Institutional references (European/Global Public Sphere)

AUTHOR
Dennis Lichtenstein

KEYWORDS
institutional references, transnational governance, transnationalization, comparative research, international, European Union

BRIEF DESCRIPTION
The variable “institutional references” refers to international institutions which are mentioned in the coverage of national media outlets. International institutions can be related to the EU (e.g., the European Commission, the European Parliament) or other transnational communities (e.g., the NATO for the transatlantic community). Studies using the variable “institutional references” aim to compare the share of mentions of transnational and national institutions and search for differences between countries and/or an increase of references over time. The variable has been measured in analyses on quality and the popular press and in single country studies as well as in comparative research. It is usually coded on the level of articles. Some studies consider headlines or the articles’ first paragraph only.

FIELD OF APPLICATION/THEORETICAL FOUNDATION
The variable “institutional references” is used to analyze the monitoring of transnational governance in national media outlets. It is one indicator for the vertical transnationalization of the public sphere (Koopmans & Erbe, 2004; Trenz, 2004; Wessler et al., 2008).

REFERENCES/COMBINATION WITH OTHER METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION
Research on vertical transnationalization of the public sphere has been combined with qualitative studies on editorial processes and interviews with journalists (Hepp et al., 2012). The aim is to gain a deeper understanding of which editorial processes and which occasions drive EU coverage.

EXAMPLE STUDIES
Wessler et al. (2008); Hepp et al. (2016)

INFORMATION ON WESSLER ET AL., 2008
Authors: Hartmut Wessler, Bernhard Peters, Michael Brüggemann, Katharina Kleinen-von Köligslöw, Stefanie Sifft
Research question/research interest: Comparison of the transnationalization of public spheres in six countries
Object of analysis: National quality newspapers, popular press, regional papers
Timeframe of analysis: 1982–2013
Variable name/definition: Institutional references

INFORMATION ON HEPP ET AL., 2016
Authors: Andreas Hepp, Monika Elsler, Swantje Lingenberg, Anne Mollen, Johanna Möller, Anke Offerhaus
Research question/research interest: Comparison of the transnationalization of public spheres in six countries
Object of analysis: National quality newspapers, popular press, regional papers
Timeframe of analysis: 1982–2013

INFORMATION ABOUT VARIABLE
Variable name/definition: Institutional references
“What international institutions were mentioned in the article? Institutions were coded, but concepts were not; for example the euro is not an institution. If the reference occurred in the header or the first paragraph of the article, it was
coded as a primary institutional reference. Up to three primary institutional references could be coded per article. All international institutions that were mentioned in an article but had not already been coded as primary institutional references were coded as secondary institutional references. Up to five secondary institutional references could be coded per article." (Wessler et al., 2008, p. 212)

01 European Union in general (EU)
02 European Commission
03 European Council
04 Council of the European Union
05 European Parliament
06 European Court of Justice
07 European Central Bank
08 other EU institutions
09 EU Intergovernmental Conference
10 EU Convention
11 NATO
12 OECD
13 GATT/WTO
14 UN
15 UN Security Council
16 UN World Conference
17 Bretton Wood Institutions (World Bank, IMF)
18 Commonwealth
19 West European Union (WEU)
20 CSCE/OSCE (Conference/Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe)
21 European Court of Human Rights
22 EFTA
23 EEC
25 Warsaw Pact
997 Other institutions – please specify!
998 Unclear
999 Not applicable

**Level of analysis:** Article  
**Scale level:** Nominal  
**Reliability:** Kappa 0.79

**REFERENCES**