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**Global Governance and Health.** The national, the supranational and the global spheres have become closely intertwined. Populist movements and anti-elite sentiments are being fed by concerns about globalization and feelings of exclusion. Democratic participation and mechanisms that ensure legitimacy are demanded beyond the state level. These issues are being dealt with especially in the Research Area International Politics and Law and among WZB democracy researchers. Two new research units focus on health governance in the context of a global system with a growing number of actors.

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# The Democratic Dilemma Would an Elected World Parliament Further the Cosmopolitan Idea?

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The ideal of a democratically elected world parliament has long been propagated by intellectuals and civil society organizations as a means for strengthening participation and legitimation in global governance. The hope they cherish is that a genuinely global parliamentary assembly could pursue a policy that takes the individual human being and the global common good as the ultimate moral criteria; world politics could be rendered more cosmopolitan and democratic.

But national counter-movements to globalization and dissatisfaction with migration flows and international trade agreements such as TTIP and ACTA—or as in the case of the United Kingdom with EU membership—nurture suspicion that the democratization of international institutions could in reality lead to more polarizing than integrative world politics. Many people, it would seem, want less rather than more openness and transnational interchange. Would setting up a global democratic parliament with considerable decision-making authority really strengthen cosmopolitan democracy? As political scientists we can address these major questions, hopes, and fears with empirical data. No democratically elected world parliament yet exists. But we can deduce what democratic potential a world parliament would have from an examination of existing institutions.

The UN General Assembly and the European Parliament have to a certain degree already institutionalized parliamentary deliberations at the transnational level. These existing institutions and the political demands they express can therefore serve as yardsticks for assessing how ideas and conflicts on important topics in world politics unfold at the transnational parliamentary level. We have examined plenary debates in these two institutions to see what form resistance to stronger communitarization takes in key policy areas: climate change, human rights, migration, trade, and European integration.

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**Summary:** Direct elections and proportional representation generate a stronger counter voice to globalization in the European Parliament than we observe in the United Nations General Assembly. This finding supports the notion that international organizations and the elites that work in them are instruments in a cosmopolitan agenda for world order and that democratizing international organizations may lead to stronger representation of the communitarian opponents of globalization in global governance.

Our analysis draws on research into major socio-political cleavages—such as that between labor and capital—and show that the gap is growing between proponents (cosmopolitans) and opponents (communitarians) of globalization. These cleavages appear to go beyond trade as the classical globalization topic to divide parliamentarians into opponents and proponents of integration on such topics as migration, climate change, and regional integration. We present the positions of the proponents in these fields to demonstrate positioning and conflict patterns and to assess the potential for a new cleavage arising in the assemblies under study between winners and losers of globalization.

To this end, we looked at 2,038 political demands concerning these issues that were addressed in the two assemblies between 2004 and 2011. Over this period, plenary sessions debated many key questions of globalization. For example: Should we enforce human rights everywhere in the world and comply ourselves with these universal values? Should we combat climate change together as an international community and establish global institutions to enforce joint rules? Should we open our borders to immigrants or try to limit immigration? Should we eliminate trade barriers to promote free trade or rather protect our own economy and our own industry against competition? Should we cede still more national sovereignty to EU institutions?

Arguments advanced on these topics in favor of openness, of transnational freedom of movement for people or merchandise, or which in other ways favored integration of the system—including support for a greater international community were coded as +1. Arguments in favor of reintroducing border controls or of protecting national or European culture from external influences etc. were coded as -1. The medium position of contributions to debates on a number of topics concerned with globalization in these assemblies thus ranged theoretically from +1 (very cosmopolitan, for open borders and integration) to -1 (very communitarian, for closed borders and demarcation).

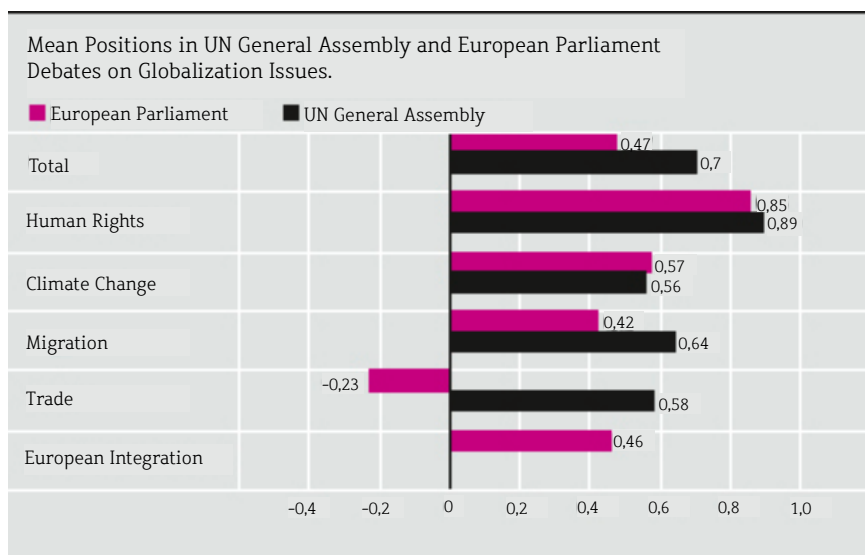
The figure shows that debates on all these topics were predominantly cosmopolitan, because the mean is positive and extends to the extreme score of +1. In both assemblies, debates on human rights showed the highest cosmopolitan scores. That means that all delegates addressing the assembly expressed commitment at least rhetorically to human rights and compliance with them. Debates on other topics such as migration and trade were more controversial: the mean is closer to 0.

Two patterns are apparent. First, debates in both bodies are dominated by cosmopolitan views. With the exception of debates on trade in the European Parliament, the general tenor is strongly cosmopolitan, that is to say, in favor of open borders. Second, debates in the European Parliament are overall less cosmopol-

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*The UN General Assembly, the most important world forum, has a cosmopolitanist slant, compared with the European Parliament with its democratically elected members. [Photo: dpa]*

itan that in the UN General Assembly. The greatest difference was to be observed on the topic of trade, but even in debating migration and human rights, positions in the European Parliament are generally less cosmopolitan than in the UN General Assembly.

The European Parliament is often regarded in the literature as the vanguard of cosmopolitanism. Our findings, however, raise questions about how justified this assessment is, at any rate in comparison with the UN General Assembly. How can the more critical attitude of the European Parliament to open borders be explained? To understand the disparity between the two bodies, institutional differences need to be examined more closely. The European Parliament is directly elected by the citizens, whereas the UN General Assembly is composed solely of non-elected government representatives. Furthermore, member states are represented in the European Parliament by MEPs elected in a national constituency in proportion to the votes cast, whereas only one representative per member state sits in the UN General Assembly. Can these institutional differences, which make the European Parliament more democratic and representative than the UN General Assembly, be responsible for the differences in globalization debates?

To investigate this aspect empirically, we took a closer look at European Parliament debates and compared the positions taken by directly elected MEPs with those adopted by members of the Commission who presented their views during these debates. It transpired that, on average, the positions of Commission members were markedly more cosmopolitan than those of parliamentarians. This supports the thesis that the direct election of MEPs strengthens critical views of globalization in international assemblies.

## The UN General Assembly without fringes

We also examined whether this could be caused by the proportional representation system in the European Parliament, under which parties on the fringes of the political spectrum are more strongly represented than in the UN General Assembly composed only of government representatives. And in actual fact, communitarian views are brought into the parliament mainly by right-wing populist and radical parties, whereas on average other political groups are in favor of integration. Interestingly, this is the case not only with respect to trade, where in all groups communitarian positions are to be found (to varying degrees) that favor protection for the European market against the pressures of external competition.

This provisional account does not mean that a democratically elected world parliament would necessarily pursue a less cosmopolitan policy. But the findings

support the widespread suspicion that European and global integration are elite projects. Whoever wishes to increase the say of the simple citizen in world politics through a directly elected world parliament has to expect more members with communitarian views. Even if these are not the personal opinions of such members, the prospect of being voted out by voters with communitarian views is likely to lead to these elites supporting a less cosmopolitan policy. Ultimately, the advocates of a cosmopolitan democracy have to decide either to strengthen world politics and give elites the freedom to develop cosmopolitan policy or to democratize world politics while accepting that this tends to favor communitarian politics.

Recent experience in individual countries confronts us with the fact that resistance to transnational integration is strong and finds increasing expression in fierce counter-reaction. Brexit is a typical example. We face the question of how we should deal with the rejection of globalization and international institutions by broad sections of the population. Whether and how disillusioned citizens can participate in national and global policy making is a question that cannot be ignored.

### References

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