & Bernauer 2019a; Bernauer & Gampfer 2015; McGrath & Bernauer 2017). Aklin & Mildenberger (2020) show that the empirical evidence for free-riding is not compelling, and that climate inaction can be equally well explained by distributive conflicts. Still, survey evidence indicates some degree of conditional cooperation: support for domestic climate action increases if other countries join forces (Carlsson et al. 2025).

I Data and Design

Samples. I conducted an original survey of 12,001 respondents representative of the adult population in eleven high-income countries (see Figure 1). The countries were chosen to span the diversity of high-income countries and the sample sizes to be commensurate with each country's population size.[4] The survey was fielded online in 2025 using the companies *Yandex* (for Russia), *Kantar* (for Saudi Arabia), and *Bilendi* (for the other countries).[5]

In Russia, I could not administer the same questionnaire as in the other countries.[6] I had to curtail it for two reasons. First, I could not use the platform *Qualtrics*, which prevented me from using certain question formats (such as constant sum scales) or embedding Javascript (used to design the interactive question). Second, I had to cut or reword some questions due to preventive censorship by the survey company. In the other countries, the questionnaires are almost identical, though the figures in the questions are adapted to the country-specific context (e.g. respondents are informed about the cost of

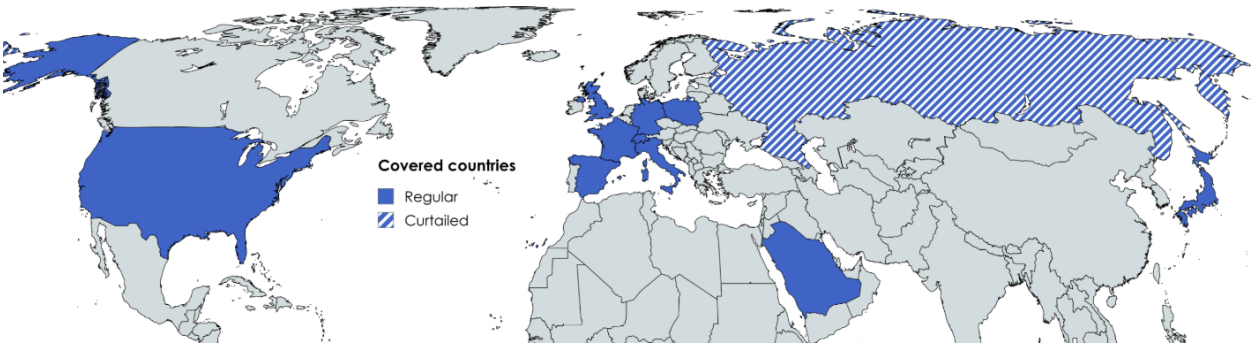
[4]The sample sizes are as follows: U.S.: 3,000; Japan: 2,000; Russia: 1,001; Saudi Arabia: 1,000; Europe: 5,000, split in proportion to the countries' adult population sizes (except for Switzerland), i.e. France: 798; Germany: 1,048; Italy: 756; Spain: 603; Poland: 500; Switzerland: 469. The maximum margins of error (at the 5% threshold) for country samples range from $\pm$1.8 p.p. in the U.S. to $\pm$4.5 p.p. in Switzerland, with an intermediate value of $\pm$3.1 p.p. in Saudi Arabia.

[5]For all countries except Russia, responses were collected between April 15 and July 3, 2025. For Russia, responses were collected between September 19 and October 9, 2025. Each complete response was rewarded with approximately €3 in gift points.

[6]To the best of my knowledge, Toews & Suvorov (2025) were the first to manage surveying the Russian public on climate attitudes.

the Global Climate Scheme to the average person in their country).[7]

Figure 1: Country coverage of the survey.



Representativeness. The samples are stratified to be representative of the country's adult population based on the following quota variables (with some exceptions[8]): gender, age (5 brackets), income (4), diploma (3), region (2 to 5), and urbanicity (2 to 3). The samples closely match the actual population frequencies along these dimensions, except for Russia and Saudi Arabia, where individuals without a high school diploma are somewhat underrepresented, as well as low-income individuals in Russia and non-Saudis in Saudi Arabia (see Tables S4-S7 in Appendix D). All results are reweighted to be fully representative of the population along the quotas, with weights trimmed between 0.25 and 4. Results aggregated at the global or European levels weigh each country in proportion to its adult population size. Descriptive results on a random branch use weights that are recomputed within that subsample.

Sociodemographic variables explain 10% to 15% of the variance in the main attitudinal outcomes, and this figure drops to 5% after accounting for country and vote (Figure S68). In other words, although variables such as age and diploma are significantly correlated with attitudes (see Tables S8-S9), differences in average acceptance of a policy between (say) age groups rarely exceed a dozen percentage points. In contrast, our measure of universalism is a stronger predictor than any sociodemographic variable.

While support for the main attitudinal outcomes is highest among left-wing voters and lowest among far-right voters, non-voters exhibit attitudes close to the center of the political spectrum (Appendix J). Besides, attitudes are much less polarized in Japan com-

[7] Appendix C.2 lists the unique features of the questionnaire in each country.

[8] In the U.S., I also use race (4 categories) as a quota variable. In Saudi Arabia, I do not use urbanicity, but I use citizenship (Saudi vs. non-Saudi). In Russia, I do not use region nor urbanicity.

pared to Europe and the U.S. Figures S66-S67 show how the weighted samples compare to actual voting results in the most recent election. Although the proportion of self-reported non-voters is lower than in reality, voting patterns across the three main political leanings are similar to the actual distribution. Additionally, the main results are robust to reweighting by vote (Appendix K).

Data Quality. The median survey duration is 17 minutes (13 min in Russia). Best practices have been implemented to ensure top-notch data quality (Stantcheva 2023). The questionnaire was carefully worded in a neutral and informative way;[9] tested on random people in public spaces to ensure correct comprehension; translated by professional translators, with figures converted into national currencies; and double-checked by native speakers.

Of all respondents who started the questionnaire, 23% respondents were allowed to continue (as their quotas were not full). Among them, 17% dropped out (including 10% who dropped out after the socio-demographic questions). The final sample is obtained after excluding 16% of respondents from the extended sample for suspicion of low quality: 9% for failing an attention test and 13% for completing the questionnaire in less than 6 minutes[10] (including 5% for both reasons). I check for differential attrition and finds no correlation of treatment arms with attrition (Appendix G). I also show that the main results replicate in the extended sample (Appendix L).

The order of question items is randomized whenever possible. Item order generally has a significant but small effect on answers (2 to 14 p.p.), as shown in Appendix M. The size of this effect helps identify questions for which opinions are strongly held (e.g. a preference for a sustainable scenario over the status quo) versus weakly held (e.g. the preferred amount of climate finance).

Incentives. The questionnaire includes three incentivized questions, each awarding a $100 prize to one randomly selected winner. First, a comprehension question about the Global Climate Scheme (GCS) checks whether respondents understand the policy's cost. Second, a donation lottery allows respondents to choose what portion of the prize they

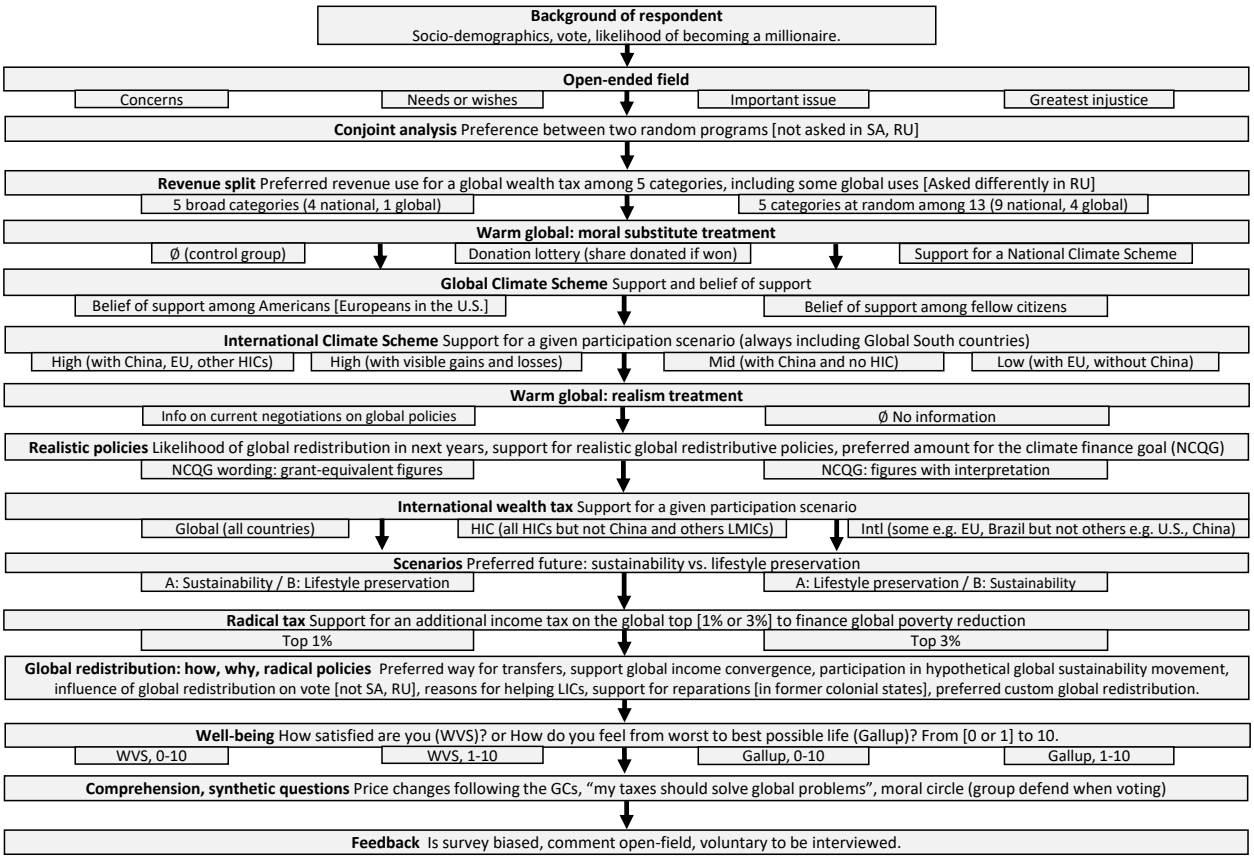
[9] At the end of the survey, 70% of the respondents find the survey politically unbiased (Figure S62). The most common comment left by respondents in the feedback field is that the survey was "interesting"; very few criticize it (Figure S63).

[10] 6 minutes corresponds to 30% of the expected median duration of 20 min. In Russia, the cutoff is 200 seconds, or 30% of the expected median duration of 11 minutes.

would donate to a reforestation NGO, should they win. Third, a question assesses respondents' perception of the actual support for the GCS, rewarding a correct guess.

Survey Structure. While Appendix B provides the full questionnaire, Figure 2 depicts the survey flow with all random branches. The various treatments are independent and uniformly distributed. Whenever there is a treatment, the acceptance rates reported are computed using the control group. Appendix I runs placebo tests to check if earlier treatments affect unrelated outcomes.

Figure 2: Survey flow.



After collecting sociodemographic characteristics, the questionnaire begins with broad questions to assess the prioritization and salience of global solidarity before respondents become aware of the survey topic. First, respondents answer open-ended fields on either their main concerns, wants, issues of interest, or perceived injustices. Second, they complete a conjoint experiment where they have to select their preferred political program, or abstain. Both programs are randomly generated: each policy (or lack thereof) in five

policy domains is selected at random from a pool of policies that are prominent in the country's public debate. Third, respondents allocate the revenue of a global wealth tax among five (national or global) spending items.

Then follow attitudinal questions about the main policies studied: a *Climate Scheme* at the national, global, or international level; an international wealth tax funding low-income countries; and ten plausible global solidarity policies. These questions include treatments that vary the international coverage of policies or test for warm glow.

The final part of the questionnaire explores attitudes towards more radical global redistribution scenarios and includes more sophisticated questions, such as an interactive task in which respondents can choose their preferred custom redistribution of global incomes by manipulating sliders.

The survey concludes with a comprehension question, synthetic questions (e.g. regarding one's moral circle), and a feedback field.

Pre-registered Hypotheses and Data Availability. The project has been approved by the CIRED institutional review board (IRB-CIRED-2025-2) and preregistered in the Open Science Foundation registry (osf.io/7mzn4). The study did not deviate from the registration; the questionnaires and hypotheses tests used are the ones specified *ex ante*. All data, code, and figures from the paper are available at github.com/bixiou/robustness_global_redistr.

II Salience and Prioritization of Global Solidarity

In this section, I analyze the salience of global solidarity in undirected open-ended fields, and the prioritization of global programs in a budget allocation task.

II.A Top-of-mind Considerations

At the beginning of the survey, respondents are randomly assigned one of four open-ended questions: their main concerns, their needs or wishes, an issue important to them but neglected in public debate, or the greatest injustice of all. The questions are deliberately broad and vague to let respondents express their top-of-mind considerations without any priming.

To analyze the answers, I automatically translated each field into English.[11] Then, I

[11] I used onlinedoctranslator.com, which is powered by *Google Translate*.

used AI and my own reading of a few hundred answers to identify the most common concepts, from which I selected 27 categories. Next, I classified each answer into one or more of these categories, both manually (Figures S4-S7) and automatically using AI (Figure S3). Finally, I manually defined a list of 47 (disjunctions of) keywords and used it to automatically classify all responses.[12] Figure S2 reports the 24 most common keyword matches.

The three different classification methods yield consistent results but differ in accuracy. While the keyword classification allows for an exact and reproducible search, the AI search is not limited to specific words and captures more matching responses. Overall, manual classification seems to provide the most accurate results, with a number of matches generally falling between those of the other two methods. For example, to the *injustice* question, 1.2% of answers match the keywords for *global inequality* and ChatGPT identifies this category in 7.5% of answers, versus 3.2% according to my manual coding.[13] Indeed, the AI incorrectly classifies unspecific answers like "poverty" in this category,[14] while the keyword search misses answers like "inequality among humans". Given this observation, I use the manual classification as the benchmark and the two other methods as robustness checks.

While less accurate than the classifications, word clouds (Figure 3) provide a simple visualization of the most common concepts in each question. By far, the most frequent *concerns* or *wishes* of respondents relate to their purchasing power, with concepts such as "money", "inflation", the "cost of living", or "financial stability" appearing in 31% of these fields. Within countries, the share of people concerned with money decreases with income: it ranges from 22% in the top income decile to 35% in the bottom one.[15] The next most frequent *concerns* are health (or the healthcare system, 13%), far-right governments (or related concepts such as "Trump" or "trade tariffs, 10%) and war (either in general or specific conflicts, such as the Gaza War, 9%). Most *wishes* are personal, with the next most frequent (after money) relating to one's own or one's relatives' health (21%) or peace

[12] The list of keywords is provided in Appendix C.3.

[13] The keyword matching searches the regular expression `global poverty|global inequal|hunger|drinking water|starv`, ignoring case. The automatic and manual classifications are based on the category definition "Inequality at the international level / Hunger or poverty in poor countries".

[14] Interestingly, out of the 47 (one-word) answers "poverty", (the zero-shot prompt passed to) ChatGPT-4.1 coded only 42 of them as *global inequality*, illustrating the lack of consistency of this classifier.

[15] At the country level, the concern for money is significantly correlated with inequality (an additional point in the Gini index is associated with 0.8 p.p. more respondents concerned with money). Interestingly, the concern for money is higher in richer countries, though the correlation vanishes once one controls for the Gini.

of mind (10%). Interestingly, almost none of the responses mention relational considerations, such as love, friendships, loneliness, intimate life, or the desire to have children (except in Saudi Arabia, where the latter was mentioned). Though the predominance of materialistic considerations is consistent with previous studies (Singer 2011; Wlezien 2005), further research is needed to determine whether this arises from the context (an impersonal survey) or truly reflects people's primary thoughts.

Asked about the greatest *injustice*, the most frequent answers relate to "inequality" or "poverty", with 19% of occurrences (28% in Europe but only 9% in the U.S.). It is unclear whether these respondents are thinking about inequality in their own country or at the global level, since only 11% of them specify a geographical scope. One clue is that 2% mention their own country versus 10% the global level (or Global South issues such as "clean water" or "starvation"). Italians, Poles, and Spaniards are the most likely to mention "global inequality" or "global poverty", while Japanese and Russian respondents are the least likely to do so. The next most common answers relate to "discrimination" (based on gender, race, or sexual orientation, 9%), "violence" or "wrongful convictions" (many respondents denounce the unjust sentencing of innocents, 9%), or their country's "welfare state" (with people criticizing either the lack of public services or the excessive welfare given to undeserving people, 8%).

Asking people about "an issue important to them but neglected in the public debate" fails to uncover unusual topics. 21% of respondents are unable to identify such an issue. The most frequently mentioned concepts are "public services" (12%), the "cost of living" (10%), "health" (9%), "ageing" (6%), and the "environment" (6%).[16] The fact that the most frequently mentioned topics are already well-publicized suggests that public debate reflects or shapes what people have in mind.

Reading and coding each field not only results in an arguably more accurate classification, but also offers insight into how people think. For example, most people reason from their own perspective (e.g. "my pension is too low", "I want to buy a house") and do not refer to the broader picture or to political reforms. To get a sense of respondents' own words, random selections of responses are displayed at bit.ly/fields2025. In addition to the manual classification presented in this section, I compiled a list of topics that are uniquely prevalent in each country, which I report in Appendix A.2.

The topics mentioned vary according to sociodemographic characteristics. For exam-

[16] Although "immigration" is one of the most frequent words according to the word cloud, the issue is only mentioned in 5% of cases.

Figure 3: Most common concepts in open-ended fields. (Questions 19-22)

(a) "What are your main concerns these days?"

(b) "What are your needs or wishes?"

(c) "What according to you is the greatest injustice of all?"

(d) "Can you name an issue that is important to you but is neglected in the public debate?"

ple, a respondent who mentions *immigration* is 3.5 times more likely to vote for the far right (correlation of .17); one who mentions *old age* is twice as likely to be 65 or older (correlation of .13). Beyond these examples, the strongest effects I find are that *criticizing the far right* correlates with voting for the left (.16), mentioning *health* with age (.11), *employment* with being unemployed (.09), *animals* with extendeding one's moral circle to

sentient beings (.09), *education* with being a student (.09), *the environment* with voting for the left (.08), and *money* with one's income (−.08).

Our topic of interest, *global inequality*, does not emerge as an issue salient to most people. Indeed, most considerations relate to issues that directly affect oneself or one's family, and political considerations (regarding e.g. public services, pensions, or taxes) are often framed at the national level. *Global redistribution* almost never appears as a *wish*. Furthermore, *global inequality* is rarely mentioned as a neglected *issue* or as a *concern*, in contrast to international issues such as war, climate change, or the rise of the far right. However, it is mentioned as frequently as these other international issues in terms of *injustice*.

In summary, the low salience of global solidarity may explain why this topic fails to mobilize political forces, despite being referred to as a just cause and it being accepted by majorities (as shown below).

II.B Prioritization of Public Spending Items

Fabre et al. (2025) find that 58% of Americans and 71% of Western Europeans would support a global tax on millionaires funding low-income countries (LICs), with only 26% and 14% opposing it, respectively. Meanwhile, around half of them would prefer to allocate half (rather than none) of the revenue from a global wealth tax to LICs. It seems that the more leeway respondents are granted to allocate the revenue from such a tax, the less they would allocate to LICs. The greatest leeway tested by Fabre et al. (2025) let the respondents select their preferred share for LICs versus domestic healthcare and education, and the average preference was 33.4% —that is, 66.8% of an equal split. Naturally, one expects respondents to split the revenue among all desirable spending items, so if LICs compete with not one but several national items, the share allocated to LICs is expected to diminish. If this share is less than 67% of an equal split, it would mean that (Fabre et al. 2025) overestimated the prioritization of LICs, perhaps due to an excessive salience of LICs when only one alternative is proposed, or because the domestic alternative —healthcare and education— was not the most desired. Conversely, if several items pertain to a global issue and each global item is considered individually desirable, the total "global spending" should rise proportionately.

To test whether the results in (Fabre et al. 2025) provide an accurate picture of the prioritization of global spending as well as to uncover the prioritization of different global causes, I conduct a revenue allocation task with five spending items. In each of the two

variants of this task, respondents use sliders to allocate the revenue of a hypothetical global wealth tax (at a rate of 2% on wealth in excess of $5 million), after being informed of the revenue the tax would collect in their country (from $1 billion in Poland to $514 billion in the U.S.) versus in all LICs combined ($1 billion).

In the *Few* variant, one global item ("Education, Healthcare and Renewable energy in LICs") competes with four domestic ones. In every country, the most prioritized item is "Domestic: Education and healthcare", with an average preferred share of 26% (Figures S25, S26). The global item is the least prioritized overall, at 17.5% (from 14% in Japan to 21% in Saudi Arabia and Spain). However, global spending is the second most prioritized item in Europe (19%) and Saudi Arabia. Furthermore, global spending is 31% higher than the expected 13.4% (that is, 66.8% of 20%)[17] and only 13% of respondents do not allocate any revenue to it (Figure 4).

In the *Many* variant, five items are selected at random from a pool of four global and nine domestic items. While domestic healthcare (27%) and education (22%) are the most prioritized items, the average allocation for global items ranges from 16% for "Forestation and biodiversity projects" to 19% for "Education and Healthcare in LICs" (Figures 4, S27-S28). On average, tasks include 1.5 global items, which together receive 26.9% of the revenue —again, equivalent to 17.5% per global item. Interestingly, there is no significant correlation between the number of global items and the average allocation per global item.[18]

Overall, the revenue allocation tasks validate and confirm the findings from Fabre et al. (2025). Most people would favor using a substantial share of the revenue from a global wealth tax to finance sustainable development in LICs, even though global spending is somewhat less prioritized than domestic spending.

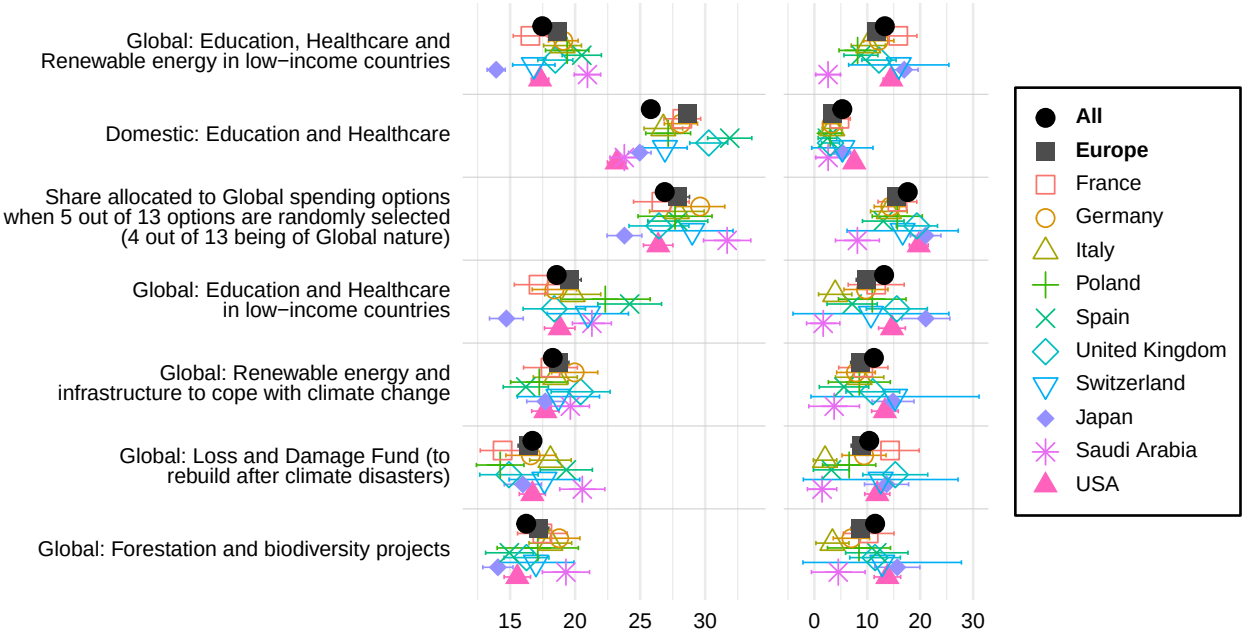
[17]The one-sided test that global spending is lower than 33.4% is rejected at the 1% threshold in all countries except Japan, where it is rejected at the 10% threshold. If one restricts the comparison to the countries surveyed by (Fabre et al. 2025), the global item is allocated 17.8%, which is 34% more than expected. The most credible explanation for outperforming expectations is that the domestic item chosen by Fabre et al. (2025) was the preferred one. Indeed, the global item is allocated 68% of the "Domestic: Healthcare and Education" share, almost exactly as expected.

[18]In Russia, the question could not be asked in the same way due to different software. Instead, respondents had to choose what share of the global tax revenue to allocate to sustainable development in low-income countries. On average, Russians allocate 12.2% to LICs, with a median allocation of just 5%, but only 12% allocate nothing to LICs.

Figure 4: Preferred split of revenue from a global wealth tax. The first two items are from the *Few* variant with 5 fixed items (the *Global* one and the most preferred one are displayed); the last four items are from the *Many* variant with 5 items taken at random out of 13 (the 4 *Global* ones are displayed). (Questions 24-25)

(a) Average preferred allocation (in %).

(b) Share of respondents allocating 0 revenue (in %).



III Acceptance of Policies as a Function of Country Coverage

While acceptance of global climate or redistributive policies is widespread (Cappelen et al. 2025b; Fabre et al. 2025), acceptance may drop if policies are not truly *global* but only *international*, i.e. if key countries such as China, Russia, or the U.S. do not participate. Indeed, people may be concerned about a domestic loss of competitiveness resulting from the expatriation of taxpayers to low-tax jurisdictions; or about unfair burden-sharing if non-cooperating countries free-ride on decarbonization or sustainable development funding. In this section, I examine the acceptance of globally redistributive policies depending on the coalition of countries that would implement them. I study, in turn, a carbon price and a wealth tax.

III.A International Climate Scheme

Presentation of the Schemes. "Cap and dividend" is a reference climate policy (Baer et al. 2000; Barnes et al. 2008; Bertram 1992; Blanchard & Tirole 2021; Grubb 1990), whereby fossil fuel companies at the source of emissions must buy emission permits on a carbon market, with the revenue from carbon pricing rebated equally to individuals. The limited and declining number of emission permits guarantees that emissions are capped according to the climate objective. As polluting companies pass the cost of emission permits down the value chain, the carbon price is ultimately paid by consumers, in proportion to their carbon footprint. Meanwhile, the equal cash transfer (or "dividend") offsets price increases for the average consumer. Those with a higher-than-average carbon footprint financially lose, while those with a lower carbon footprint (who are on average poorer) financially gain.

Using simple *Yes*/*No* questions, I test the acceptance of three types of "cap and dividend" (or "Climate Scheme") policies that differ by geographical scope: the National, Global, and International Climate Schemes (Figures 6, S30). While average consumers in a high-income country are financially unaffected by the National Climate Scheme (NCS), they lose out in the Global and International versions, since their carbon footprint is larger than the world (or climate coalition) average.

The National Climate Scheme (NCS) is accepted by 68% of respondents (ranging from 56% in Poland to 88% in Saudi Arabia).[19]

The Global Climate Scheme. Before presenting the Global Climate Scheme (GCS), respondents are instructed to pay careful attention, with the incentive that they may win a $100 lottery prize if they correctly answer a comprehension question at the end of the survey. When presented with the Global Climate Scheme (GCS), respondents are informed that the cash transfer would lift 600 million people out of extreme poverty, and the cost to them is made salient. Respondents are informed of the amount of the cash transfer, as well as the price increases and the net cost to the average person in their country (e.g. 2% price increases and a net cost of $90 per month in the U.S., or 2% and €45 per month

[19]The acceptance of the NCS is higher than the support for a *tax*-and-dividend policy found in other surveys (Douenne & Fabre 2022; Mildenberger et al. 2022), 12 p.p. higher than in Dechezleprêtre et al. (2025). Indeed, most people prefer emissions trading schemes to carbon taxes (Funke et al. 2025), and support drops (before recovering) in specific contexts, such as the Yellow Vests movement.

in Germany).[20] The GCS is accepted by 55% of respondents (from 49% in the U.S. and Russia to 85% in Saudi Arabia). The salience of costs in the GCS question may explain the somewhat lower acceptance of the GCS compared to the NCS.[21]

Pluralistic Ignorance. After assessing support for the GCS, respondents are asked in an incentivized way about their belief concerning the actual support, either in their country or in the U.S. (Figure S30).[22] In every country and for any variant of the question, actual support is underestimated. The median respondent underestimates the support in their own country by 16 p.p. and the support in the U.S. by 22 p.p. In Japan and in European countries, the underestimation is more severe, with most people wrongly believing that the GCS does not garner majority support in their country. Such pluralistic ignorance might explain why politicians do not dare to propose global climate justice policies.

Interestingly, support is strongly correlated with the perception of support: 51% of respondents who support the GCS perceive it as supported by at least 50% in their own country, compared to only 24% of those who do not support it.[23] In other words, in addition to pluralistic ignorance, there is a false consensus effect.

International Climate Scheme. To test how country coverage influences the acceptance of the International Climate Scheme (ICS), respondents are randomly assigned to one of four variants. They can visualize the country coverage on a map (see examples in Figure 5), where their own country is striped to denote its potential participation. Respondents are also informed of the number of countries that would participate in the assigned scenario, the list of these countries or world regions, and their share of world emissions.

[20] The computations use a carbon price of \$95/tCO_2. For Russia, Saudi Arabia, and the U.S., computations assume universal country coverage and the cash transfer is \$35 per month. For Europe and Japan, the net loss is computed in a non-universal but *High* participation scenario, which implies a lower cash transfer (€20 per month) and a higher net cost (by about \$10 per month) since the coalition's average carbon footprint is lower than the world average. Appendix C.2 reports the country-specific figures.

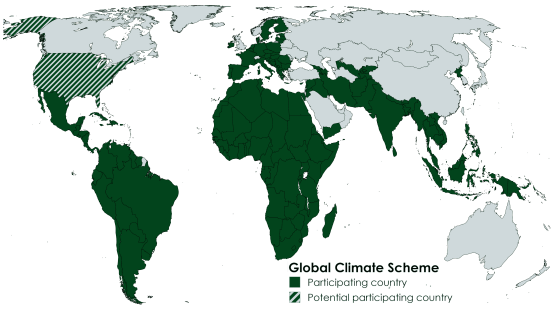
[21] Acceptance of the GCS is also around 10 p.p. lower than in Fabre et al. (2025). There may be different reasons for this: attitudes may have changed in the two-year interval; and I added information on the price increases, which allows respondents to estimate the cost to themselves (rather than to their average fellow citizen).

[22] Americans are asked about either their country or the EU. In Russia, I was not permitted to enquire about beliefs regarding a foreign country.

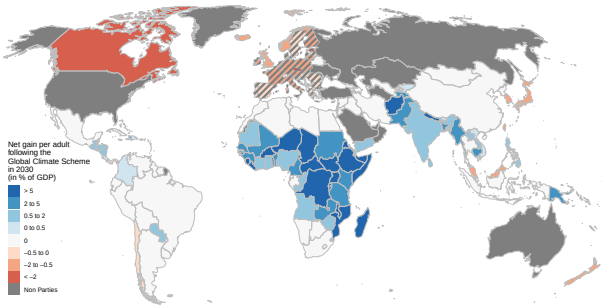
[23] The median perception of support in one's own country is 20 p.p. higher among those who support the GCS (50% versus 30%). Reciprocally, support for the GCS reaches 72% among the 39% of respondents who believe that a majority in their country supports it, compared to 44% among those who do not.

Figure 5: Example maps of the International Climate Scheme question. (Question 35).

(a) *Low* variant for the U.S.

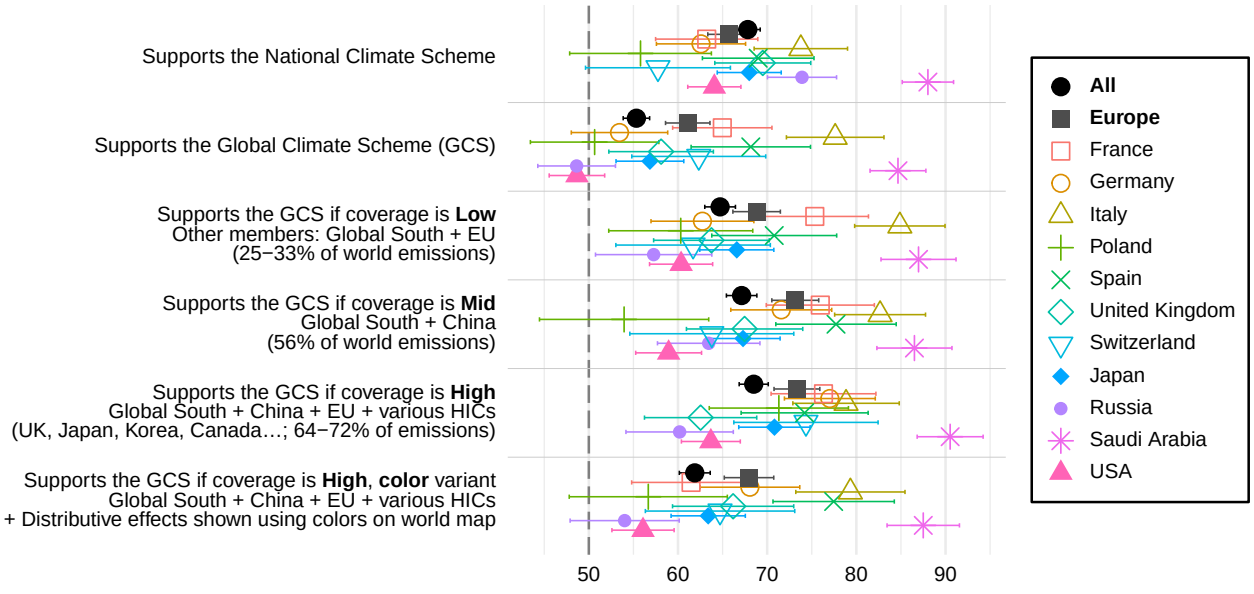


(b) *High color* variant for EU countries.



The *Mid* scenario covers 56% of world emissions and includes China and Global South countries. The *Low* scenario replaces China with the EU and covers 33% of emissions. The *High scenario* adds various high-income countries to the *Mid* scenario, including the EU, the UK, Japan, Canada, and South Korea, and covers 72% of emissions. The last variant, *High color*, combines the *High* participation scenario with a colored map that displays not only the country coverage, but also the net gain or cost for each country, with China appearing as neither gaining nor losing from the policy.[24]

Figure 6: Percentage of support for the National, Global, and International Climate Schemes (*Yes*/*No* questions). (Questions 26-35.)



[24]In a standard cap and dividend, China should lose, as its carbon footprint exceeds the world average. However, the Global Climate Scheme departs slightly from the standard policy so that middle-income countries do not lose out (Fabre 2025).

As expected, the wider the coverage, the higher the acceptance. However, this effect is relatively small, as acceptance is only 3.8 p.p. higher in the *High* variant (at 68%) compared to the *Low* variant (65%). Interestingly, acceptance among Europeans significantly increases when China is added to the coalition, but does not rise further when other HICs are also added. Conversely, for Americans and Japanese, the participation of the EU or China yields similar levels of acceptance, and only the combined participation of China, the EU, and other HICs significantly increases acceptance.

The effect of country coverage is entirely driven by the 74% of respondents who understand that the GCS would result in increased gasoline prices. It is worth noting that acceptance is higher among the minority of respondents who misunderstand the policy: by 5 p.p. for the GCS and 4 p.p. for the ICS.

Acceptance is 6.6 p.p. lower in the *High color* variant compared to the *High* variant. Three reasons may explain this effect. First, the cost may be more salient with the colored map. Second, some respondents may be concerned by the information (made explicit in the question) that China would neither gain nor lose from the policy. Third, with the colored map, respondents learn how their own country fares compared to others. In fact, the effect is no longer significant (and of opposite sign) for countries that appear to lose less than 0.5% of their GDP (Spain and Switzerland).

Notice that acceptance of the ICS in the *Low* coverage variant is similar to that of the NCS. This suggests that the average respondent is willing to pay the ICS's higher cost for the guarantee of poverty alleviation and decarbonization in the Global South.

Finally, the greater acceptance of the ICS compared to the GCS is somewhat puzzling. Perhaps people view the proposal as more credible when a list of participating countries is provided, compared to the GCS, which is framed as if all countries might join (or, on the contrary, as one in which the participation of any country is uncertain). Relatedly, acceptance may be stronger for more precise or more visual proposals, either because they are viewed as more advanced or because they induce an experimenter demand bias. The greater acceptance could also be due to costs being less salient in the ICS question (but acceptance is still greater than in the GCS in the *High color* variant, where costs are visible). Unfortunately, the data does not allow testing these different hypotheses.

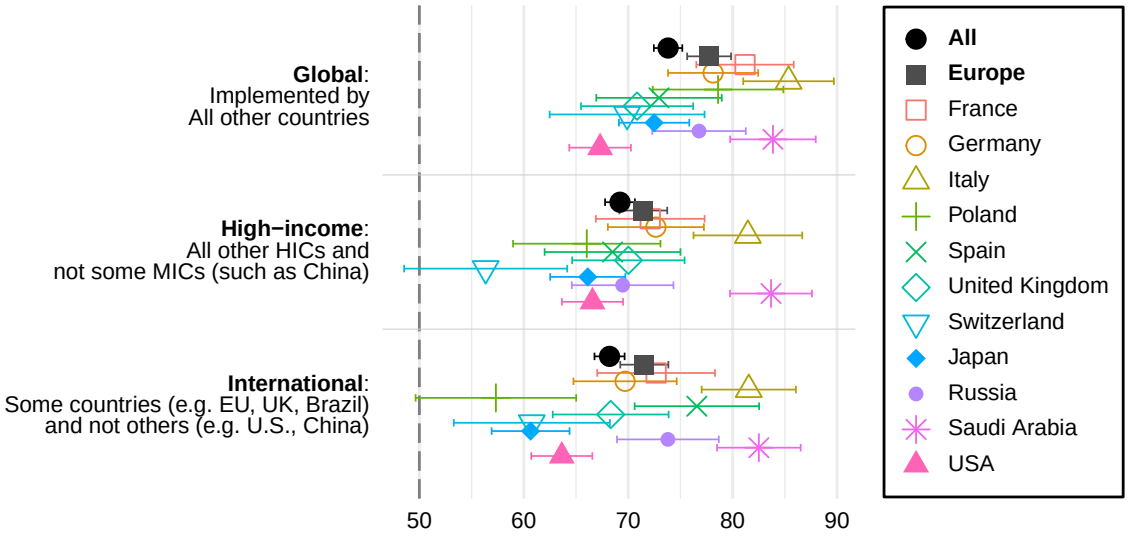
III.B Wealth Tax Funding LICs

I test the effect of country coverage on the acceptance of an internationally redistributive wealth tax using a simple *Yes*/*No* question with three random variants. The policy is

described as a 2% tax on wealth above $1 million, with 30% of its revenue financing public services in LICs. In the *Global* variant, all countries except the respondent's own are assumed to participate. The *HIC* variant covers all HICs (except the respondent's country). The *International* variant covers some countries and not others, with the precise coverage varying by respondent's country but always including Brazil and European countries (or the whole EU) and excluding China and the U.S.[25]

Here again, acceptance increases with the country coverage, but the effect is small. The middle-ground *HIC* variant garners 70% acceptance (from 58% in Switzerland to 81% in Saudi Arabia). Compared to *HIC*, acceptance is 4.8 p.p. higher with *Global* coverage, while it is only 1.4 p.p. and non-significantly lower with *International* coverage (Figure 7).

Figure 7: Percentage of support for an international wealth tax with 30% of revenue funding LICs, depending on the country coverage (*Yes*/*No* question). (Questions 41-43).



Overall, the results indicate that the acceptance of internationally redistributive policies is quite robust to country coverage. This confirms that the issues of competitiveness or free riding are not decisive factors in public support (Aklin & Mildenberger 2020).

[25]More precisely, in the U.S., excluded countries differ and are *China, Japan, and Canada*. As for included countries, in addition to *Brazil*, they are: *the EU and the UK* for Switzerland, Saudi Arabia, and the U.S.; *the EU* for Russia and the UK; and *France, Germany, Spain, and the UK (except one's own country)* for EU countries.

IV Sincerity of Support for Global Redistribution

Skeptics about the public's support for global redistribution would argue that this support is not reflected in real-stake decisions or that it mostly results from *warm glow*. According to the *warm glow* hypothesis, many people would express their support to enjoy moral comfort as long as the policy appears out of reach and supporting it seems harmless. In case of *warm glow*, support would vanish if (*i*) the prospect of implementation materialized or if (*ii*) moral comfort could be obtained from a substitute. In this section, I test whether global redistribution is a vote-determining issue using a conjoint analysis, and I test both forms of *warm glow* (*i* and *ii*) using two other survey experiments.

IV.A Conjoint Analysis

I conduct a conjoint experiment in all countries except Russia and Saudi Arabia. This question is positioned at the beginning of the survey, before respondents know the survey's topic. Respondents are presented with two random political programs, framed as the fictitious programs of the leading candidates in the next election, and are asked which candidate they would vote for (27% of the respondents choose the outside option *Neither of them*). Each program contains a policy or an absence of policy, chosen at random, for each of five policy domains (the order of which is also randomized). Our domain of interest is *Foreign policy*, whose pool contains three policies: *Cut development aid*, *International tax on millionaires with 30% financing healthcare and education in low-income countries*, and a country-specific policy. The policies, except for these two of interest, have been selected from the programs of the main candidates in the country's most recent election, ensuring coverage of the entire political spectrum and the most prominent proposals in the national public debate.

Figure 8 shows the effect of including our policies of interest in a program on the likelihood that it is preferred (see Figures S10-S23 for full country-by-country results[26]). More specifically, following Hainmueller et al. (2014), Figure 8 and Table S18 present the results of the following regression, estimated by simple OLS with standard errors clustered by

[26]With a few exceptions, *raising the minimum wage* is among the most popular policies, alongside *redistributive taxes or transfers*, *anti-immigration regulations*, and *abortion rights*. Conversely, *a ban on new combustion-engine cars* is among the least popular ones.

respondent:[27]

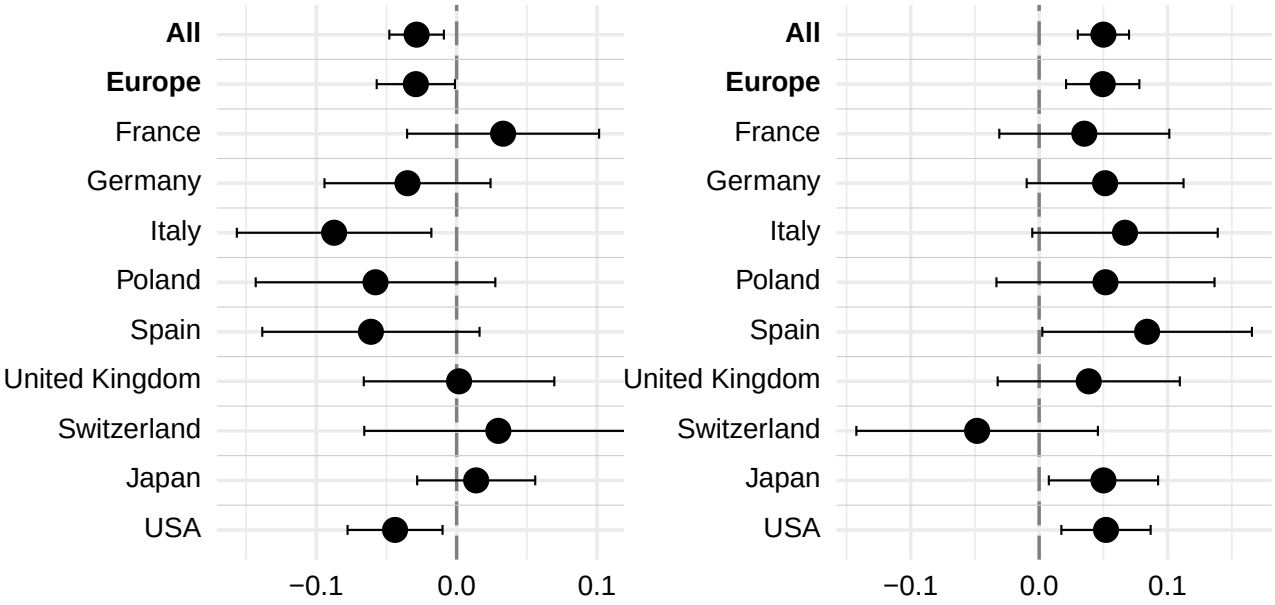
$$\text{Preferred}_{pi} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Cut\_aid}_{pi} + \beta_2 \text{Intl\_tax}_{pi} + \beta_3 \text{Foreign3}_{pi} + \varepsilon_{pi} \quad (1)$$

where pi denotes the program p faced by respondent i, and each variable is a dummy.

Figure 8: Effect on the likelihood that a political program is preferred of containing the following policies (compared to no foreign policy in the program). No control is included, 95% confidence intervals are shown. (See Figure S9 for effects by vote.) (Question 23)

(a) Cut development aid

(b) International tax on millionaires with 30% financing health and education in low-income countries



Both policies significantly affect program choice: the internationally redistributive millionaire tax increases the likelihood that a program is preferred by 5 p.p., while cutting development aid decreases it by 3 p.p. At the country level, the effects are generally non-significant due to lack of power, but when significant, they are of the same sign as the global effect. On average, the effects of the tax are of similar size to the effects of

[27] More specifically, I estimate the average marginal component effect (AMCE), which is the change in the probability that a program is chosen if a policy is present rather than not, averaged across all possible values in the other policy domains. Hainmueller et al. (2014) show that the linear model is an unbiased estimator of the AMCE under uniform and independent randomization of attributes. I verify that the results are similar when using a conditional logit: the average marginal effects of *Int'l tax* and *Cut aid* are 6 p.p. and −3 p.p., respectively.

other policies,[28] suggesting that certain global redistribution proposals may be as vote-determining as policies prominent in the national debate.

One concern with this type of conjoint analysis is that it involves unrealistic political programs, namely programs that contain both left and far-right policies, which distorts the actual choices that voters may face. De la Cuesta et al. (2022) showed that to fully address this issue, one should weigh each pair of programs by the probability that it would arise in a real election. Since this probability cannot be computed, the best practice is to bound the effects by estimating them with extreme probabilities. The results just presented are based on one extreme, the uniform distribution. To construct the other extreme, I classify each policy proposal according to its originating political party[29] and consider a program consistent if it does not contain policies from both the *left* and the *far right*. Then, I re-estimate the regression after dropping the 29% of pairs with an inconsistent program, effectively assigning them a probability of zero. Effects are preserved: +5 p.p. for the tax and -3 p.p. for cutting aid.[30] This indicates that the results are robust to the critique of De la Cuesta et al. (2022).

IV.B Testing Warm Glow

Some people might claim to support a policy of global redistribution merely to ease their conscience. If support were mainly due to this psychological mechanism, called *warm glow*, it might dissipate when the prospect of the policy materializes or if the policy support could be replaced by a substitute with the same moral appeal.

Moral Substitute. Following Nunes & Schokkaert (2003), warm glow would be revealed if support for the GCS decreased after respondents are offered the opportunity to express generosity towards the cause of climate change. To test this hypothesis, right before the GCS page, I assign a random subset of the respondents to a donation lottery,

[28] A simple permutation test shows that the effects of *int'l tax* is not significantly lower than the average absolute effect size (it is just 4% lower, p=.48) but the effects of *cut aid* is significantly lower (p=.01).

[29] Interestingly, the most popular policies originate from left-wing parties, except in Germany and Switzerland. Indeed, the average deviation from the mean effect is highest for policies originating from the *Left*, and lowest for those from the *Center-right or Right*.

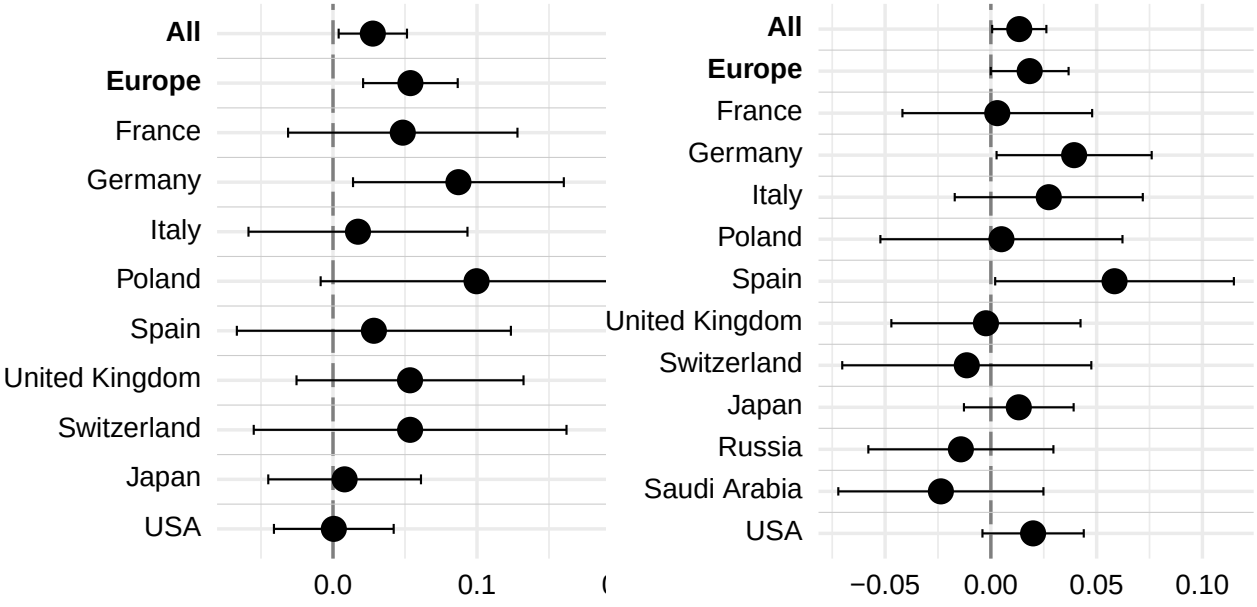
[30] In the main specification, I consider our policies of interest as consistent with any program. As an alternative, I classify them as either *left* (for the tax) or *far right* (for cutting aid). In that case, only 43% of observations are retained, yet effects are still preserved (+5 p.p. for the tax and -4 p.p. for cutting aid).

while the control group faces no question.[31] In the *Donation* branch, respondents must decide how much they would donate to the reforestation NGO *Just One Tree*, should they win the question's $100 lottery. Lower support for the GCS in the treated group would be evidence of warm glow, or moral licensing, as it would indicate that the support derives (at least partially) from moral satisfaction at having recently supported a just cause.

Figure 9: Testing warm glow (negative effects would indicate the presence of warm glow). Regressions include controls, 95% confidence intervals are shown.

(a) Effect of a *Donation lottery* treatment on support for the Global Climate Scheme. (Questions 27-28)

(b) Effect of information about ongoing global redistribution initiatives on the share of plausible global policies supported. (Questions 36-38)



On the contrary, support for the GCS is 3 p.p. higher in the *Donation* branch compared to the control group, and the coefficient is positive in every country, though often not significant (Figure 9a, Table S19). While the reason for this positive effect remains unclear,[32] the results show no evidence of warm glow.

[31] More precisely, right before the GCS question, the sample is split into three branches: the *Donation* lottery, the *NCS* question, and the control group. The NCS treatment is excluded from this analysis as it is unrelated to this experiment (restricting the NCS question to a subsample was done to prevent it from influencing responses to the GCS).

[32] Perhaps the *Donation* question triggers thoughts favorable to the GCS, such as the realization that individual actions like donations are ill-suited to address climate change, so that we need a global policy, even if it is imperfect.

Realism Treatment. To test the hypothesis that some people express support for global redistribution only as long as its implementation seems unlikely, I randomly assign half of the respondents to receive information about ongoing negotiations on globally redistributive policies. Among other things, treated respondents are informed that the International Maritime Organization recently adopted a levy on maritime carbon emissions that should partly finance LICs; that the G20 considered introducing a global tax on billionaires; that the UN General Assembly recently agreed on the principle of expanding the UN Security Council to new members; and that the UN Secretary-General supports financial system reforms that would drive resources towards sustainable development (see Question 36). Then, respondents are asked "how likely [it is] that international policies involving significant transfers from HICs to LICs will be introduced in the next 15 years", right before their support for ten plausible global policies is tested.[33] Here, warm glow would be revealed if the information treatment increased the belief that global redistribution is likely but decreased support for global policies.

The treatment was designed to satisfy the exclusion restriction required for the instrumental variables (IV) strategy. The exclusion restriction states that the treatment affects support for global policies only through its impact on beliefs that global redistribution is likely. Table 1 reports the corresponding regression results. Although the treatment is randomly assigned, the preferred specification includes the sociodemographic variables as controls to improve accuracy.[34] Informed respondents are 7 p.p. more likely to believe that global redistribution is likely, from a baseline of 33% in the control group. With an effective F-statistic of 67, this highly significant effect provides a strong first stage for the IV estimation. Assuming that the exclusion restriction holds, the IV is well identified. The local average treatment effect estimated by 2SLS is 18 p.p., indicating that believing global redistribution is likely causally *increases* the share of global policies supported. This estimate is consistent with both the non-causal OLS coefficient of 15 p.p. and the direct effect of the treatment on policy support, estimated at 1 p.p. (see Figure 9b and Table S20).

Again, the effects go in the opposite direction to warm glow. In this case, increased support may stem from enhanced credibility of policies that are known to be discussed in international organizations. Overall, the results of these two experiments provide no evidence that support for global redistribution is affected by warm glow. On the contrary, they suggest that support is sincere and robust to the prospect of implementation or to

[33] Section V.A reports acceptance of these policies and Appendix C.1 describes the corresponding international negotiations.

[34] See Table S21 for results without controls.

Table 1: Effect on support for global redistribution of believing that it is likely.

	Believes global redistribution likely		Share of plausible global policies supported		
	IV 1st Stage	IV 1st Stage	IV 2nd Stage	OLS	Direct Effect
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Information treatment	0.077	0.074			0.013
	(0.010)	(0.009)			(0.007)
Believes global redistribution likely			0.181	0.145	
			(0.086)	(0.007)	
(Intercept)	0.332	0.078	0.216	0.220	0.230
	(0.007)	(0.067)	(0.065)	(0.064)	(0.066)
Controls: sociodemos and vote		✓	✓	✓	✓
Effective F-statistic	65.04	67.09			
Observations	12,001	12,001	12,001	12,001	12,001
R^2	0.006	0.134	0.174	0.176	0.141

Note: Robust standard errors (HC1) are reported in parentheses.
As in Appendix E, control variables are: vote, gender, age, income, education, urbanity, likelihood of becoming millionaire, living with partner, employment status, foreign born, country region.

the possibility of a moral substitute.

V Breadth of Accepted International Policies

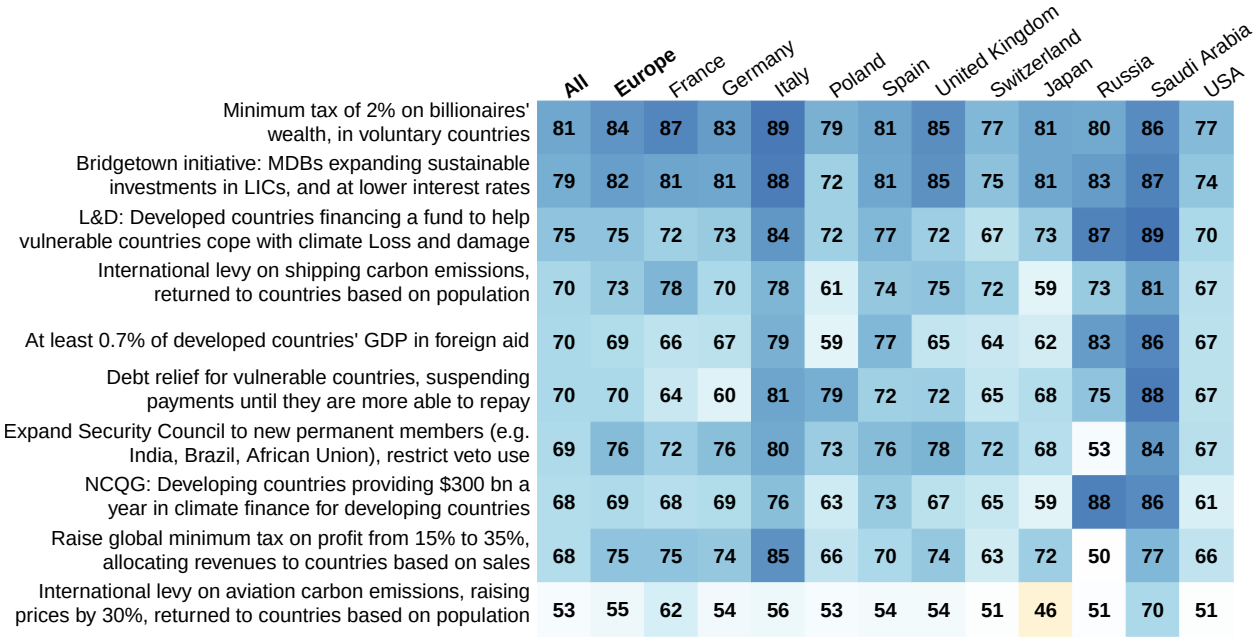
Knowing that some internationally redistributive policies are sincerely supported and may influence voting behavior, I now examine the range of international policies that could be accepted. In this section, I analyze, in turn, the support for global policies currently debated in the international community, as well as more radical proposals; I also assess broader willingness to defend global solidarity, analyze the preferred channels to transfer resources to LICs, and I use a custom redistribution task to reveal the preferred extent of international transfers.

V.A Acceptance of Currently Debated Global Policies

Plausible Global Policies. Figure 10 reveals the acceptance of plausible global policies (see Figure S32 for absolute support). These policies are deemed "plausible" because they

are debated in international organizations, as detailed in Appendix C.1. Almost every policy garners majority acceptance in each country. The only exception is the acceptance among Japanese respondents of a globally redistributive tax on carbon emissions from aviation, at 46%. This proposal has the most salient cost: a 30% increase in flight prices. It is the least supported in every country. The most supported policies, with over two-thirds acceptance in every country and a majority of absolute support in the pooled sample, are the 2% minimum tax on billionaires' wealth proposed by Zucman (2024), the expansion of low-interest-rate sustainable investments in LICs (Bridgetown Initiative 2025), and developed countries contributing to the climate loss and damage fund. Figure S72 shows that most policies garner majority support across the political spectrum in Europe and Japan, whereas Trump voters oppose more policies than they support.

Figure 10: Acceptance of plausible global redistribution policies (Percentage of *Somewhat* or *Strongly support* among non-*Indifferent* responses). See Figure S32 for the absolute support. (Question 38).



Ranking of Countries in Terms of Support for Global Redistribution. On average, respondents support 51% of the plausible policies and oppose 21% of them. This means they support +30 p.p. more policies than they oppose (Figure S1). The countries with the highest mean difference between support and opposition are Saudi Arabia (+50 p.p.), Italy (+49) and Spain (+39). In contrast, net support is lowest in Japan (+20), Switzerland

(+24), Poland, and the U.S. (+25).

Other synthetic indicators of support for global redistribution show consistent country rankings. In particular, the countries previously identified as having the highest and lowest net support retain their rankings when ordered by average latent support for global redistribution (Figure S1). To construct this latent variable, I standardize all variables of support and average them, weighted by loadings obtained from an exploratory factor analysis (see details and loading weights in Appendix C.4).

One might wonder why the countries leading in support are the Saudi kingdom and right-wing-dominated Italy. Breaking down the support by political leaning and other selected sociodemographics, Figures S71-S73 shed some light on this question. In Saudi Arabia, half of the adult population is immigrant. However, foreign workers do not drive the results, as Saudi citizens exhibit slightly higher support than non-Saudis.[35] As for Italy, it is both the country with the lowest gap in support between left-wing and far-right voters (along with Japan, at 33 p.p.) and the country with the highest support among left-wing voters.[36]

Climate Finance Goal. Climate finance refers to the financing of climate action in developing countries by developed countries. In 2024, countries agreed on a "New Collective Quantified Goal" (NCQG) of climate finance set at $300 billion per year by 2035, which is triple the previous goal. However, while developing countries such as India called for $600 billion in grants (or grant-equivalent funding), the NCQG does not specify the share of finance that should be provided as grants. Currently, the goal is being met with only $26 billion in grants and the remainder in loans (OECD 2024).

I test the preferred amount for the NCQG in grant-equivalent terms, using two random variants. Both variants inform respondents of the current situation and the agreed goal, expressing amounts in both absolute terms and as a proportion of developed countries' GDP. The *Short* variant uses qualitative, textual responses, and features a middle category of $100 billion (namely, "Meet the newly agreed goal by tripling grants and loans ($100 billion in grants, or 0.15% of GDP)."). The *Full* variant provides more detailed explanations in the question text and then uses numerical answers, with a midpoint of

[35] Therefore, tentative explanations may rather come from Saudi society. While Saudis benefit from a generous welfare state, the Islamic pillar of *Zakat* (almsgiving) might further foster a culture of generosity.

[36] While the former point may be linked to the vision of Italy's far-right leader of an Africa-Italy partnership (trading off foreign aid with cooperation in fighting immigration), the Italian population might also be influenced by the Vatican's messages in favor of global solidarity.

$300 billion.

In both variants, the median preferred NCQG is $100 billion in grants, with 19% of respondents choosing an amount of $600 billion or larger (Figures S35-S36).

That differently framed variants yield consistent results suggests that, despite its length, the question was well understood. The median choice of a climate finance quantum in line with the internationally agreed NCQG can be interpreted in two distinct ways. Either diplomats of HICs are defending the level of generosity that reflects the median preferences of their compatriots, or respondents' attitudes are anchored in existing agreements (or in their governments' stance). The results presented below are more consistent with the latter interpretation, as they reveal majority acceptance of much larger international transfers.

V.B Support for Radical Proposals, Political Action, and Broad Values

In the final part of the questionnaire, I pose a variety of questions to assess the range of global solidarity policies, actions or values that people may accept (Figure 11).

Sustainable Future versus Status Quo. Respondents were asked which scenario they would prefer for the next twenty years: a sustainable future or the status quo (note that scenarios were not labeled that way in the questionnaire, but were instead randomly named *A* or *B*). In the sustainable scenario, most countries cooperate to tax millionaires and meet the +2°C target, through the electrification of cars and the doubling of prices for heating fuel or gas, air travel, and beef. Although overall purchasing power is preserved (through a reduction in sales tax), people change their habits (e.g. flying and eating meat are cut by half). In the status quo, no policy is implemented, people maintain their lifestyles, and global warming reaches +3°C by 2100, causing more severe disasters.

Overall, 68% of respondents prefer the sustainable future over the status quo.

Global Income Redistribution. I test the support for a global tax on top incomes to finance poverty reduction in LICs, with the tax targeting either the global top 1% or top 3%, depending on random assignment. The top 1% variant describes an additional 15% tax on after-tax individual income in excess of $120,000 per year (at Purchasing Power Parity), while the top 3% variant features additional rates of 15%, 30%, and 45% above $80,000, $120,000, and $1 million, respectively. Each tax is calibrated to finance the poverty gap, with poverty defined using thresholds of $250 and $400 per month for the top 1% and

top 3% variants, respectively. These taxes entail international transfers of 2% and 5% of world nominal income, respectively (see Appendix C.2 for details). Two numerical examples explain to respondents how the tax would affect taxpayers' income. The question also states the share of affected taxpayers worldwide and in their country, as well as the share of their country's GDP that would be transferred. For example, in the U.S., the top 1% tax would affect the top 8% and transfer 3% of GDP, while the top 3% tax would affect the top 18% and transfer 8% of GDP (see Figure S39). These figures are about half as high in Japan and Germany, and around four times lower in France and Spain.

Overall, 56% (resp. 50%) of the respondents support the top 1% (resp. top 3%) tax, and 25% (resp. 28%) oppose it (Figure S40). The top 1% tax obtains majority of absolute support in every country except Japan. Both variants are accepted by a majority in every case except Switzerland for the top 3% variant (in which case 18% of Swiss people would be affected). Overall, the tax garners majority acceptance even among the 6% of respondents who would be affected, though this is not the case in every country for the top 3% variant (Figure S41).

Global Convergence. A simple question captures the acceptance of global solidarity: "Should governments actively cooperate to have all countries converge in terms of GDP per capita by the end of the century?" Overall, 61% answer *Yes* and 26% *No*, with the lowest relative agreement (i.e. excluding people not responding) in the U.S., at 56%.

Willingness to Act. Two questions asked the respondents how they would react to a "worldwide movement in favor of a global program to tackle climate change, implement taxes on millionaires and fund poverty reduction in [LICs]".

In a multiple-choice question (censored in Russia), 29% report they could participate in the movement by either attending a demonstration (19%), going on strike (7%), or donating $100 to a strike fund (10%). This share rises to 68% in favor of the movement when including the 52% of respondents who "could sign a petition and spread ideas" (Figure S45). Interestingly, 52% of the 584 millionaires[37] who answered the survey would be in favor of such a movement.

When asked whether they would be more or less likely to vote for the political party they feel closest to if it were part of such a movement, 36% of the respondents state they would be more likely versus 17% less likely (Figure S46). Among the 5% of respondents

[37] In the weighted subsample of millionaires, 60% are Americans and 26% Europeans.

who did not vote in the last election and feel closest to a left-wing party, the share more likely to vote in that case increases to 46% (versus 10% who are less likely).

Reasons for Helping LICs. In a multiple-choice question, I asked respondents which reasons for HICs supporting LICs they agree with, among arguments involving *duty*, *long-term interest*, or *historical responsibility*. At 54%, the reason most frequently chosen in every country (except France) is *duty*, specifically "Helping countries in need is the right thing to do" (Figure S47). Additionally, 38% select *interest*, and 25% *responsibility*, with only 16% disagreeing with every reason.

Reparations. In former colonial or slave States,[38] I asked respondents whether they would support "reparations for colonization and slavery to former colonies and descendants of slaves", specifying that the reparations "could take the form of funding education and facilitating technology transfers". Consistent with the general disagreement that HICs have a *historical* responsibility to support LICs, only a minority of 35% of respondents support reparations (except in Italy where 56% do), while 42% oppose them (Figure S48). This suggests that framing global solidarity as a decolonial struggle might be counterproductive for its advocates.

Agreement That Own Taxes Should Solve Global Problems. Overall, 41% agree and 28% disagree that "[their] taxes should go towards solving global problems". With 60% relative agreement, there is a relative majority in favor of one's own taxes financing global solidarity, though a lower one than for specific proposals that would make the richest contribute.[39] As explained in Section I, the present results replicate well the "Global Solidarity Report" that first asked this question (Global Nation 2023)

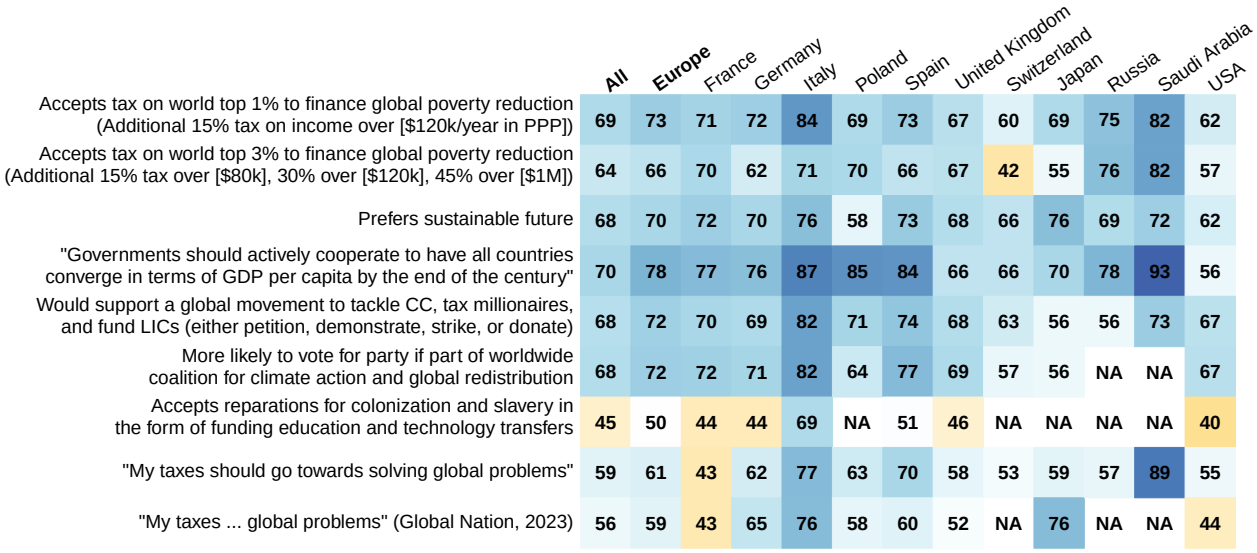
Moral Circle. Asked "Which group of people do you advocate for when you vote?",[40] 45% select a universalist answer ("Humans" or "Sentient beings (humans and animals)"), which is more than the most common answer, referring to one's fellow citizens (32%).

[38] I did not ask this question in Japan or Russia, because these countries' historiographies do not present their past as colonial but rather as an empire.

[39] This confirms that the willingness to pay for global solidarity, even through taxes, does not equate to acceptance of global redistribution proposals.

[40] In Russia and Saudi Arabia, the question was asked differently. It read: "Which group do you advocate for? For example, if you were the richest person on Earth, which group would you predominantly help with your money?"

Figure 11: Acceptance of broad action or radical proposals of global redistribution. (Questions 44-46, 49-51, 53, 61).

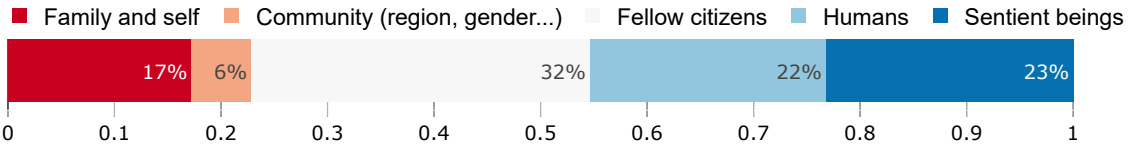


Universalists are fewer in Japan (30%) but constitute a majority in Europe (50%) and Saudi Arabia (57%), as shown in Figures 12 and S61. Among those who lean to the left, 59% are universalists, compared to 32% on the center-right or far-right.

Following Enke et al. (2024), I construct an alternative measure of universalism based on the vocabulary used in open-ended fields.[41] Although latent support for global redistribution is significantly correlated with this measure, the correlation is only .05, less than the correlation with manual, keyword, or AI classifications of a field as relating to inequality or poverty (at .09, .08, and .06, respectively), and much less than the correlation with our universalism variable based on moral circle (at .37). Furthermore, the correlation between the two measures of universalism is only .03. This observation demonstrates that the various indicators labeled as "universalism" by different authors may not all capture the same dimension.

[41] More specifically, I use the Moral Foundation Dictionary (MFD) 2.0 (Frimer et al. 2019) and define *universalism* as the number of occurrences of *care* or *fairness* words minus the number of *loyalty* or *authority* words. I also test an alternative definition, based on the extended MFD (Hopp et al. 2021), that uses weights rather than dummy variables to indicate a word's belonging to a moral dimension. The latter definition is even less (though still significantly) correlated with the latent support for global redistribution, at .03.

Figure 12: "Which group of people do you advocate for when you vote?"[40] (Question 62).



V.C Preferred Channels for Transferring Resources to LICs

Asked to evaluate ways of transferring resources to reduce poverty in LICs on a 4-point Likert scale, the most preferred option in every country is "Cash transfers to parents (child allowances), to the disabled and to the elderly", with 16% selecting it as the *Best way* overall, and 49% as a *Right way* or *Best way* (Figures 13, S42-S43). "Unconditional transfers to the national government" is the only option seen as a *Wrong way* by the majority, but this share falls from 51% down to 21% (becoming the third most supported option out of seven) when "transfers to the national government [are] conditioned on the use of funds for poverty reduction programs". Interestingly, "unconditional cash transfers to each household" are controversial: they are the second most chosen *Best way*, yet 33% view them as a *Wrong way*. Conversely, "transfers to public development aid agencies which then finance suitable projects" is uncontroversial, with only 16% considering it a *Wrong way*, while 37% rate it as a *Right* or *Best way*.

Figure 13: "How do you evaluate each of these channels to transfer resources to reduce poverty in LICs?"
Percentage of *Right* or *Best way* (other options: *Wrong* or *Acceptable way*). (Question 48).

	All	**Europe**	France	Germany	Italy	Poland	Spain	United Kingdom	Switzerland	Japan	Russia	Saudi Arabia	USA
Targeted cash transfers (child allowances, disability & elderly pensions)	49	48	43	46	57	45	54	44	47	36	65	73	45
Development aid agencies	37	42	42	47	39	32	44	43	44	36	23	57	37
Government, conditional on financing poverty reduction	37	40	39	43	48	33	41	37	35	27	34	62	35
Unconditional cash transfers to each household	34	30	31	27	31	30	34	27	32	24	54	62	31
Local NGOs with democratic processes	29	33	39	33	34	33	33	29	32	22	17	53	29
Local authorities	22	23	25	22	22	30	23	19	19	18	19	47	22
Government, unconditional	18	18	21	14	18	22	21	16	14	14	18	50	18

V.D Custom Global Income Redistribution

The last task of the questionnaire allowed respondents to manipulate the shape of the global income distribution.[42] The question text included the following instructions:

> "Below you will find a graph of the world distribution of after-tax income and three sliders that vary it. The current distribution is in red, and your custom one is in green. The first two sliders control the proportion of winners and the proportion of losers, among all humans. The third slider controls the degree of redistribution from the richest to the poorest. If you do not want new policies to reduce global inequality, you can set the third slider to zero."

The interactive question is available at bit.ly/custom_global_redistr, an explainer video at youtu.be/gSfsQwczT7w, and the algorithm translating slider positions into a redistribution is described in Appendix F. Figure 14 displays what respondents see below the instructions, including the interactive graph and a table summarizing how their custom redistribution would affect five example income levels (including their own, asked right before). To mitigate potential anchoring at the sliders' initial positions,[43] sliders are initialized in one of two random positions: either 60% of winners, 20% of losers, and a degree of redistribution of 2 out of 10 (as in Figure 14); or 40%, 10%, and 7/10, respectively. Given the complexity of the task and its inconvenience on mobile devices, respondents are given the explicit option to skip it.

Overall, 56% are satisfied with their custom redistribution and 43% skip it. Although the non-response rate may seem high, it is relatively evenly spread across the population. Indeed, the share of satisfied respondents is 52% for non-voters, 54% for center-right or right-wing voters, 57% for far-right voters, and 61% for left-wing voters; while it ranges from 49% for people without a high-school diploma to 57% for those with a post-secondary diploma. The limited heterogeneity in response rates across crucial sociodemographic groups suggests that the task enabled motivated respondents to make an informed choice regarding their preferred redistribution with little sacrifice in terms of sample representativeness.

[42] Appendix C.2 details how I obtained the world distribution of PPP incomes.

[43] To test for anchoring, I regress responses on the sliders' initial positions. I define the anchoring effect as the effect size relative to the difference between the initial positions of the two variants. It is always significant, at 36% for the share of winners, 57% for the share of losers, and 42% for the degree of redistribution. While anchoring plays a role, the responses converge to a middle point between the two anchors, indicating that the anchors themselves may have been defined by the surveyor (myself) drifting away from a shared preference in opposite directions.

Figure 14: Custom global redistribution: screenshot of the bottom of the page. (Question 55).

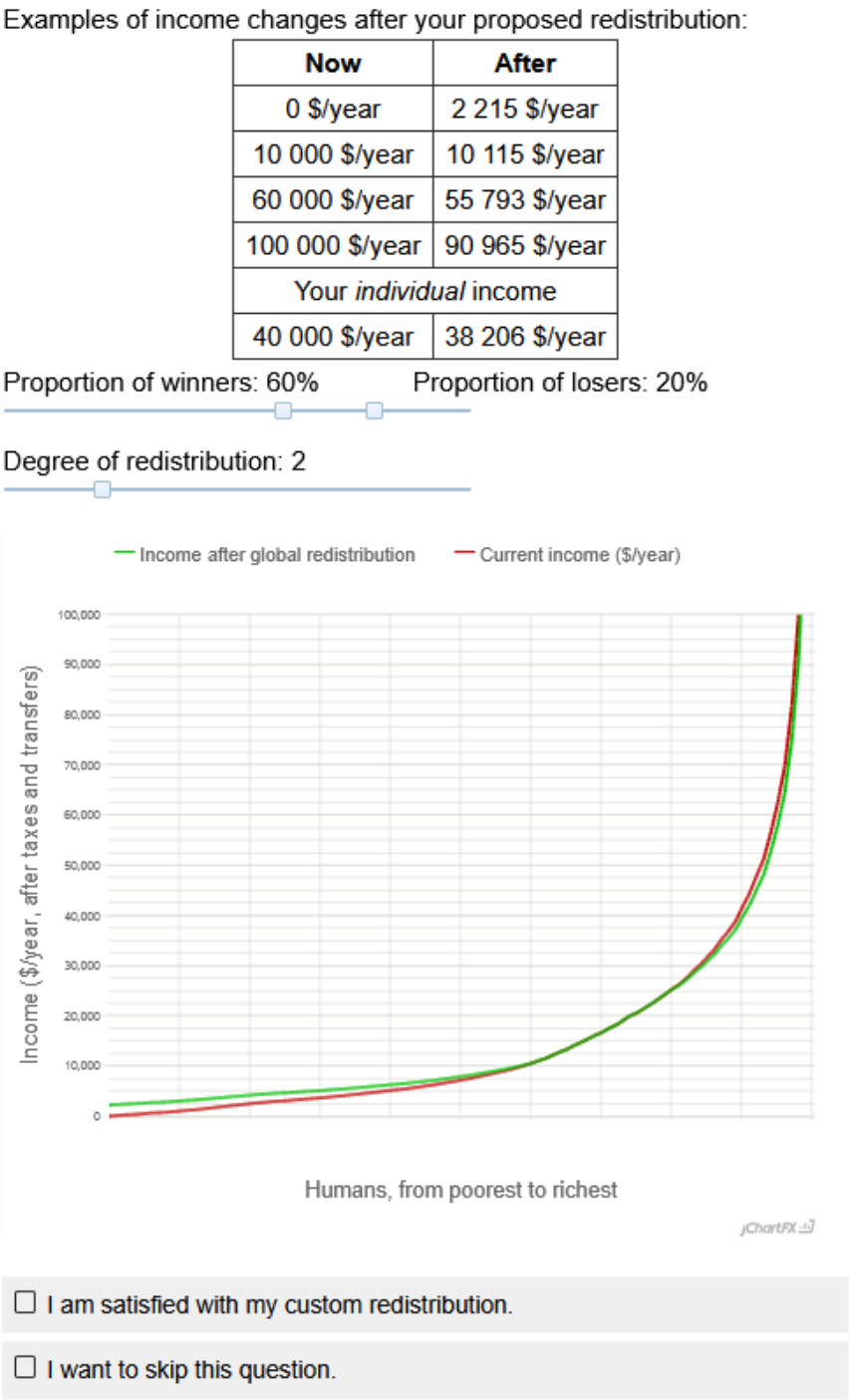


Figure S49 shows the median preferred redistribution among satisfied respondents, i.e. the curve obtained by setting the sliders at their median preferred values: 49% of

winners, 18% of losers, and a degree of redistribution of 5/10, resulting in a transfer of 5.4% of world income from rich to poor and in a minimum income of $287 per month. Interestingly, 48% choose to lose from their custom redistribution while only 9% choose to win; the median satisfied respondent selects parameters such that they neither win nor lose. Besides, 10% of satisfied respondents opt for the status quo, preserving the current income distribution. Finally, Figure S50 presents the average preferred redistribution among satisfied respondents, obtained by pointwise averaging custom curves. The average preferred redistribution transfers 5.4% of world income from the top 27% to the bottom 73% and entails a minimum income of $247 per month. As shown in Figure S70, at the top of the distribution, the average preferred redistribution can be achieved with a 7% marginal income tax rate above $25,000 and a 16% rate above $40,000 per year (at Purchasing Power Parity).

Figures S52-S53 reveal limited heterogeneity in custom redistributions across countries. However, Figures S54-S57 show greater variation at the individual level, though the bulk of respondents favor a custom redistribution implying transfers of 4% to 5% of world income and a minimum income of $150 to $350 per month.

Fabre (2022) applied the same method to uncover French preferences regarding national income redistribution and tested support for the median and average preferred redistributions on a separate sample. Excluding the 22% to 24% of people not responding, 51% of respondents accepted the average redistribution and 67% the median one.[44] While one cannot be sure that these results would replicate in the context of a global redistribution, they suggest that a majority might accept the average or median redistribution described above.

VI Conclusion

Applying the theory of optimal taxation, Kopczuk et al. (2005) show that the level of U.S. foreign aid could only be rationalized if the U.S. government placed a value 2,000 times higher on the welfare of a American than on that of a foreigner (although this ratio should be reduced by the proportion of foreign aid transfers diverted or wasted). Our results contradict the notion that government action accurately reflects attitudes towards global redistribution, and are consistent with a conservative bias among legislators

[44] Fabre (2022) also tested a redistribution obtained from median parameters and a 5% lower aggregate income to account for adverse behavioral responses. This was accepted by 62% of French respondents.

(Broockman & Skovron 2018; Gilens & Page 2014; Pilet et al. 2024). Indeed, a majority of respondents in high-income countries support a global tax on top incomes to finance poverty reduction in low-income countries. Additionally, over two-thirds of respondents accept a tax on the wealth of millionaires with 30% of the revenue financing LICs, even in the case of only a few countries implementing it. In every country, majorities accept an International Climate Scheme that is costly to them but beneficial to the poorest globally, showing that most people value climate action and poverty reduction.

The revenue allocation task sheds light on how much people value global versus domestic public goods. On average, respondents allocate 17.5% of the revenue from a hypothetical global wealth tax to sustainable development out of the five specified categories. This indicates that people are neither selfless universalists, who would allocate all the revenue from this tax to the poorest countries, nor devoid of altruism towards foreigners, as this would imply allocating nothing to global spending. The custom redistribution task confirms that most people would actually prefer much greater global redistribution than currently exists, as the average respondent opts for a global minimum income of $247 per month, financed by transfers amounting to over 5% of world income.

An exploration of respondents' underlying values reveals that support for global redistribution primarily stems from a sense of duty and empathy towards the destitute. For some, this issue appears important enough to factor into their voting decision. Indeed, the likelihood that a political program is preferred increases if it includes a globally redistributive tax on millionaires and decreases if it includes cuts to foreign aid. Additionally, one-third of respondents report that they would be more likely to vote for a political party if it were part of a global movement for sustainable development, and a similar proportion state that they could themselves participate in such a movement.

These results raise the question of why so few policymakers campaign on sustainable development proposals. The lack of supply of such campaigns might stem from pluralistic ignorance among policymakers and activists, consistent with the public's underestimation of support for a Global Climate Scheme. Alternatively, it could be due to a lack of demand from constituents. Indeed, global inequality is rarely a top-of-mind consideration. People's most frequent concerns relate to self-interested issues such as their purchasing power or health; articulated political demands generally refer to national issues such as public services; and the most salient international issues are climate change, wars, and the rise of the far right.

The low salience of global inequality may manifest as a lack of popular mobilization,

resulting in it being a low priority for policymakers. Combined with the necessary trade-off between global redistribution and fellow citizens' purchasing power, policymakers may prioritize the latter —which is the primary concern of voters— to the point of ignoring universalist attitudes. Status quo bias is a compounding factor: the weakness of global institutions and the primacy of national polities make international cooperation unlikely, which may discourage universalist thought and make it seem utopian. Indeed, support for global policies is partly caused by the belief that they are possible, as our information experiment demonstrated. Therefore, the organization of the world order based on nation-states might silence demands for universalist reforms and perpetuate a cycle where the low salience of universalist concerns and status quo institutions reinforce each other.

Nevertheless, the survey results suggest some untapped potential for global solidarity. In light of these findings, it is unlikely that the public would resist global redistribution policies. This is especially true for balance sheet operations with expansionary impacts and indirect costs, such as debt restructuring, liquidity provision, the expansion of lending by Multilateral Development Banks, and their recapitalization through the rechanneling of Special Drawing Rights. These reforms are widely accepted and are the natural focus of multilateral initiatives (Bridgetown Initiative 2025; FfD4 2025). Since public attitudes do not appear to be a limiting factor, further research is needed to understand policymakers' motivations and the obstacles they face in cooperating on sustainable development reforms.

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