Release Notes for ATOP Similarity Scores Dataset, 1816–2016

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These release notes describe similarity scores computed with ATOP alliance data.

1 Citation

We ask users of the dataset to cite the following article:

> Daina Chiba, Jesse C. Johnson, and Brett Ashley Leeds. 2015. "Careful Commitments: Democratic States and Alliance Design." *Journal of Politics* 77 (4): 968–982.

In addition, users should cite Signorino and Ritter (1999) if they use S scores, and cite Häge (2011) if they use Scott's π or Cohen's κ.

2 Variable Descriptions

The dataset contains the following four foreign policy similarity measures.

s_un_atop Unweighted version of Signorino and Ritter's (1999) S scores computed with ATOP alliance data, 1816–2016.

s_wt_atop Weighted version of Signorino and Ritter's (1999) S scores computed with ATOP alliance data, 1816–2012. Correlates of War (COW)'s National Material Capabilities (ver 5.0, available for 1816–2012) data are used to weight the observations.

pi_atop Scott's π scores computed with ATOP alliance data, 1816–2016. See Häge (2011) for descriptions of Scott's π and Cohen's κ.

kappa_atop Cohen's κ scores computed with ATOP alliance data, 1816–2016.

These variables are calculated for all undirected dyads of COW member states based on version 2016 of the State System Membership data.[1]

In computing these similarity scores, we rank order annual directed dyadic observations in terms of the strength of alliance treaty obligations based on version 4.0 of the ATOP data. The ordered categories are:

3. Defense and/or Offense obligations (regardless of other content)
2. Neutrality and/or Consultation obligations (but no defense or offense obligations)
1. Nonaggression (but no defense, offense, neutrality, or consultation obligations)
0. No alliance obligation

We view defense and offense obligations as the strongest alliance connection because both types of pacts require member states to provide military assistance in war. Both neutrality and consultation pacts stop short of requiring a partner to join a conflict, but they do require active effort on the part of partners to support their allies and coordinate policy. We view these as weaker commitments than defense and offense pacts, but stronger than nonaggression pacts, which may not require any cooperative action on the part of alliance members other than to refrain from conflict with one another. While nonaggression pacts do not require action on the part of members, we think that having a similar portfolio of nonaggression commitments provides an indicator of foreign policy similarity.

References

Chiba, Daina, Jesse C. Johnson and Brett Ashley Leeds. 2015. "Careful Commitments: Democratic States and Alliance Design." *Journal of Politics* 77 (4): 968–982.

Häge, Frank M. 2011. "Choice or Circumstance? Adjusting Measures of Foreign Policy Similarity for Chance Agreement." *Political Analysis* 19: 287–305.

Signorino, Curtis S. and Jeffrey M. Ritter. 1999. "Tau-b or Not Tau-b: Measuring the Similarity of Foreign Policy Positions." *International Studies Quarterly* 43: 115–144.

[1]Correlates of War Project. 2017. "State System Membership List, v2016." Online, `http://correlatesofwar.org` (accessed in August 2018)