

DFG research project

Mediated Contestation in Comparative Perspective

CODEBOOK (version 7.7)

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7. CODING STEP: CHARACTERISTICS OF THE JUSTIFICATIONS

***Preliminary note:** the following justification variables are not mutually exclusive! This means that the coding of each variable is completely independent of the coding of all other variables for the respective justification.*

7.1 JUSTIFICATION: NAME OF THE JUSTIFICATION [JUST_JUSTIF_NAME]

In the provided text box, enter the name of the justification as agreed upon in the first consensus discussion (max. 20 words).

7.2 JUSTIFICATION: REPRESENTATIVES OF THE JUSTIFICATION [JUST_REP_ACTOR_ID]

From the actor list for the respective article, select all actors who represent the justification to be coded. If a justification is represented by several actors mentioned in the article, code all representatives of the justification on the actor list.

Important: when deciding whether an actor represents a justification, refer (a) **strictly to the text of the article** and (b) only to the prior **knowledge the reader requires** to fully understand the article. Ignore the prior knowledge you might have about the justifications of individual actors as well as any information about justifications of actors mentioned in the text that are not clear and unambiguous.

For actors who do not meet the criteria of **identifiability and potential discourse participation**, used for the creation of the actor list (see coding step 2), select the option ‘Unlisted actor’ (e.g. ‘Christians’, ‘Many people’, ‘Some’). Caution: select this option only if it is clear from the text that someone represents a justification, but that this someone does not meet the criteria for being listed as an actor in coding step 2. If it is not apparent in the article that someone represents the justification, no representative should be chosen.

Note: actors taking over **leadership positions** in organizations (e.g. leaders, chairpersons, board members) should **not** automatically be coded as representatives of the same justifications as those of their organization (and vice versa). This means that representatives of an organization also can distance themselves from the justifications of their organization and/or support a different justification.

Speakers of organizations as a whole (for example, spokespersons) who are clearly recognisable as such are coded as representatives of the justification of the organization they speak for.

7.3 JUSTIFICATION: POSITIONAL AFFILIATION OF THE JUSTIFICATION [JUST_JUSTIF_POSITION_ID]

Select the position(s) supported by the justification from the list of positions. **Caution:** the affiliation of the justification to one or more positions is independent of the actors who represent this position or justification.

7.4 JUSTIFICATION: REFERENCE TO IN-GROUP INTERESTS

[JUST_IN_GROUP_REFERENCE]

In-group reference within a justification is given if it **explicitly** addresses costs and/or benefits of the justified position for the group an actor (or an unlisted actor) **belongs to** (i.e. an in-group). Costs and benefits can be of both **ideal** (for example, social recognition or influence) and **material nature**.

When coding, keep in mind the article’s central issue around which the debate revolves and which is related to the position, and then consider whether the costs and benefits for an in-group are **explicitly identified as such** or not.

Explicitness criterion: the in-group of the actor who justifies must be recognisable to a generally educated reader without special technical knowledge.

Context dependency: since actors have multiple group affiliations (e.g. national, gender, religious, political, or other organizational affiliations), always select the **group affiliation that the reader can clearly recognise as relevant in the context of the justification and from the point of view of the justifying actor**. This characteristic aims to register when an actor, in order to justify their position, leads the interests of a group whom they feel **associated** with (recognisable to a generally educated reader), thereby explicitly distancing themselves from the interests of other groups. That can mean that

- (1) actors want to privilege their own group over other groups,
- (2) they want to compensate an existing disadvantage of their own group compared to other groups,
- (3) they want to avoid costs/to avert damage for their own group.

In-groups or out-groups are not necessarily defined by country boundaries but rather by the indication which in-group the actor explicitly refers to.

Example 1: *if a nationalist party from a European country appeals to the ‘wellbeing of the European peoples’ to justify a position, this must be coded as in-group reference, provided a distinction from at least one group (in this case non-European groups, e.g. immigrants or refugees) is clearly recognisable to a generally educated reader.*

Example 2: *in an article on the admission of refugees into Germany, the position is represented that an upper limit for admission should be introduced. The position is justified by the fact that the German society has no further capacity for accepting refugees.*

In this justification, there is a reference to in-group interests, as it refers to the costs for the German society, which is delimited from the group of refugees. There is no reference to common good, since the issue concerns not only the German society, but also refugees.

Rule in case of doubt: if you are in doubt whether there is an in-group reference or not, code the variable conservatively, i.e. as not given.

1 Not given

2 Given

7.5 JUSTIFICATION: REFERENCE TO OUT-GROUP INTERESTS

[JUST_OUT_GROUP_REF]

Out-group reference within a justification is given if it **explicitly** addresses costs and/or benefits of the justified position for the group an actor (or an unlisted actor) **does not belong to** (i.e. an out-group). Costs and benefits can be of both an **ideal** (for example, social recognition or influence) and a **material nature**. When coding, keep in mind the article’s central issue around which the debate revolves and which is related to the position, and then consider whether the costs and benefits for an out-group are **explicitly identified as such** or not.

Explicitness criterion: the out-group of the actor who justifies must be recognisable to a generally educated reader without special technical knowledge.

Context dependency: since actors have multiple group affiliations (e.g. national, gender, religious, political, or other organizational affiliations), always select the **group affiliation that the reader can clearly recognise as relevant in the context of the justification and from the point of view of the justifying actor**. This characteristic aims to register when an actor, in order to justify their position, leads the interests of a group whom they feel **not associated with** (recognisable to a generally educated reader), thereby explicitly distancing themselves from the interests of other groups. That can mean that ... This may mean that actors want to privilege a certain other group over their group or a third group, or that they want to compensate for an existing disadvantage of a certain other group compared to their group or a third group. An out-group relationship does not have to be limited to one, but can also apply to several out-groups at the same time.

In-groups or out-groups are not necessarily defined by country boundaries but rather by the indication which out-group the author explicitly refers to.

Example: *if an actor who is clearly a member of the German society appeals to ‘charity as religious duty’ to justify the position of not imposing an upper limit on the admission of refugees, this should be coded as an out-group reference, because it becomes clear to a generally educated reader that they refer to benefits and interests of a group to which they do not belong.*

Rule in case of doubt: if you are in doubt whether there is an out-group reference or not, code the variable conservatively, i.e. as not given.

1 Not given

2 Given

7.6 JUSTIFICATION:REFERENCE TO COMMON GOOD [JUST_COMMON_GOOD_REF]

Reference to common good within a justification is given if an actor (or an unlisted actor) **explicitly** addresses costs and/or benefits of the justified position **for all social groups** that are concerned in

the article. It is therefore about costs and/or benefits for society in general, i.e. for ‘the public’. A justification with the reference to common good has an **integrative character and emphasizes commonalities of groups rather than their differences**. In principle, reference to common good can occur independently of all other forms of justification. This means, for example, that it may be given even if there is already an in- and/or out-group reference.

Example 1: *in an opinion article, the author argues that the common practice of deporting rejected asylum seekers is an unnecessary burden for all concerned and should be changed. This is coded as a reference to common good, because the author addresses the benefits of the position for all groups affected by the issue.*

Example 2: *in an opinion article, the author justifies the position for the introduction of same-sex marriage by writing: ‘The outrage of some at the Parliament’s decision is disconcerting: the possibility for homosexual couples to close the bond of marriage instead of, as before, a registered civil partnership, and thus to enjoy the same privileges, does not mean fewer rights for heterosexuals, but equal rights for all.’ Here, the benefits of all groups affected by the issue is addressed (‘equal rights for all’).*

Caution: Whether to code in-group reference or out-group reference depends on whether the text or context clearly indicates which group the actor who justifies a position belongs to!

Example 3: *an article in the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung contains the following passage: ‘Atzelmeier emphasizes that religions should not be placed under the general suspicion of incompatibility with guaranteed human rights. Löwenstein sees it completely differently: he believes that religious practices have suppressed humans’ and women’s rights for centuries. “Therefore, religion must make it clear not to contradict human rights,” Löwenstein said.’*

- *Here, Löwensteins position (‘religion must make it clear not to contradict human rights’) is justified by referring to the centuries-long suppression of human rights through religious practices. Reference to common good is therefore given. In addition, from the point of view of the justifying actor (Löwenstein), the interests of an out-group are addressed (women’s rights).*

1 Not given

2 Given

7.7 JUSTIFICATION: EXPLICIT REFERENCE TO RELIGIOUS BELIEFS [JUST_RELIGIOUS_BELIEFS_REF]

An explicit reference to religious beliefs within a justification is given if an actor (or an unlisted actor) explicitly includes a ‘religious marker’ in the justification. Religious markers are linguistic utterances that are recognisable to non-religious persons (i.e. atheists or agnostics) as a religious argumentative content. They include words such as ‘Jesus’, ‘God’, ‘Allah’, ‘Bible’, ‘Quran’, Bible quotes (e.g., but not only, from the ‘Ten Commandments’), and explicit references to religious scholars or church authorities (e.g. the Pope, Imams or the Buddha). Often (**but not always**) justifications with explicit reference to religion can be assigned to one of the following types of religious references. References to

- (1) religious norms and values;
- (2) religious scholars and authorities;
- (3) God or gods;
- (4) Holy scriptures;
- (5) Founders of religious traditions.

Caution: only justifications with a **positive** reference to religion should be coded, i.e. only if a position is justified with regard to religious convictions. Statements such as ‘in Germany, the Basic Law applies, not the Sharia,’ should *not* be coded as an explicit reference to religion.

Example: *if an actor appeals to ‘charity as a religious duty’ to justify a position, this should be coded as an explicit reference to religious beliefs, provided it is clear to a generally educated reader that it refers to a religious doctrine.*

- 1 Not given
- 2 Given