

**The Acceptability of War and Support for Defense Spending
Evidence from Fourteen Democracies, 2004-2013**

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Abstract

We study the factors that influence citizen support for defense spending in fourteen democracies over the period 2004-2013. We pose two research questions: First, what factors influence citizen support for war and military force? We refer to this as the *acceptability of war*. Second, in addition to the acceptability of war, what other factors affect support for defense spending? Our principal finding is that citizen acceptance of war and support for defense spending are most influenced by basic beliefs and values. Gender also has a strong negative influence on attitudes toward war and thus indirectly lowers support for defense spending among women. Attitudes toward war and defense spending are also sometimes influenced by short-term threats and by alliance considerations, but the effects are not as substantively meaningful. We conclude with a summary of the results and a discussion of the implications for theory and policy.

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Introduction

Scholars of international relations have devoted particular attention to the sources of citizen support for defense spending. In so doing, they recognize that governments must attend not merely to external threats but also to public support for defense budgets that compete with domestic priorities. As Michael Howard has put it, governments must engage not merely in defense and deterrence, but also in *reassurance*: "The object of reassurance is to persuade one's own people, and those of one's allies, that the benefits of military action, or preparation for it, will outweigh the costs" (Howard 1982, 317).

Recent commentary by scholars and policy-makers suggests that citizens in many democracies are no longer reassured, that is, that they no longer believe that the benefits of defense spending outweigh the costs. The concern was most bluntly expressed by former US Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, who argued in 2010 that...

These budget limitations relate to a larger cultural and political trend affecting the alliance. One of the triumphs of the last century was the pacification of Europe after ages of ruinous warfare. But, as I've said before, I believe we have reached an inflection point, where much of the continent has gone too far in the other direction. *The demilitarization of Europe – where large swaths of the general public and political class are averse to military force and the risks that go with it – has gone from a blessing in the 20th century to an impediment to achieving real security and lasting peace in the 21st* (Gates 2010; emphasis in original).

Gates' comments are interesting because they echo predictions made by scholars during and after the Vietnam War and the emergence of nuclear parity in the early 1970s. Many

scholars characterized the contention over security policy as essentially a debate about the acceptability of military force and war as instruments of policy. Other scholars observed that the debate about military force reflected the increasing competition between defense budgets and the programs of the welfare state. These scholars predicted exactly the outcome that Secretary Gates now laments: that citizens would increasingly find that the benefits of military force had declined and would therefore resist paying the cost.

However, among all these debates among policy makers and the works of scholars, an important element is missing: a thorough, comparative study of the opinions of citizens. In this article, we study the factors that influence citizen support for the cost of defense in fourteen democracies over the period 2004-2013. Our approach is influenced by the work of Bartels (1994), who conceptualized the issue in terms of two research questions: First, what factors influence citizen support for war and military force? We refer to this as the *acceptability of war*. Second, in addition to the acceptability of war, what other factors affect *support for defense spending*? We seek answers to these questions using a unique set of opinion surveys that are available in fourteen countries for the period 2004-2013.

We proceed as follows. In the following section, we review three bodies of scholarly literature that speak to our two research questions: theories of change in both domestic and international politics and its impact on citizen assessments of the acceptability of war and support for defense spending; research on the factors that most influence support for military force and defense spending at the individual level; and research on the dynamics of defense spending preferences at the aggregate level. Following this review, we estimate regression models of the acceptability of war and support for defense spending.

Our principal finding is that both citizen acceptance of war and support for defense

spending are most consistently influenced by basic beliefs and values and by life experience. Ideology and beliefs about military power affect both attitudes toward war and support for defense spending. Gender has a strong negative influence on attitudes toward war and thus indirectly lowers support for defense spending among women. Attitudes toward war and defense spending are also influenced by short-term threats and by alliance considerations, but the effects are not as consistently significant or substantively meaningful as variables such as ideology and gender. We conclude with a summary of the results and a discussion of the implications for theory and policy.

War, Military Force, and Citizen Support for Defense Spending

War, Social Change, and Support for Defense

The 1960s and 1970s produced a number of scholarly works that sought to understand the increasing contention that arose during the Vietnam War and continued with the question of how the US and its allies would adjust to the emergence of nuclear parity between the US and the Soviet Union. For example, Hoffmann characterized debates about security policy as a more recent version of a centuries-old argument: that the acceptability of military force and war would decline as the values of modern industrial democracies came to prevail. Theorists from Auguste Comte to Montesquieu had argued

that there is something in industrial society which will gradually tame war and eliminate force - because war will become dysfunctional. Industrial society is based on free labour instead of enslavement for war; it is geared to production and commerce, instead of conquest, which is not merely unnecessary for but detrimental to the acquisition of wealth. Industrial societies will also tame war because of a change of values. They are societies in which the citizens want what Constant described as 'le repos et l'aisance' instead of glory, what de Tocqueville called higher status and standard of living instead

of turmoil (Hoffmann 1966, 3).

Hoffman's analysis foreshadowed the theoretical developments of the 1970s, especially works that predicted a decline in the utility of military force in an age of strategic parity, economic interdependence, and welfare states (Brown 1974; Keohane and Nye 1977). Keohane and Nye in particular did not argue that military force had lost all utility, but they did observe that security politics would become increasingly contentious in an age dominated by economic interdependence and the emergence of new issues that competed for attention and resources (1977, 23-37). Other scholars observed that the increasing contention surrounding military force would be exacerbated by the resource conflict between defense budgets and the programs of the welfare state that had expanded in the postwar years (Russett 1971; Sprout and Sprout 1968).

The protests that erupted in both Europe and the US during the years of the Reagan presidency and later during the war in Iraq do not seem surprising in light of these early scholarly predictions, but more recent scholarly analyses have added new elements to the argument that international and domestic changes have transformed views of military force and thus military spending. In a widely discussed essay, Robert Kagan argued that the unwillingness of Europeans to invest additional resources in defense resulted in part from a difference in relative power: strong states invest in military power, but weaker states seek protection through international law and multilateral cooperation. Nonetheless, there was an additional reason, a result of the success of European integration that had brought peace and prosperity to Europe. To the question of why Europe had not reacted to American dominance with an effort to increase its own military capabilities, Kagan answered: "The answer lies somewhere in the realm of ideology, in European attitudes not just toward defense spending but toward power

itself...Europeans today are not ambitious for power, and certainly not for military power....They have rejected the power politics that brought them such misery over the past century and more" (2003, 53, 55).

These scholarly works highlight several important factors that are likely to influence citizen views of defense spending. The first is the centrality of citizen views of the acceptability of war and military force. The question is not just how much defense will cost, but also what benefit it will bring. Differences in views on this subject are likely to elicit different levels of support for the defense budget. The second is the emergence of the welfare state as a competitor for resources. Finally, Kagan offers the argument that American attitudes are fundamentally different. Partly as a result of the difference in relative power but also as a result of differing historical experience, Americans are more likely than Europeans to view military force and war as acceptable means of policy, and this difference translates into differing views of defense spending as well.

Support for Defense Spending at the Individual Level

Given the centrality of individual attitudes to theories of change in support for defense spending, there has been surprisingly little research on the subject, although there has been important work on the structure of attitudes toward military force. The signal exception is Bartels, who estimated the impact of ideology and a variety of foreign policy attitudes on Americans' support for defense spending in 1992. The results were unequivocal: "the magnitudes of the various parameter estimates clearly suggest that the dominant factor in producing support for defense spending in 1992 was a general willingness 'to use military force to solve international problems'...it is the dominant determinant of defense spending preferences in every specification,

regardless of which other variables are included..."(Bartels 1994, 481). What is more, when Bartels turned his attention to support for spending in the Cold War years of 1982-1984, he found the same result: support for defense spending was dominated by the general willingness to use force rather than by other factors: "One implication of these results is that, even in the Cold War era, defense spending preferences were determined more by a predisposition to favor or oppose the use of force in the international arena than by either general political ideology or attitudes toward the Soviet Union per se"(1994, 485). Put differently, Bartels findings suggest that defense spending preferences are conditioned more by long-held attitudes toward military force than by short-term variation in threats or estimates of adversaries.

These findings naturally lead to the question of what determines attitudes toward war and the use of force, and here Bartels makes an interesting finding: the willingness to use force is more strongly determined by basic cultural attitudes (patriotism and distrust of people) than by ideology or what might be termed short-term influences, although these also have an impact. Some demographic characteristics, such as gender, race, and occupational status, are also important (1994, 495). Although Bartels does not draw the conclusion, it seems plausible that fundamental attitudes toward the use of force resemble the basic values that make up an individual's ideology --in fact, attitudes toward war may be the "international" component of what we normally consider a citizen's ideology. If so, it is likely an attitude that formed in early adulthood. Such a conceptualization makes it easier to understand why attitudes toward defense spending vary less than one might expect in reaction to short-term forces (Bartel 1994, 497).

Beyond Bartels, there are few other studies of individual defense spending preferences, but his results are consistent with broader studies of the structure of attitudes toward foreign policy and international relations. Most important is the research of Hurwitz and Peffley, who

distinguish between three types of attitudes: core *values* (morality of war, ethnocentrism), international *postures* (internationalism, militarism), and opinions on specific *issues* (1987). In their view, the core value "morality of war" is causally prior to citizens' preferred international posture, which in turn helps citizens form attitudes on specific policy choices, such as defense spending. In fact, opinions of defense spending are quite strongly related to a militarist posture, which in turn is strongly determined by views of the morality of war. Thus, like Bartels and much of the literature on military force reviewed above, Hurwitz and Peffley are essentially arguing that fundamental attitudes toward war and military force are a primary determinant of defense spending preferences (1987, 197).

The centrality of attitudes toward military force also characterizes the broader literature on the structure of foreign policy attitudes at the individual level. In a number of studies of American public and leadership opinions from the 1970s through the 1990s, Holsti, Rosenau, and Wittkopf demonstrated that two dimensions dominate individual opinions: a "cooperative" dimension composed of opinion items measuring support for nonmilitary policy instruments, and a "militant" dimension composed of items measuring support for military instruments of policy. A third group reveals a mixture of militant and cooperative views. The findings of these scholars demonstrate with remarkable consistency that support or opposition to the militant and cooperative dimensions (which are essentially mirrors) is the central cleavage that structures American opinions of foreign policy (Wittkopf 1990, 34-36; Holsti 2004, 163-239; Holsti and Rosenau 1990). These attitudes toward military force are a dominant correlate of a host of specific policy opinions, including opinions of defense spending (Wittkopf 1990, 54).

Less is known about opinion structures in other countries, although those studies that do exist suggest a similarity to the structure of US opinion. For example, Asmus, Everts, and

Isernia constructed a typology of attitudes toward military force from surveys conducted by the German Marshall Fund in the US and eleven European countries (2004). Their typology is based on two question items, the first asking about the acceptability of war ("war is sometimes necessary to achieve justice") and the second inquiring if economic power is more important than military power. The typology based on these two questions yields an attitude structure that is quite similar to the one that characterizes US opinion: there are distinct "hawk" and "dove" groupings, along with a mixed "pragmatist" group (Asmus, Everts, and Isernia 2004, 3). In a subsequent study, Everts and Isernia demonstrate that these attitudes towards military force were very strong determinants of support for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan (2012, 19-22). Although none of these studies of European opinion specifically address support for defense spending, they provide plausible evidence of the centrality of attitudes toward military force as determinants of security policy preferences.

Change in Aggregate Support for Defense Spending over Time

The question of how defense spending preferences move over time has produced a small but cumulating literature that focuses principally on the causal impact of change in spending itself. Wlezien's "thermostat" model of spending has come to dominate this body of scholarship (1995; 1996). Wlezien argues that the important political question is the public's desired level of *change* in spending. Citizens may not have a specific preferred level of spending, but given the salience of the defense budget, they are likely to know if spending has been increasing or decreasing. Following the thermostat metaphor, when spending has been increasing (decreasing), the public will react by moving toward a preference for decreasing (increasing) spending (1995; 1996). Wlezien's studies of American federal spending in general and defense spending in particular

strongly confirm the thermostat dynamic. Public support for defense spending is also related to the Soviet threat (dislike of the Soviet Union), so that a parsimonious model including the Soviet threat and the recent change in defense spending explains a very high percentage of the variation in aggregate spending preferences (1996). Subsequent research demonstrates that the thermostat model has broad applicability (Soroka and Wlezien 2004, 2005; see also Nincic 1988). In summary, there is ample time-series evidence at the aggregate level that citizens in democracies are aware of recent change in defense spending and generally prefer that increases or decreases be followed by a change in the opposite direction.

The Dataset: *Transatlantic Trends*, 2004-2013

Most scholarship on public opinion on national security issues is focused on the US. One reason is the availability of numerous surveys in the US that employ identical question wording over time. Once we move beyond the US, however, the task becomes more difficult, as survey organizations in different countries each have their own preferred wording on specific issues; some do not focus on national security at all; and those that do administer the questions at different points in time.

Fortunately, the opinion surveys in the German Marshall Fund's *Transatlantic Trends* series offer the opportunity to close the gap in comparative research. Beginning in 2002, *Transatlantic Trends* has conducted a yearly survey on foreign and security policy issues in a minimum of 7 countries that now includes surveys in 14 countries. The questions are identically worded in each country, and sampling takes place at the same time each year (June). In light of the scholarly findings reviewed above, we are particularly interested in a measure of the acceptability of war and in a measure of support for defense spending. As Table 1 shows, a

measure of attitudes toward war is available in the GMF dataset for all years since 2004, and a measure of support for defense spending is available in five years between 2004 and 2013.

The analyses reported here are grouped by the four categories in Table 1. That is, we report results for the US, Turkey, and for the pooled responses for Western Europe and Eastern Europe. Results for individual national models are reported in Reviewers' Appendices 1-4; they are consistent with the grouped results reported here.

Modeling Citizen Views of the Acceptability of War

Although the scholarly literature reviewed above varies in methodological approach and historical reach, one theme is a consistent focus: citizen attitudes on the acceptability of war and military force. In this section, we model citizen attitudes toward war using the following question that has been administered since 2003 in the *Transatlantic Trends* surveys:¹

"Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following--Under some conditions war is necessary to obtain justice."

In the analysis to follow, we operationalize the acceptability of war as a dummy variable for which the value of 1 is assigned to respondents who agree "strongly" or "somewhat" with the statement above.

The question is not without some weaknesses. The mention of "justice" is of particular concern, especially in the environment after September 11, 2001, when respondents might interpret the question as specifically inspired by the attacks on the US. Yet as we have seen in the research of Hurwitz and Peffley, the "morality of war" is one of the "core values" that has a

¹ Appendix 1 contains a list of the surveys.

strong influence on a variety of other security attitudes, and it is precisely the sentiment that we want to measure. Moreover, the GMF “war is necessary” question was not formulated in reaction to recent events. Its origins date to the 1930s as part of the research program of L.L. Thurstone, a social psychologist who was a pioneer in the development of attitude scales on a variety of topics (1929, 1931, 1959). During the 1930s, Thurstone and his students invested considerable effort to develop a "pacifism" scale, and the "war is sometimes necessary" question was one of twenty-three items from which the scale was constructed (Droba 1930; Peterson 1931). At the time, psychologists debated the validity of the overall pacifism scale, but it was widely employed (see Ericksen 1942 for a critique, and Carter 1940 for a review of studies that employed the scale). In fact, the "war is necessary" item is still in use by psychologists who study attitudes toward war (Kuterovac 2000; Jones-Wiley, Restori, and Lee 2007). It has also been employed in a recent survey of twenty-four countries designed to measure fundamental values, including attitudes towards war (Halifax International Security Forum 2013). In short, the question is attractive because it seeks to measure a basic attitude toward war that is independent of time and circumstance.

The question has other virtues as well. The first is the blunt invocation of "war," a welcome contrast to survey research that often employs generalities, such as "military action." Second, the measure in the GMF survey is available in identical form over ten years in as many as sixteen countries. As a result, many research findings that exist only for the US can now be explored comparatively. Third, the question subtly invokes the ambivalence that most citizens have about policy choice (Zaller and Feldman 1992). War may be necessary, but only "under some conditions." The research question is whether different citizens resolve this ambivalence in different ways. A fourth virtue of the question is that it has proven to be a very robust

predictor of opinions on other security issues, which increases our confidence that it measures fundamental attitudes toward military force (Everts and Isernia 2012). In summary, whatever doubts one might have about the wording of the question, it seems to measure a fundamental toleration or rejection of war as an instrument of policy.

The analyses reported below are logistic regressions with the acceptability of war as the dependent variable. Because we pool Eastern and Western European responses in the analyses, we employ clustered standard errors for each country to account for the fact that observations may not be independent within countries. Our reading of the methodological literature suggests that there is no dominant recommendation for treating observations within clusters, although some evidence does suggest that the clustered standard errors that we employ here produce conservative estimates of statistical significance.²

Independent Variables

Building on previous research and adding our own hypotheses, our regression model of the "war is necessary" dependent variable includes measures of both long-term and short-term influences.

The most important long-term influence is *ideology*, which is a consistently strong correlate of attitudes towards war and other security issues in many studies of US opinion and occasional comparative studies. We measure ideology using a three point scale (left-center-right). As Figure 1 shows, there is a cross-national association between ideology and acceptance of war in the aggregate, and an interesting feature of the data is that the US is a clear outlier:

² See, for example, —Analyzing Correlated (Clustered) Data,” Institute for Digital Research and Education, University of California, Los Angeles. <http://www.ats.ucla.edu/stat/stata/library/cpsu.htm>

support for war is far higher than one might expect given its level of conservatism. Of course, our interest here is to test the hypothesis that ideology and acceptance of war are associated at the individual level within nations, but the cross-national pattern is telling.

A second variable included in the regression models is a survey measure of citizens' belief that economic power is more important than military power. As we noted above, several scholars have argued that a primary source of domestic contention over matters of national security is the confluence of two long-term trends: the emergence of economic welfare as a primary value of industrial societies, and the emergence of international economic interdependence. If these arguments are correct, we would expect that individuals who think that economic power is now primary in world affairs will be more skeptical of war as an instrument of policy. To measure this belief, we specify a dummy variable that equals 1 when respondents agree with the following statement: "economic power is more important than military power." We expect a negative sign on this variable.

The third independent variable is *gender*. There is a cumulating literature on attitudes toward war and national security in the US that demonstrates that women are significantly less supportive of using military force (Conover and Sapiro 1993; Nincic and Nincic 2002; Huddy, Feldman, and Cassese 2009). Whether this skepticism is the result of innate, biological factors or the experience or socialization of women is still far from established, but one precondition for assessing the question is comparative research to evaluate the universality of gender differences. We hypothesize that gender (female = 1) will take a negative sign.

We also specify the *age of respondents*. During the 1980s, there was considerable speculation that younger citizens had more skeptical attitudes toward national security because they had not experienced the tensions of the early Cold War (Szabo 1983). However, as we saw

above, Kagan has made a cogent argument that contemporary European attitudes toward national security, European integration, and world affairs more broadly reflect a disgust and exhaustion resulting from two world wars in the twentieth century. If Kagan is correct, we would expect older respondents to have more negative attitudes toward war. Which hypothesis is correct remains to be seen. Our age variable is grouped chronological age, with six groups beginning with age 18-24 and ending with a group 65 years and older.

In prior theory and research findings, the impact of *educational attainment, social position (occupation), and political engagement* are mixed. For example, in some research, educational attainment increases support for international activism and military intervention because citizens with higher education are more politically engaged, cosmopolitan, and engaged in global affairs (Everts 2011 provides evidence from the Netherlands on this relationship). In his studies of the US, Wittkopf finds support for two different views: in the 1970s, those with higher education were less supportive of militant activism, but in the 1980s, they reversed positions and became more supportive (1990, 46). In Bartel's analysis of US citizens, those with higher education and higher levels of political information in the US were less supportive of using force (1994, 502).

In preliminary estimates of our model, we studied the effects of educational attainment, political engagement, and occupational status and found that each has some positive influence on acceptance of war, but the influence is sporadic. However, the most consistent and significant correlate in these preliminary estimates was occupational status: those in professional and managerial occupations are more accepting of war. Based on existing literatures, this is likely due to the fact that professional occupations require higher education; that professionals work in more cosmopolitan locations and environments; and that both education and income increase

engagement in politics, which also increases support for global activism. For all of these reasons, on the basis of both parsimony and the results of our preliminary analyses, we specify a dummy variable which takes the value of 1 for respondents who describe their occupation as "professional [or] managerial." We expect a positive sign on this variable.³

Finally, we estimate the effects of four variables measuring short-term threat perceptions.⁴ For the entire time period for which complete data are available (2004-2013), we specify variables representing a perceived threat from the *Iranian nuclear program* and a perceived *Chinese military threat*. The Iran threat variable is a dummy variable that takes the value of 1 if the respondent is "very or somewhat concerned about Iran acquiring nuclear weapons." The Chinese threat measure is a dummy variable that takes the value of 1 if the respondent believes that "China is a military threat" [versus the alternative response that China is not a military threat].

For a more limited number of years (2004-2008), we also estimate the effect of two additional threat questions. The first is the perceived personal or national threat from "international terrorism." We construct a dummy variable that takes the value of 1 if the respondent believes that international terrorism is "an extremely important [or] important threat to ...the vital interest of [our country] in the next 10 years." The second variable is the perceived

³ We also tested alternative versions of the model including higher educational attainment while excluding professional occupational status. The version of the model including the occupational status variable was more consistently significant in these preliminary tests. The results of the preliminary analyses described in this paragraph are available by request to the authors.

⁴ Further details on the threat perception variables are provided in Appendix 2.

threat from "Islamic Fundamentalism."⁵ We specify a dummy variable if respondents reply that "Islamic fundamentalism" is "an extremely important [or] important threat to ...the vital interest of [our country] in the next 10 years."

Results: The acceptability of war

The results, shown in Tables 2a and 2b, indicate that attitudes toward war are more strongly and consistently conditioned by fundamental values and life experience than by short-term threats.⁶

The most obvious examples are ideology and gender, which are highly significant in all countries or groups of countries in the direction predicted by our hypotheses. In addition, in three out of the four groups (excluding Turkey), those in professional and managerial positions are more supportive of war. Other variables are significant, although the parameters take different signs in different locations. In Eastern Europe and the US, older respondents are less supportive of war, while in Turkey older respondents are more supportive. In Western Europe and Turkey, a belief that economic power is more important than military power does *not* lower judgments about the acceptability of war, while in Eastern Europe and the US it does. Nonetheless, the important finding in Tables 2a and 2b is that the most consistently significant influences on attitudes toward war arise from personal beliefs and life experience that have no relation to contemporary

⁵ The GMF questionnaire instructed interviewers to explain (if queried by respondents) that "Islamic fundamentalism" is "the more radical stream of Islam."

⁶ Individual national models for West and East European states are reported in Reviewers' Appendices 1 and 2. Results for West European states are very consistent in both the signs and significance of the grouped results. East European states differ somewhat, especially in the significance of ideology, but in other regards they are very similar to the grouped results reported here. A summary characterization is that our substantive interpretation applies to national as well as the grouped models.

global events, nor are they easily influenced by policy arguments (arguments in favor or against war are unlikely to change an individual's gender or ideology).

It is true that views of war are related to short-term assessments of threats, but these are less consistent and cross-nationally uniform than individual characteristics. In the estimates for 2004-2012 (Table 2a), concern about the Iran nuclear program is most consistent, as it is a significant influence in Eastern Europe and the US and near-significant in Western Europe. The military threat of China is significant only in Turkey. For estimates that includes measures of the threat from terrorism and Islamic fundamentalism (Table 2b), it is the latter that is most consistently significant but only in Eastern Europe and the US.

It is important to note, however, that no combination of threat variables substantially weaken the effect of basic values and life experience. Moreover, if we examine the magnitude of the slopes for variables with the same metric (for example, the dummy variables for gender and the threat from Iran), the magnitude of the slopes for personal values and characteristics are generally higher. An important exception to this pattern is the magnitude of the slopes for threat variables in the equations for the US, which are both steeper than the parameters for other countries and regions and also steeper than the variables representing personal characteristics and values.

Finally, the overall similarity in the structure of the parameters does not mean that US and European views of the acceptability of war are essentially ~~the same.~~ Rather, the results refocus attention on the distribution of the independent variables, most importantly on the distribution of citizens along the ideological spectrum and the threat variables. We return to this question after analyzing support for defense spending.

Modeling Support for Defense Spending

As we did for the model of war acceptability above, we estimate support for defense spending as a function of long-term forces and short-term forces. The models presented below are logistic regressions in which the dependent variable takes the value of 1 if the response to the following question is a preference for increased defense spending:

"And how about defense spending? Do you think the [country's] government should increase defense spending, keep defense spending at the current level, or decrease defense spending?"

This item is available for the fourteen countries listed in Table 1 for the years 2004, 2008, and 2011-2013.

Independent Variables

We argued above that support for defense spending is a cost-benefit calculation: the question is whether the cost of defense is commensurate with its benefits. An important determinant of support for defense spending is therefore whether one considers war an acceptable instrument of policy and also whether there is utility to military power as an instrument of policy. We specify these considerations in two independent variables. The first is the "war is necessary" question modeled in the previous section. Obviously, we expect a significant positive coefficient on this variable because it goes to the heart of what it means to support spending for the defense establishment --if one views war as sometimes necessary, one is likely to support spending for defense. We also specify the question on economic versus military power described earlier. We expect a significant negative coefficient, that is, that those who consider economic power more

important than military power are less likely to support spending for defense.

Existing research on support for defense spending emphasizes the impact of recent change in the defense budget (the "thermostat" effect), budget tradeoff considerations, and the impact of short-term variations in perceptions of threats. To these we can add two additional categories of variables: the importance of alliance solidarity and support for the alliance's dominant partner (the US), and support for the European Union as a global actor and its aspiration to act independently of the United States.

In preliminary estimates of support for defense spending, we found to our surprise that budgetary and tradeoff considerations had almost no effect on support for defense spending. We estimated respondents' sensitivity to budget tradeoffs in several ways. First, following the literature, we estimated the impact of the change in each sample country's real defense spending in the year prior to each opinion survey. The results showed no significant impact of defense spending, so we omitted it from further estimation. Second, we evaluated the effect of additional variables that plausibly measure sensitivity to budgetary tradeoffs among different classes of citizens. Specifically, we expected a significant negative coefficient for several groups of respondents with a self-interest in civilian government spending: the retired, those whose primary occupation is "taking care of the home," and those who are currently seeking a job. None of these variables proved significant in our preliminary estimates, so they are excluded from the estimates reported below. Finally, for the years 2011-2013, we estimated the effect of a variable that asked if respondents had been "personally affected" by the continuing economic crisis, but this variable was also insignificant.

There are two variables that are relevant to tradeoff considerations that did prove significant in at least some of our estimates. The first is left-right ideology. While it is true that

the indirect effect of ideology is already captured by the acceptability of war variable, we think it is also plausible that ideology has a direct effect on attitudes towards defense spending because it raises the prospect of short-term budgetary tradeoffs that are distinct from an individual's fundamental attitudes towards war. That is, it may be that a person on the left of the ideological spectrum feels that war is sometimes a necessary action in world politics but who in any particular year fears that spending for defense might threaten more valued social programs. Thus, we think it plausible that there will be a significant positive association between left-right ideology and support for increasing defense in addition to the indirect effect of ideology through the acceptability of war variable.

The same is true of gender. Some women may find war acceptable under some circumstances, but they may not support increased defense spending if it would threaten the education and social spending that serve the interests of women more so than men (Iversen and Rosenbluth 2006). We expect a negative coefficient on the gender variable (female = 1).

In the introduction to this paper, we quoted former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, who urged his European colleagues to increase defense spending to redress what he saw as severe deficiencies in NATO's collective efforts. This pressure within the Alliance to increase spending is not unique to the years of Gates' tenure. In the 1970s, for example, the NATO allies committed themselves to the explicit goal of increasing defense in real annual terms by three percent -- the so-called "three percent solution" chronicled by Garfinkle (1981). Throughout NATO's history, member governments have had to reconcile the competing pressures of alliance expectations to increase spending with domestic budget necessities.

Our interest here is not in modeling the outcome of this balancing act, but rather to model the competing considerations in the preferences of citizens. We do so by specifying

considerations of alliance solidarity in two ways. First, we estimate the impact of support for the NATO Alliance, reasoning fairly obviously that those who support the Alliance are more amenable to increases in defense spending that are often justified as alliance obligations. Our measure of support for NATO is a dummy variable that takes the value of 1 if the survey respondent believes that "NATO is essential for [our country's] security" (the alternative response is that NATO is "not essential"). The second measure of alliance solidarity is support for US global leadership. Because the United States is the dominant power in the Alliance and often the source of pressure to increase defense, we reason that those who are more supportive of the US global role are more likely to support increasing defense. We estimate support for US security policy by specifying a variable that measures support for US global leadership. The questions reads: "How desirable is it that the United States exerts strong leadership in world affairs? Very desirable, somewhat desirable, somewhat undesirable, or very undesirable?" Our measure of support for US leadership is a dummy variable that takes the value of 1 if the respondent chooses "very desirable" or "desirable." We expect a positive sign on this coefficient.

Note that these two alliance variables also allow evaluation of a competing hypothesis: that Europeans "free ride" on the efforts of NATO's dominant member, the United States. If free-riding considerations are present in European attitudes, we would expect to find a *negative* association between support for NATO and support for defense spending precisely because the alliance provides the opportunity to spend less than would otherwise be necessary.

Europe's role in the world and European Independence. Beginning with the Maastricht Treaty in 1992, the European Union has constructed joint policies and capabilities to increase the EU's ability "to assert its identity on the international scene" (as the Maastricht Treaty put it).

As a result, the EU now has a joint military command, joint military forces, and joint training exercises, and EU forces have served in a number of peacekeeping and training missions (for example in Bosnia, Kosovo, Mali, the Central African Republic, and elsewhere).⁷ In the view of some scholars, these efforts are in fact an attempt by the EU to balance the US "hyper power" that has been much discussed since the 1990s (Posen 2006). Other scholars see the EU's efforts more as a complement to NATO capabilities (Art 1996). Yet other scholars such as Kagan argue that support for the EU in general represents a rejection of military instruments because of a preference for peaceful integration. It is therefore an interesting question whether European citizens who support the EU's global aspirations or who favor more security independence from the US are more or less supportive of defense spending.

We evaluate these questions in two ways. The first is by specifying a dummy variable that takes the value of 1 when respondents declare that it is "very desirable or somewhat desirable that the European Union exert strong leadership in world affairs." We are agnostic as to the expected sign on this variable. On the one hand, following Posen, one might expect increased support for defense spending from those who desire strong European global leadership. On the other hand, Kagan's hypothesis is also plausible: if the European project is largely seen as a soft power enterprise, then support for defense spending will be less among those who support Europe's global role.

The effect of sentiments favoring security independence from the US (or from Europe in the US) is tested by specifying a dummy variable that takes the value of 1 when respondents choose "a more independent approach" in response to the following question: "Do you think that

⁷ For a complete list and description of these missions, see: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/csdp/missions-and-operations/eutm-mali/index_en.htm

the partnership in security and diplomatic affairs between the United States and the European Union should become closer, should remain about the same, or should the [European Union/US] take a more independent approach ...?”

Finally, we specify external threats in the equations for support of defense spending. Although the indirect effects of threats on acceptability of war are already captured by specifying that variable in the earlier equation, we think it plausible that short-term attitudes toward defense spending may yield different results. That is, although a perceived threat from terrorism, to choose one example, might increase one’s general acceptance of war as an instrument of policy, it is a different question altogether whether this same threat translates into short-term support for specific national policy measures such as an increase in defense spending in one’s own country.

In early evaluations of the model, we found that concern about the Iranian nuclear problem was unrelated to support for defense spending, so it is excluded from further analysis. The analyses include variables representing the perceived military threat from China and the perceived threat of terrorism and Islamic fundamentalism, as defined in previous sections.

Results: Support for Increased Defense Spending

The results are shown in Tables 3a and 3b.⁸ What is interesting about the results is the

⁸ Individual national models for West and East European states are reported in Reviewers’ Appendices 3 and 4. Results for individual West European states are very consistent in both the signs and significance of the grouped results. Where differences occur, it involves the significance of the NATO or US leadership variables, but one of these two is significant in all states but France (as one might expect). Results for East European states vary more than their Western counterparts, with different variables showing significance for each state, and no variables other than gender showing a significant influence in Poland. However, in the other three Eastern European states—and the influence of gender in Poland—the significant coefficients reinforce the substantive conclusions that we draw here.

presence of both commonality and variety in the effects of the independent variables. The most important commonality is the strong impact of basic values and beliefs. In three of the four groupings shown, opinions of the acceptability of war and the relative importance of economic and military power are a highly significant influence in the predicted direction. Acceptance of war increases support for defense spending, and the belief that economic power is more important decreases support. Left-right ideology is also significant in two groupings –Western Europe and the United States, and this is in addition to the indirect effect of ideology that flows through the acceptability of war variable. The important implication of these findings is that long-held beliefs and values that are largely independent of current events are the most important determinants of attitudes toward increased defense spending. Significantly, it is also on these measures that the US most differs from its European allies. We return to the importance of this finding in the discussion below.

We noted above that a number of measures of individual sensitivity to defense spending had little to no impact in preliminary evaluations of the model, and here we see that gender, which one might expect to show sensitivity to tradeoffs, has a significant negative impact only among East European respondents. Of course, gender does have a strong indirect effect because of its association with the measure of war acceptability, so the result here reinforces the finding that attitudes towards defense spending arise more from fundamental attitudes towards war and military power than from tradeoff considerations associated with the defense budget itself.

A second commonality is that at least one threat variable has a positive and significant influence on support for increased defense. The view that China is a military threat has a significant impact in Western Europe and the US (Table 3a), and the threat of terrorism or of "Islamic fundamentalism" is significant in all groupings but Turkey (Table 3b).

Some of the most interesting and politically significant results concern the variety in the impact of alliance solidarity variables and the EU's global role. Support for NATO does increase support for defense (in Western Europe and Turkey), as does support for US leadership (in both European groups). In other words, at least one measure of alliance solidarity has a significant, positive effect on support for defense, a finding that has important implications. The first implication is that arguments concerning the need to support NATO do have positive resonance, and since support for NATO has been largely stable in most countries for over fifty years, alliance solidarity has been a source of support for defense spending.⁹ However, a second implication is that support for defense spending in Europe is not simply the result of the calculus of security policy. It is also sensitive to broader assessments of US global leadership. In Europe, the trend on the US leadership question was steeply downward during the Bush presidency and the war in Iraq, and our results suggest that these assessments of US foreign policy undermined support for defense spending. Views of US leadership have since recovered, but the important point is that the much-discussed US "image" does have important consequences.

In all four groups, including the United States, support for European global leadership is *negatively* associated with support for defense spending. Further, in Europe and Turkey, support for a European security policy that is more independent of the US does not translate into support for more defense spending. Taken together, these findings support Kagan's argument that support for the EU's global role does not translate into support for strengthening its military capabilities, a pattern that is true among Americans as well. In both Europe and the US, a strong European role appears to be defined in nonmilitary terms.

⁹ There are important exceptions. For example, support for NATO in Turkey has declined noticeably since the Iraq War, from 67 percent who thought NATO "essential" in 2004 to 50 percent in 2013.

Finally, the results for the US on the alliance and global leadership variables deserve special mention. Somewhat surprisingly, support for US global leadership is not a significant influence, but this may be due to the very high and largely unvarying American support for US global leadership (over 80 percent of Americans think strong US leadership is desirable). Support for NATO is slightly more evenly divided; 67 percent supported the alliance over the period of this analysis. Nonetheless, in the US, variations in support for NATO have no effect on support for defense spending. Rather, it is support for a security policy that is *independent of Europe* that most strongly affects American attitudes toward defense spending. Those favoring more independence from Europe are significantly more supportive of defense spending.

The contrast in patterns of support in Europe and the US illustrate the political differences within the alliance. In Europe, support for Alliance with the United States and for US leadership increases support for defense spending. In the US, these variables have no effect, and support for defense is highest among those who prefer independence from Europe. To the extent that this can be interpreted as a unilateralist preference, it is precisely the sentiment that undermined European support for American leadership during the Iraq War period and therefore contributed to a decline in European support for defense.

This pattern also provides an interesting perspective on the “free riding” argument. As we noted earlier, a desire to free ride on the efforts of the alliance leader should yield a pattern in which support for the NATO Alliance or for US leadership reduces support for defense spending. Here we see the opposite – support for NATO and/or the US increase support for defense spending. Interestingly, it is only in the US that support for NATO is not correlated with support for increasing defense. Rather, in the US, it is a desire to be “independent” of Europe that increases support for defense, a posture that is unlikely to improve Europeans’ assessment of

the US or NATO. The likely result is obvious: to the extent that the US seeks to increase military capabilities outside of the NATO context, the less support there will be in Europe for increasing military spending. This is contrary to what theories of free-riding would predict, but it is consistent with the evidence presented here.

Marginal Effects

The preceding analysis has shown that basic values and beliefs are more consistently significant in analyses of both the acceptability of war and support for defense spending. External threats do have an impact, but they are less consistently significant across countries and regions. One way to summarize the substantive effect of these variables is to compute the marginal effects from the regressions reported earlier. We computed the marginal effects for all of the equations reported above. In the equations for the acceptability of war (Tables 2a and 2b), the most important substantive effects were for left-right ideology and gender, although not always in the same pattern for different countries and regions. In Western Europe, the average predicted probability of responding that war is sometimes necessary is 30% for those on the ideological left and 44% on the ideological right, that is, a change of 14%. In the United States, the change in probabilities from left to right is 16%, and in Turkey 7%. Large negative changes in probabilities also exist for gender in both Western and Eastern Europe (-14% and -9 % respectively). Only in the US and Turkey does external threat have a substantive impact on war acceptability; the predicted probability of agreeing that war is sometimes necessary shifts upward by about 8% in reaction to external threat (threat from China for Turkey, Islam and terrorism for the US). In summary, in the equations for the acceptability of war, either ideology or gender produces larger substantive effects than any external threat variable.

Table 4 displays the same analysis of marginal effects from the equations modeling support for increased defense spending. The results reflect what was apparent in the regression models. For fundamental values and beliefs (ideology and acceptability of war), the change in the average predicted probability of supporting an increase in defense from the lowest category to the highest is generally much larger for each country or regional grouping. For example, in Western Europe, the largest marginal changes occur for the war is necessary variable (8%) and left-right ideology (8% moving from the left to the right). In comparison, those who find China threatening in Western Europe differ from those who do not by a smaller margin (4%). In Eastern Europe and Turkey, the substantive effect of most variables is small. In the US, it is the acceptability of war and the Chinese military threat that have the largest marginal impact (9% and 6% respectively). In summary, where meaningful marginal changes occur, they are most often due to core values and beliefs (ideology and acceptance of war) than to external threat.¹⁰

These results highlight the perceptual distance that characterizes policy differences, especially between the US and West Europeans. Since the US is more ideologically conservative than most other countries in this analysis and also substantially more accepting of war, the recurring disagreements between the US and its European allies—such as those of Secretary Gates cited in the opening of this article—are understandable. This perceptual gap is offset somewhat by the fact that West European support for defense is positively influenced by support for NATO and the US global role, but as we noted above, this means that European support for defense is subject to fluctuating assessments of American foreign policy more generally.

¹⁰ The pattern of results is the same for the equations that include the threat of terrorism and Islamic fundamentalism. Both of these variables have a meaningful marginal impact on support for defense in the US. In Turkey, it is the threat from terrorism that is most meaningful.

Summary and Implications

Although there has been no lack of theoretical or policy arguments about the sources of citizen support for defense spending, there has been no comparative, longitudinal research to assess these arguments. In this paper, we analyzed a comparative dataset that covers fourteen countries during the period 2004-2013. The evidence we present is the most comprehensive available in the literature.

Our results indicate that basic values and beliefs, as well as life experience, are the most important influences on attitudes towards war and defense spending. Fundamental beliefs about war and military power, ideological identification, gender, and occupational status are more frequently significant and cross-nationally uniform in our regression models than short-term threats in the external environment. In fact, the strong association between ideology and war acceptability suggests that fundamental beliefs about war may be an integral component of ideology rather than a separate belief that is “caused” by ideology.

Our results also illuminate the sources of disagreement that often arise within the transatlantic alliance, especially between the US and its West European allies. The US is one of the most conservative societies in the alliance, while the West Europeans are among the least. The US is the most accepting of war as an instrument of policy, while the West Europeans are the least. While attitudes in both the US and West Europe are at times influenced in similar ways by external threats –which might push them together—the fact is that US attitudes are more often affected by threats, and the magnitude of the effect is larger. Although tempered somewhat by West European support for the NATO Alliance and by support for US leadership, the ideological distance and the difference in attitudes toward war arise from long-held beliefs and values that are unlikely to change in response to the security environment.

This naturally leads to the question of how the citizens studied in this paper will react to the events in Ukraine and to the possibility of an aggressive Russian posture in the region, particularly with the downing of flight MH17 and the aftermath of this tragedy. Based on our results, we would expect a modest increase in support for defense spending in all the countries and regions that we studied in this paper. One reason is that any perceived threat is to Europe itself, which is much more specific and geographically immediate than the hypothetical threats that we studied here.¹¹ The impact of this threat is likely to be felt directly in increased support for defense spending, but also indirectly through increased acceptability of war. The second reason is that, because European security is directly implicated by Russian actions, support for the NATO Alliance is likely to increase, and this increases support for defense spending. Although this effect was weaker for East Europeans (in Table 3a), given the geographic proximity of Russian forces, we would expect the effect to be stronger here. Although more speculative, we might also expect recent events to increase the short-term importance of NATO relative to the EU's security role, and this might limit the downward influence on support for defense that we found for EU global leadership. Finally, the crisis in the Ukraine has produced calls from Europe for the United States to fully engage on this crucial issue of European security, and the US has already been quite active in response to Soviet actions. Secretary of State Kerry has made numerous trips to Europe and engaged the Russians directly, and Vice President Biden has visited the NATO countries that border on Russia. President Obama visited Brussels, the Hague, and Rome in late March and specifically called for Europeans to increase spending on defense. Whether this diplomatic activity will be seen by Europeans as prudent or effective is a

¹¹ We did explore the use of a Russian threat variable for this paper, but unlike the other threats studied here, a measure of feelings toward Russia (a favorability rating) was available only for a limited number of years.

different question. What seems less uncertain is that the flurry of US diplomacy in Europe, coupled with the importance of the US to European security, is likely to contribute to an increase in support for defense spending given the past relationship between US leadership and support for defense.

None of this means that there will be a groundswell of European support for increasing defense budgets, although past patterns do point to some increase. Nonetheless, there are countervailing forces as well. The first is gender. In all countries and regions, women are less supportive of war, and this indirectly reduces their support for defense spending. Second, in all the countries and regions studied here, the belief that economic power is more important than military power lowers support for defense spending. This is an issue that has been explicitly raised with respect to the crisis in Ukraine, with political leaders emphasizing that economic sanctions will be the primary Western response to Russia. Future deliberations within the alliance will almost certainly involve proposals to increase NATO's capabilities, but the door is certainly open for a debate about the relative merits of economic and military power in the 21st Century. Finally, a related issue is that the European Union is likely to be a major actor and contributor in strengthening the economy of Ukraine, and many in Europe may even see closer ties with the EU as the best route to stability and security for Ukraine. As we have seen, supporters of an international role for the EU are less supportive of increased defense spending. To the extent that Ukraine is defined more as an issue for the EU than for NATO, support for increasing defense would be weakened.

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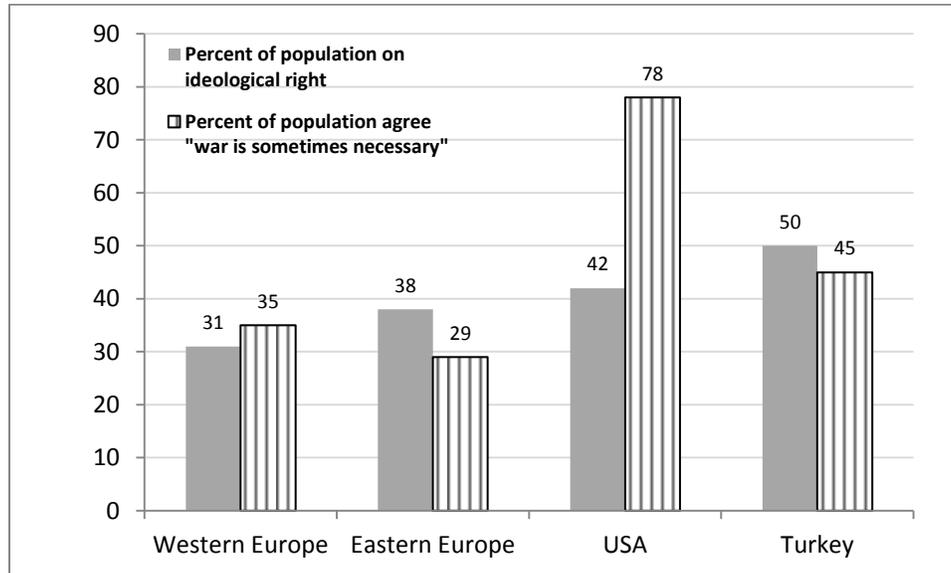
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Table 1. Nations and Years Covered in *Transatlantic Trends* Surveys

	Acceptability of War	Support for Increased Defense
<i>Western Europe</i>		
France	2004-2013	2004, 2008, 2011-2013
Germany	2004-2013	2004, 2008, 2011-2013
Italy	2004-2013	2004, 2008, 2011-2013
Netherlands	2004-2013	2004, 2008, 2011-2013
United Kingdom	2004-2013	2004, 2008, 2011-2013
Portugal	2004-2013	2004, 2008, 2011-2013
Spain	2004-2013	2004, 2008, 2011-2013
Sweden	2011-2013	2011-2013
<i>Eastern Europe</i>		
Poland	2004-2013	2004, 2008, 2011-2013
Slovakia	2004-2013	2004, 2008, 2011-2013
Bulgaria	2006-2012	2004, 2008, 2011-2012
Romania	2006-2013	2004, 2008, 2011-2013
Turkey	2004-2013	2004, 2008, 2011-2013
United States	2004-2013	2004, 2008, 2011-2013

Note: Sample size is 1,000 per country and year designed to be representative of the population 18 years or older. See Appendix 1 for the list of datasets available from the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research.

Figure 1. Percentage of respondents on the ideological right and percentage who agree that “war is sometimes necessary to obtain justice”



The ideological right is respondents who choose 5 through 7 on a seven-point left-right scale. The full wording of the “war/justice” question is appears in the text.

Table 2a. Logistic Regression Analysis of War Acceptability, 2004-2012

	Western Europe	Eastern Europe	Turkey	USA
Left-right ideology	0.312 (5.96)**	0.050 (2.06)*	0.139 (3.48)**	0.487 (12.67)**
Economic power more important than military	0.197 (3.00)**	-0.226 (2.21)*	0.635 (8.73)**	-0.133 (1.74)
Gender (female = 1)	-0.628 (7.06)**	-0.445 (10.52)**	-0.205 (3.31)**	-0.354 (5.66)**
Age grouped	-0.052 (1.28)	-0.106 (5.60)**	0.051 (2.43)*	-0.080 (3.98)**
Occupation: professional or managerial	0.400 (2.89)**	0.212 (1.98)*	-0.063 (0.32)	0.153 (2.18)*
Concerned about Iran acquiring nuclear weapons	0.149 (1.88)	0.101 (2.20)*	-0.064 (0.99)	0.545 (7.47)**
China is a military threat	0.033 (0.67)	0.128 (1.67)	0.291 (4.39)**	0.038 (0.57)
Constant	-0.940 (3.08)**	-0.215 (1.67)	-1.484 (9.18)**	0.344 (2.06)*
<i>Number of observations</i>	47,689	15,344	4,575	6,676

Coefficients are logistic regression coefficients with normalized z-scores in parentheses; controls for year of survey are specified but not shown.

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

Table 2b. Logistic Regression Analysis of War Acceptability, 2004-2008

	Western Europe	Eastern Europe	Turkey	USA
Left-right ideology	0.338 (6.37)**	0.082 (1.81)	0.180 (3.22)**	0.416 (7.55)**
Economic power more important than military	0.117 (1.70)	-0.124 (2.34)*	0.770 (7.28)**	-0.322 (2.95)**
Gender (female = 1)	-0.632 (5.92)**	-0.516 (34.00)**	-0.251 (2.92)**	-0.361 (4.04)**
Age grouped	-0.044 (0.99)	-0.103 (4.63)**	0.084 (2.86)**	-0.088 (3.13)**
Occupation: professional or managerial	0.393 (1.98)*	0.141 (0.82)	-0.127 (0.54)	0.165 (1.67)
Concerned about Iran acquiring nuclear weapons	0.144 (1.12)	-0.010 (0.15)	-0.068 (0.74)	0.354 (3.60)**
China is a military threat	-0.055 (0.69)	0.072 (1.07)	0.293 (3.22)**	-0.010 (0.10)
Terrorism is a threat	-0.065 (1.39)	0.127 (3.53)**	0.026 (0.26)	0.508 (4.86)**
Islamic fundamentalism is a threat	0.168 (2.70)**	0.242 (5.18)**	0.330 (3.50)**	0.411 (4.29)**
Constant	-1.277 (3.47)**	-0.825 (3.19)**	-1.437 (6.11)**	0.154 (0.71)
<i>N</i>	25,276	7,425	2,407	3,529

Coefficients are logistic regression coefficients with normalized z-scores errors in parentheses; controls for year of survey are specified but not shown.

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

Table 3a. Logistic Regression Analysis of Support for Increased Defense spending, 2004, 2008, 2011-2013

	Western Europe	Eastern Europe	Turkey	USA
War is sometimes necessary (1 = agree)	0.603 (6.21)**	0.268 (6.02)**	0.134 (1.13)	0.625 (5.29)**
Economic power more important than military (1 = agree)	-0.437 (10.51)**	-0.265 (2.76)**	-0.059 (0.42)	-0.336 (3.56)**
Left-right ideology (3 point scale)	0.319 (7.41)**	0.090 (1.12)	-0.057 (0.80)	0.184 (3.32)**
Gender (female = 1)	-0.086 (1.20)	-0.151 (2.66)**	0.037 (0.31)	0.002 (0.03)
Is NATO essential? (1 = essential)	0.307 (3.48)**	0.023 (0.51)	0.282 (2.38)*	0.097 (1.06)
US global leadership (1 = desirable)	0.236 (3.04)**	0.318 (2.11)*	-0.062 (0.37)	0.048 (0.36)
EU global leadership (1 = desirable)	-0.339 (2.66)**	-0.056 (0.97)	-0.263 (1.88)	-0.213 (2.06)*
US/EU partnership (1 = take a more independent approach)	-0.084 (1.52)	-0.080 (0.46)	0.066 (0.55)	0.453 (4.73)**
Is China a military threat? (1 = yes)	0.267 (4.91)**	-0.078 (1.09)	0.039 (0.31)	0.387 (4.44)**
Constant	-2.591 (6.91)**	-1.722 (3.70)**	0.008 (0.04)	-2.181 (9.49)**
<i>Number of observations</i>	28,077	7,513	1,581	3,434

Coefficients are logistic regression coefficients with normalized z-scores in parentheses; controls for year of survey are specified but not shown.

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

Table 3b. Logistic Regression Analysis of Support for Increased Defense Spending, 2004, 2008

	Western Europe	Eastern Europe	Turkey	USA
War is sometimes necessary (1 = agree)	0.446 (5.12)**	0.219 (6.39)**	-0.152 (0.72)	0.572 (2.85)**
Economic power more important than military (1 = agree)	-0.240 (2.95)**	-0.141 (1.44)	-0.367 (1.47)	-0.066 (0.45)
Left-right ideology (3 point scale)	0.288 (5.70)**	0.114 (1.34)	-0.117 (0.88)	0.155 (1.77)
Gender (female = 1)	-0.176 (2.39)*	-0.282 (4.64)**	0.657 (3.23)**	0.062 (0.45)
Is NATO essential? (1 = essential)	0.222 (1.99)*	-0.047 (0.43)	0.167 (0.79)	0.021 (0.15)
US global leadership (1 = desirable)	0.188 (2.33)*	0.424 (1.53)	-0.088 (0.29)	0.390 (1.59)
EU global leadership (1 = desirable)	-0.230 (2.35)*	-0.037 (0.35)	-0.424 (1.87)	-0.152 (0.85)
US partnership (1 = take a more independent approach)	-0.145 (1.41)	-0.173 (0.83)	-0.090 (0.43)	0.347 (2.16)*
Is China a military threat? (1 = yes)	0.106 (1.31)	-0.277 (8.52)**	0.148 (0.72)	0.001 (0.01)
Is Terrorism a threat? (1 = yes)	0.276 (4.02)**	0.264 (3.78)**	-0.003 (0.01)	0.597 (3.13)**
Is Islamic fundamentalism a threat? (1 = yes)	0.094 (1.92)	0.174 (1.22)	0.103 (0.46)	0.430 (2.82)**
Constant	-1.702 (7.57)**	-0.960 (1.78)	-1.012 (2.10)*	-2.950 (7.28)**
<i>Number of observations</i>	9,597	2,298	671	1,302

Coefficients are logistic regression coefficients with normalized z-scores in parentheses; controls for year of survey are specified but not shown.

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

Table 4. Summary of Marginal Effects in Equations for Support for Increased Defense Spending*Predicted probability of support for increased defense spending (%)*

Independent variable	Western Europe	Eastern Europe	Turkey	USA
War is necessary				
disagree	13	20	29	14
agree	21	24	32	24
Ideology				
left	13	20	32	18
center	16	21	31	21
right	21	23	30	24
China is military threat				
no	15	22	30	18
yes	19	21	31	25

Change in probability from lowest to highest value of independent variable

War is necessary: disagree – agree	+8	+4	+3	+9
Ideology: left-center	+4	+1	-1	+3
Ideology: center-right	+5	+2	-1	+3
Ideology: left-right	+8	+3	-2	+6
Chinese threat: no - yes	+4	-1	+1	+6

Appendix 1

List of *Transatlantic Trends* Datasets Available from the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research

(Marginal percentages for all years and countries in the GMF surveys can be found at:
<http://trends.gmfus.org/archives/transatlantic-trends/>)

ICPSR # 34973 [Transatlantic Trends Survey, 2013](#)

Stelzenmueller, Constanze, Isernia, Pierangelo; et. al. 2013

ICPSR # 34715 [Transatlantic Trends Survey, 2012](#)

Kennedy, Craig; Nyiri, Zsolt; Isernia, Pierangelo; et al. 2012

ICPSR # 34422 [Transatlantic Trends Survey, 2011](#)

Kennedy, Craig; Nyiri, Zsolt; Isernia, Pierangelo; et al. 2011

ICPSR # 33021 [Transatlantic Trends Survey, 2010](#)

Kennedy, Craig; Nyiri, Zsolt; Isernia, Pierangelo; et al. 2010

ICPSR # 28462 [Transatlantic Trends Survey, 2009](#)

Kennedy, Craig; Nyiri, Zsolt; La Balme, Natalie; et al. 2009

ICPSR # 26501 [Transatlantic Trends Survey, 2008](#)

Kennedy, Craig; Glenn, John; La Balme, Natalie; et al. 2008

ICPSR # 28187 [Transatlantic Trends Survey, 2007](#)

Kennedy, Craig; Glenn, John; La Balme, Natalie; et al. 2007

ICPSR # 20302 [Transatlantic Trends Survey, 2006](#)

Isernia, Pierangelo; Kennedy, Craig; La Balme, Natalie; et al. 2006

ICPSR # 4605 [Transatlantic Trends Survey, 2005](#)

Kennedy, Craig; La Balme, Natalie; Isernia, Pierangelo; et al. 2005

ICPSR # 4243 [Transatlantic Trends Survey, 2004](#)

Kennedy, Craig; La Balme, Natalie; Isernia, Pierangelo; et al. 2004

ICPSR # 3972 [Transatlantic Trends Survey, 2003](#)

Kennedy, Craig; La Balme, Natalie; Isernia, Pierangelo; et al. 2003

Appendix 2

Measurement of Threat Variables

The regression models reported in Tables 2a, 2b, 3a, and 3b contain measures of threat for the following: Chinese military threat; concern about Iranian nuclear weapons; terrorism, and “Islamic fundamentalism”. This appendix contains further detail on the construction of these variables.

Concern about Iranian nuclear weapons

For the period 2010-2012, this is a dummy variable that takes the value of 1 if the respondent chooses “very concerned” or “somewhat concerned” in response to the following question: “Thinking about Iran, are you concerned or not concerned about Iran acquiring nuclear weapons?”

For the period 2003-2008, the dummy variable takes the value of 1 if the respondent chooses a value of 49 or less on a thermometer scale question, which reads as follows: “Next I’d like to rate your feelings toward some countries, institutions, and people, with 100 meaning a very warm, favourable feeling, 0 meaning a very cold, unfavourable feeling, and 50 meaning not particularly warm or cold- You can use any number from zero to one hundred- If you have no opinion or have never heard of that country or institution, please say so... Iran.”

We validated the usefulness of the latter variable by analyzing the relationship between the thermometer dummy and a 2008 question that asked respondents to estimate how likely they were to be personally threatened by Iran acquiring nuclear weapons. The relationship is highly significant for the entire sample and for each of the four groups reported in the regression analysis ($p < .000$), so we are confident that the dummy variable measures a generalized perception of threat from Iran’s nuclear program. Note that the two components of the chained dummy are tested separately for the period 2003-2008 in Tables 2b and 3b.

Chinese military threat

For the period 2008-2013, this is a dummy variable that takes the value of 1 if the respondent chooses “China is a military threat” in response to the following question: “There are also different views about China’s military power- Some people see China as a military threat, while others do not- Which view is closer to your own?”

For the period 2003-2008, the dummy variable takes the value of 1 if the respondent chooses a value of 49 or less on a thermometer scale question, which reads as follows: “Next I’d like to rate your feelings toward some countries, institutions, and people, with 100 meaning a very

warm, favourable feeling, 0 meaning a very cold, unfavourable feeling, and 50 meaning not particularly warm or cold- You can use any number from zero to one hundred- If you have no opinion or have never heard of that country or institution, please say so...China.”

We validated the usefulness of the latter variable by analyzing the relationship between a general Chinese favorability question in 2010 and 2012 and the question on Chinese military threat reported above. The relationship is highly significant for the entire sample and for each of the four groups reported in the regression analysis ($p < .000$), so we are confident that there is a generalized relationship between favorability/thermometer ratings of China and perceptions of threat. Note that the two components of the chained dummy are tested separately for the period 2003-2008 in Tables 2b and 3b.

Terrorism

For the period 2003-2005, this is a dummy variable that takes the value of 1 if the respondent chooses “~~x~~extremely important” to the following question: “I am going to read you a list of possible threats to the vital interest of [Europe, USA] in the next 10 years- For each one, please tell if you see this as an extremely important threat, an important threat, or not an important threat at all- international terrorism”

For the period 2006-2008, this is a dummy variable that takes the value of 1 if the respondent chooses “~~v~~ery likely” or “somewhat likely” in response to the following question: “And in the next 10 years, how likely are you to be personally affected by the following threat?
----- international terrorism”

Islamic Fundamentalism

For the period 2003-2005, this is a dummy variable that takes the value of 1 if the respondent chooses “~~x~~extremely important” to the following question: “I am going to read you a list of possible threats to the vital interest of [Europe, USA] in the next 10 years- For each one, please tell if you see this as an extremely important threat, an important threat, or not an important threat at all- Islamic fundamentalism” [interviewer instruction: (if needed: “the more radical stream of Islam”)].

For the period 2006-2008, this is a dummy variable that takes the value of 1 if the respondent chooses “~~v~~ery likely” or “somewhat likely” in response to the following question: “And in the next 10 years, how likely are you to be personally affected by the following threat?
----- Islamic fundamentalism.” [interviewer instruction: (if needed: “the more radical stream of Islam”)].

Reviewers' Appendix 1: National Models of War Acceptability: West European States

	Germany	Spain	France	Italy	Netherlands	Portugal	Sweden	UK
Left-Right 3 point scale	.312 (8.82)**	.428 (11.55)**	.293 (8.72)**	.544 (15.33)**	.277 (9.18)**	.066 (1.88)	.145 (2.30)*	.065 (1.86)
Economic power more important	.091 (.96)	.435 (4.43)**	.196 (2.13)*	.209 (2.11)*	.064 (.82)	.465 (4.87)**	.550 (3.22)**	.343 (4.41)**
Gender (female = 1)	-.842 (14.97)**	-.973 (15.86)**	-.624 (11.22)**	-.573 (9.22)**	-.716 (14.29)**	-.628 (11.08)**	-1.020 (9.73)**	-.423 (7.72)**
age grouped	-.194 (11.04)**	-.066 (3.31)**	-.178 (9.92)**	-.059 (3.09)**	-.060 (3.59)**	-.090 (5.05)**	-.200 (5.77)**	-.057 (3.12)**
professional /managerial (= 1)	.134 (1.50)	.203 (2.47)*	.337 (3.23)**	.018 (.16)	.044 (.59)	.320 (4.36)**	.348 (2.02)*	.234 (3.42)**
Concerned Iran acquiring nukes (=1)	.154 (2.35)*	.387 (5.46)**	.170 (2.47)*	.340 (4.26)**	.280 (4.81)**	.074 (1.05)	.240 (1.79)	.350 (5.66)**
China is a military threat (=1)	.048 (.82)	.243 (3.86)**	.038 (.66)	.044 (.67)	-.020 (.37)	.120 (2.06)*	.091 (.84)	-.036 (.60)
Constant	-.343 (2.22)*	-2.013 (12.52)**	-.712 (4.69)**	-2.017 (11.94)**	-.194 (1.37)	-.934 (5.74)**	.018 (.06)	.464 (2.98)**
<i>N</i>	7,172	6,883	6,848	5,778	7,003	5,966	1,725	6,314

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$.

Normalized z-scores in parentheses. Regressions include controls for year of survey (not shown).

Reviewers' Appendix 2: National Models of War Acceptability: East European States

	Bulgaria	Poland	Romania	Slovakia
Left-Right 3 point scale	.078 (1.52)	-.003 (.06)	-.017 (.35)	.092 (2.31)*
Economic power more important	-.486 (3.47)**	.038 (.34)	-.266 (1.91)	-.296 (2.78)**
Gender (female = 1)	-.443 (5.39)**	-.553 (8.31)**	-.317 (3.73)**	-.436 (7.01)**
age grouped	-.105 (3.93)**	-.145 (7.12)**	-.099 (3.63)**	-.061 (2.93)**
Professional/managerial (= 1)	.351 (2.56)*	.441 (3.71)**	-.085 (.53)	.075 (.72)
Concerned Iran acquiring nukes (= 1)	-.019 (.19)	.191 (2.45)*	.132 (1.35)	.147 (1.88)
See China as a military threat (= 1)	.391 (4.21)**	-.026 (.36)	.076 (.80)	.092 (1.39)
Constant	.012 (.05)	.123 (.65)	-.346 (1.47)	-.467 (2.60)**
	<i>N</i> 3,307	4,327	2,792	4,918

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

Normalized z-scores shown in parentheses. Regressions include controls for year of survey (not shown).

Reviewers' Appendix 3. National Models of Support for Defense Spending: West European states

	Germany	Spain	France	Italy	Netherlands	Portugal	Sweden	UK
War sometimes necessary (1 = agree)	.700 (6.63)**	.814 (6.79)**	.452 (4.37)**	.422 (3.54)**	.401 (3.98)**	.100 (.91)	.466 (4.12)**	.356 (4.09)**
Economic power more important than military (1 = agree)	-.482 (3.22)**	-.416 (2.72)**	-.235 (1.65)	-.384 (2.47)*	-.640 (4.91)**	-.537 (3.74)**	-.604 (3.89)**	-.485 (4.46)**
Left-right ideology (3 point scale)	.324 (5.12)**	.568 (8.20)**	.430 (7.20)**	.370 (5.78)**	.295 (4.89)**	.185 (2.90)**	.128 (1.83)	.236 (4.73)**
Gender (female = 1)	-.274 (2.65)**	-.023 (.20)	-.218 (2.19)*	.074 (.69)	-.245 (2.48)*	.396 (3.81)**	-.285 (2.54)*	-.148 (1.91)
Is NATO essential? (1 = essential)	.290 (2.56)*	.539 (4.38)**	-.002 (.02)	.229 (2.00)*	.329 (2.64)**	.500 (4.12)**	.753 (6.51)**	.464 (4.85)**
US global leadership (1 = desirable)	.197 (1.79)	.488 (3.72)**	-.007 (.06)	.094 (.81)	.208 (1.83)	.086 (.79)	.290 (2.23)*	.292 (3.30)**
EU global leadership (1 = desirable)	-.276 (2.01)*	-.221 (1.69)	-.153 (1.32)	.006 (.04)	-.219 (1.84)	-.156 (1.22)	-.380 (2.72)**	-.482 (5.79)**
US partnership (1 = take a more independent approach)	-.046 (.44)	-.146 (1.26)	-.200 (1.97)*	-.007 (.07)	-.222 (2.16)*	.208 (1.95)	.089 (.76)	-.032 (.40)
Is China a military threat? (1 = yes)	.191 (1.85)	.521 (4.76)**	.188 (1.85)	.305 (2.79)**	.383 (3.82)**	.001 (.01)	.275 (2.50)*	.284 (3.61)**
Constant	-3.422 (11.60)**	-4.493 (14.96)**	-2.753 (195)**	-2.944 (170)**	-2.723 (162)**	-3.004 (11.01)**	-1.012 (4.21)**	-1.753 (8.33)**
<i>N</i>	4,205	3,861	3,984	3,059	3,859	3,376	2,329	3,404

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

Normalized z-scores shown in parentheses. Regressions include control for year of survey (not shown).

Reviewers' Appendix 4. National Models of Support for Defense Spending: East European states

	Bulgaria	Poland	Romania	Slovakia
War is sometimes necessary (1 = agree)	.368 (2.52)*	.105 (1.01)	.350 (2.64)**	.202 (1.39)
Economic power more important than military (1 = agree)	-.410 (1.66)	-.276 (1.76)	.100 (.44)	-.474 (2.25)*
Left-right ideology (3 point scale)	.133 (1.66)	.105 (1.77)	-.124 (1.77)	-.010 (.11)
Gender (female = 1)	-.149 (1.14)	-.223 (2.23)*	.070 (.56)	-.258 (1.86)
Is NATO essential? (1 = essential)	-.095 (.66)	.067 (.64)	-.001 (.01)	.264 (1.67)
US global leadership (1 = desirable)	.081 (.56)	.010 (.10)	.463 (3.20)**	.317 (2.07)*
EU global leadership (1 = desirable)	-.135 (.78)	-.129 (1.08)	-.165 (.99)	-.025 (.15)
US partnership (1 = take a more independent approach)	.332 (2.43)*	-.077 (.70)	.075 (.44)	-.382 (2.52)*
Is China a military threat? (1 = yes)	-.198 (1.24)	-.053 (.54)	.145 (1.09)	.111 (.80)
Constant	-1.817 (4.92)**	-.888 (3.35)**	-1.561 (4.82)**	-2.485 (7.01)**
	<i>N</i> 1,357	2,063	1,577	2,516

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Normalized z-scores shown in parentheses. Regressions include controls for year of survey (not shown).