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DEVELOPMENT AID TARGETING AND THE MAKING OF AID DARLINGS AND ORPHANS: THE CASE OF THE DIRECTORATE GENERAL FOR INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

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Author's Declaration

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Abstract

Development aid is not allocated equitably among all developing countries. Those recipient countries that enjoy large development aid flows that exceed their needs are referred to in modern development literature as aid darlings, while the ones who are systemically neglected despite their objective needs for development aid are referred to as orphans. In this regard, the European Union, being one of the largest donors through its' institutions, has long positioned itself as a normative actor prioritizing recipient's needs.

This research investigates how development aid darlings and orphans emerge, focusing on a case of the European Commission's Directorate General for International Partnerships (INTPA). This is a mixed methods study, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative methods, which allows for creating a macro picture of INTPA aid flows and using an expert interview to test initial data inferences. The results provide limited support for each of the hypotheses of aid allocation tested, which includes realist, idealist, and institutionalist approaches.

Table of Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

List of Abbreviations

ACP	Africa, Caribbean, and Pacific
AIDCO	EuropeAid Cooperation Office
CPI	Corruption Perception Index
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DG	Directorate General
DG DEV	Directorate General for Development
DG DEVCO	Directorate General for Development and Cooperation – EuropeAid (This abbreviation has other meanings)
DG DEVCO	Directorate General for International Development and Cooperation (This abbreviation has other meanings)
DG ECHO	European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations
DG INTPA	Directorate General for International Partnerships
DG NEAR	Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations
DG RELEX	Directorate General for External Relations
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
IATI	International Aid Transparency Initiative
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MIP	Multi-Annual Indicative Programme
NDICI	Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PCD	Policy Coherence for Development
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
UN	United Nations
WDI	World Development Indicators

WGI	World Governance Indicators

Introduction

After the end of the Cold War, developing countries found themselves in a precarious situation. Previously, they could rely on constant aid flows from either the US or the USSR since they had to pick sides in the bipolar world, which guaranteed continued support from one of the sides. Yet, after the collapse of the USSR, the nature of aid shifted as conditionality changed from allegiance to a single superpower to improving governance, democratization, and economic liberalization, promoted mainly through the Bretton-Woods institutions, namely the IMF, and Western bilateral donors (Unger 2018; Alden, Large, and Mendez 2020**).** For a while, the world of development aid had no clear agenda with everyone doing whatever was in their interest as countries and development institutions struggled to redefine economic development in a post-Cold War era (Unger 2018). Soon it became clear that in the absence of better-coordinated development, a growing power vacuum allows emerging power, most notably China, to fill in the gap by building up a concise development strategy (Weaver 2015). This created major pressure for Western donors to reconsider their development aid approach, vowing a new era of development where China, Arab countries, and major NGOs are great powers.

Stephen Browne claims that the Western-inspired development aid history could be broadly divided into three periods: the first from the 1950s to 1970s, the second from the 1970s to 1980s, and the third one ongoing from the 1990s (2006). According to him, at first, aid was perceived to be gap-filling as it was seen that aid should equip developing countries with the missing factors that were present in Western countries and were thought to be the cornerstone of economic development success – in short, it was focusing on economic growth (Ibid, 24). In the second phase, a conviction that development is a function of economic growth started to be challenged as the agenda centered around basic needs, bottom-up paradigms, as well as the sustainability of development, and the natural resources that supported it (Ibid, 31). The final stage of development as of 2006, was perceived to be

concerned with facilitating a global shift towards neoliberal market democracies with good governance and human rights being at the top of aid conditionality (Ibid, 34). However, what Browne did not capture is the collapse of neoliberalism in the post-2008 financial crisis world. It turned out that neoliberal principles are not fully compatible with democratic ones (Ayers and Saad-Filho 2015; Merkel 2014) and previously dogmatic policies of neoliberal development were significantly challenged, which meant that the quest for finding a better understanding of development and its' individual elements persisted, opening-up the discussions about more resilient and sustainable development.

In terms of actors, in post-Cold War development, the world saw not only the emergence of new Southern development aid actors but also a new Western actor – the European Union (EU) – which has now become a major player in the international development aid. The continued consolidation of Europe through the EU meant that some of the most significant bilateral development aid donors in the world were coming closer in terms of their economic and political cooperation. Yet, a coordinated EU development aid coordination agenda on the level of member-states and EU institutions was not considered among the top priorities for a while. Even after the collapse of the USSR, as the Eastern Bloc countries were incorporated into the union, there were no clear provisions for development aid coordination and this topic was considered an insignificant aspect that would be figured out later. However, over time, EU institutions became major donors with notable transparency and great significance (Publish What You Fund 2022). Even though the impact of the EU on major agreements in the field of international development is ambiguous, the European Commission has constantly been in favor of aid collaboration (Carbone 2021). This puts the EU and its institutions in a position where they could claim that their development approach is one of a normative actor (Bountagkidis, Fragkos, and Frangos 2015, 86). Despite a public image as an idealist development aid actor, there is evidence that EU development aid was shaped by the EU's self-interest (Ibid; Kiratli 2021). The latter is also true for other development actors that allocate development aid based on their own preferences, which

creates situations when some countries, given they are more of a strategic interest to a donor, receive significantly higher aid inflows, becoming what is known as an aid darling. On the other end of the spectrum are development orphans – countries that require development aid assistance yet remain largely neglected by the international donor community (Tengstam and Isaksson 2022, 17).

Discussions around development aid darlings and orphans suggest that there are countries that are strategically more important to donors than others and given limited resources for aid, providing more to strategically important countries would mean giving less to the ones who are not fortunate enough to have something of a donor's great interest. Development aid darlings and orphans are an emerging field of research and there are still ongoing debates about whether countries could be categorized as orphans, as there are only a few countries that fully meet orphan criteria (Swiss and Brown 2015, 251). This should not be misguiding since even though some point out the fact that there are no countries that are truly orphans, these authors still recognize that aid allocation is not equitable, and they only disregard the notion of an orphan used to describe certain countries (Ibid).

While there is substantive research in revealing the aid darling and orphan dynamics for certain regions or Official Development Assistance (ODA) flows in general, less research exists regarding darlings and orphans of particular donors. In this research, the author contributes to this literature by analyzing the development aid distribution of the European Commission's (EC) Directorate General for International Partnerships (INTPA), which is responsible for the allocation of development aid only. Unlike other EU aid research, this study focuses exclusively on development aid without mixing it with other forms of the EC's aid. The main question of this research is what are the factors that determine or shape INTPA's aid targeting towards recipient countries? How are development aid darlings and orphans born? To answer this question, mixed methods are used, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. Researcher uses explanatory research when the former provides an overall picture, while the latter enables adding more nuances to initial insights obtained

through quantitative research since it requires only a limited amount of qualitative data (Almalki 2016, 293).

The paper begins with a literature review, which provides theoretical foundations for the hypotheses of the study as well as provides more information on INTPA. Chapter 2 provides quantitative empirical evidence for INTPA's aid allocation across time and countries. Chapter 3 introduces an expert interview with a senior INTPA staff member, allowing for the inclusion of important nuances that are visible from the organizational point of view. Finally, the study is concluded with a discussion on development aid darlings and orphans as well as potential improvements of this research.

Chapter 1 – Literature Review

To advance the research, two broader academic literature bodies are joined together: development aid targeting and international relations. The former provides empirical evidence for darling-orphan dynamics while the latter allows for the identification of broader patterns of aid targeting and puts them within conceptual frameworks from international relations literature.

1.1 Theories of EU Development Aid and Darling-orphan Dynamics

Theories of development aid regarding the EU institutions are usually considered from four perspectives: realism, idealism, institutionalism, and liberalism, which allow for different motivations behind aid allocation (Carbone 2007, 40-42). For realists, development aid is allocated based on the donor's strategic interest (Lancaster 2007; Alesina and Dollar 2000; Hook 1995). From this perspective, it is likely to suggest that as a part of an executive branch of the EU, INTPA will prioritize projects that are not necessarily of a major priority for recipient countries but of greater significance to the EU. Migration issues and access to strategic natural resources are some of the most vivid examples of the EU's self-interest. The former became salient after the 2015 EU migration crisis when migration prevention became part of an unofficial agenda of EU development aid efforts (Kiratli 2021, 66). In turn, natural resources are also of great strategic interest to the EU – having relatively low deposits of rare earths and increasingly high demand for them, the EU must secure access to these resources to keep its economy growing (Charalampides et al. 2015, 134). Therefore, from a realist perspective, it becomes a paramount strategic self-interest when it comes to maintaining good relations with countries that not only poses natural resources but already have established supply chains and extract rents from them. Even if a country does not have a lot of natural resources, it is still possible to acquire great significance based on trade exports if the country is a significant contributor to the world supply of a particular good. Donor coordination could be also important for realist aid targeting but from a perspective of reducing transaction costs,

since the more donors are present in a given country, the easier it gets to establish relations with local officials, civil society, and other relevant actors to implement INTPA's programs.

For idealists, altruism, moral obligation, and other non-material motivations are playing a key role in aid distribution (Carbone 2007, 41). This is the most recipient-oriented approach since it is based on the latter's objective needs. Following the logic of this approach, the EU would mostly focus on the areas that concern poverty reduction, and human potential development and avoid providing military aid, aid distributed to local elites, and inefficient distant donor bureaucracies (Hook, 1995). The EU in general is publicly positioning itself as a normative donor that has motivations that largely fall into the idealist category (Bountagkidis, Fragkos, and Frangos 2015, 88**).** In this case, there should not be significant differences between what recipient countries need and the volumes of development aid from the EU. Under idealist assumptions, darlings and orphans could still exist, yet they would have been created not due to intended misallocation but due to the mismatch between objective and perceived need that could occur due to information issues or transaction costs that might distort the real picture for both parties. Hence, INTPA would be supporting countries with lower economic performance, rewarding better governance indicators, poverty reduction, and healthcare improvements.

Institutionalists would argue that international organizations play a key role in agenda setting of international development, namely the UN, the World Bank Group, and the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC) (Carbone 2007, 41). For this approach, donor coordination is a key element and INTPA as a part of an EU would be considered among coordination trend-setters. Although some researchers claim that donor coordination is a rationalized myth (Hensell 2015, 106**)**, it does not imply that it cannot be an important factor for INTPA aid allocation, even if it is a de-facto rationalized myth. The EU is also trying to harmonize their development aid with bilateral aid agencies of their member states, which led to the creation of the Team Europe approach to advocate for multilateral solutions (Burni et al. 2022, 530). Unlike donor coordination under the realist assumption, instead of a self-

interest in reducing transaction costs, it comes from a desire of improving the overall situation in a recipient country through comprehensive aid.

Finally, liberalism in development aid suggests that its' volumes are contingent on the domestic actors' actions (Carbone 2007, 41**)**. The latter includes political parties, businesses, NGOs, and bureaucracies that push for specific development aid policies (Ibid). In short, it depends on the lobbying power of donor-based political, private, and non-profit actors. Lobbyists are active in the European Commission and could exert significant influence on the EC's policies **(**Bäumlisberger 2020, 15), yet analyzing the applicability of a liberal approach to INTPA's development aid targeting appears to be rather complicated. First, lobbying would appear at the levels of the EC, the Parliament, and INTPA, which would be hard to distill to the INTPA-specific lobbying activities through a quantitative approach. Therefore, the liberal approach to the development aid is left out of the focus of this research yet remains a valid theory to analyze in more qualitative research since quantitative indicators will likely aggregate lobbying at the EU level, which would not be INTPA specific.

Another source for the EU normative perspective is the New European Consensus on Development. It focuses mainly on poverty eradication yet also "integrates the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development and underlines the links between development and other policies including peace and security, humanitarian aid, migration and climate." (EUR-Lex 2017). In general, it is in line with the UN Agenda 2030 and Millennium Development Goals:

> "The EU and its Member States are committed to a life of dignity for all that reconciles economic prosperity and efficiency, peaceful societies, social inclusion and environmental responsibility. In doing so, efforts will be targeted towards eradicating poverty, reducing vulnerabilities and addressing inequalities to ensure that no-one is left behind. By contributing to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, the EU and its Member States will also foster a stronger and more sustainable, inclusive, secure and prosperous Europe." (European Parliament, Council and European Commission 2017, 4)

The Consensus goes on to identify a framework for action in four key dimensions: people, planet, prosperity, and peace (Ibid). By focusing on people, the EU is considering human development and dignity, while planet focus suggests protecting the environment, managing

natural resources, and tackling climate change. Prosperity is a separate category that includes inclusive and sustainable growth and jobs. Finally, the peace element is centered around peaceful and inclusive societies, democracy, effective and accountable institutions, the rule of law, and human rights for all (Ibid). Additionally, the Consensus also invokes the importance of better coordination between various stakeholders to efficiently address their partners' capacities and needs:

> "The EU and its Member States will apply the principle of policy coherence for development (PCD), and will take into account the objectives of development cooperation in all external and internal policies which they implement and which are likely to affect developing countries. PCD is a fundamental part of the EU's contribution to achieving the SDGs." (Ibid, 6).

Therefore, the following hypotheses are derived based on the theories of development aid and the Consensus:

H1: INTPA development aid targeting follows realist assumptions with statistically significant self-interest variables centered around migration, natural resources, trade, and transaction cost reduction.

H2: INTPA development aid targeting follows idealist assumptions which suggest the stronger significance of the normative values associated with the Consensus and target healthcare, poverty, climate change, and the rule of law.

H3: INTPA development aid targeting exhibits institutionalist patterns, focusing on donor coordination.

1.2 DG INTPA Organizational Evolution and Power

While this study analyzes development aid distributed by INTPA from 2004 to 2019, there were several predecessors of INTPA under different names. Moreover, it is DG for International Cooperation and Development (DEVCO) that is being analyzed, since it was transformed to INTPA only in 2021. Quantitative analysis is constrained to DG DEVCO, while qualitative analysis allows looking beyond the data constraints and getting an insight into what INTPA is doing in 2023. Therefore, organizational evolution is relevant for this study to indicate potential changes from the normative perspective. However, a thorough

analysis of an organizational change could take an entire article so to stay within the scope of research, this section is briefly outlining the key milestones in the organizational evolution of INTPA.

The earliest predecessors of INTPA were two separate DGs: DG for Development (DEV), which focused exclusively on relations with African, Caribbean, and Pacific States (ACP), and EuropeAid Cooperation Office (AIDCO). The latter was created in 2001 and was responsible for implementing development aid programs (Wunderlich 2012, 7), while DG Development provided policy and programming support for ACP countries, while DG for External Relations (RELEX) dealt with other regions (Tannous 2013, 344). Having three DGs that were responsible for EU development policies did not make things particularly coherent and in 2011 AIDCO and DEV merged to form a DG for Development and Cooperation – EuropeAid, which is referred to as DEVCO. RELEX continued to exist but its role slowly shifted away from programming for non-ACP regions and subsequently, DEVCO gained full programming control over all regions. In 2015 another change came when DEVCO was renamed to a DG for International Cooperation and Development, putting a greater emphasis on International Cooperation in its' name, which was still referred to as DEVCO. The focus on cooperation and partnerships between development aid donors and recipients was further continued and in 2021, DEVCO was changed to DG for International Partnerships (INTPA). Figure 1 illustrates the entire process of evolution of DGs responsible for development aid that predeceased the modern-day INTPA, excluding RELEX to keep it simple.

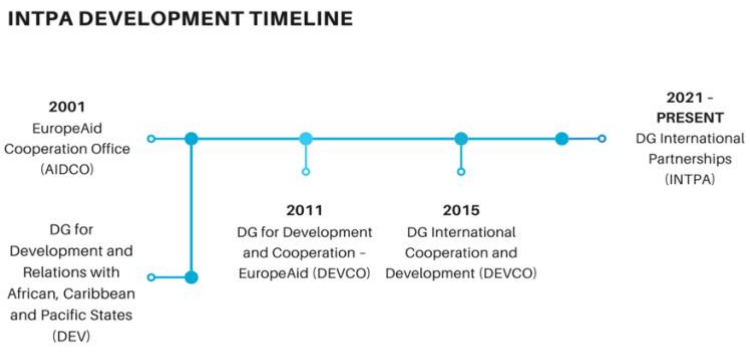


Figure 1. INTPA organizational development timeline. Source: Author's visualization

Therefore, while analyzing INTPA's aid from 2004 to 2019, it should be noted that over time, these were different organizations with varying powers, autonomies, and interests. This means that for a more thorough analysis, the organizational documents of each of the entities should be consulted to determine which areas of development aid were of particular importance. However, this research is kept at the macro level, recognizing the potential for micro-level organizational analysis.

Additionally, INTPA power constraints should be mentioned. Its programming budget is given externally since it is contingent on the EC and the Parliament negotiations over the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI), which is a part of the European External Action (EEAS 2022). INTPA's funding is also allocated through NDICI and, therefore, tied to the EC and the Parliament negotiations (Ibid). There are three regions for INTPA: (1) Africa; (2) Latin America, Caribbeans and Overseas Territories; (3) Middle East, Asia and Pacific, with overall funding determined by NDICI. However, there are also multi-annual indicative Programmes (MIPs) that allow for country-specific funding distribution as well as thematic aid distribution (International Partnerships n.d.). This brings a potential limitation to the darling-orphan dimension as INTPA does not have full control over aid allocation, yet it remains possible to analyze which factors on average shape INTPA's aid and the potential emergence of darlings and orphans.

Chapter 2 – Quantitative Analysis

Once the theoretical background for the research is established and potential limitations coming from the organizational development history of INTPA are identified, the research may proceed with the analysis of empirical evidence regarding development aid targeting by INTPA and its' predecessors to identify which factors are the most important for INTPA in development aid allocation.

2.1 Data Sources Description

Three main data sources for this study are IATI's d-portal, the World Bank's World Development Indicators (WDI), and World Governance Indicators (WGI). D-portal is used to retrieve the dependent variable – ODA disbursed by INTPA, while WDI and WGI are used for independent variables. The main criteria for data sources selection were data reliability and availability of preferred indicators.

IATI's d-portal data does not have the best data quality, yet it is the only database capable of supplying INTPA-specific data. While other databases are of higher quality, they cannot be used for the purposes of this research. For instance, OECD DAC data provides high-quality data that undergoes a verification process by a third party (in this case OECD), which allows for more robust data inferences (EU Aid Explorer, n.d.), yet it aggregates ODA at the level of the European Commission as a whole. This means that all its' Directorate Generals that are involved in disbursing aid are aggregated. This includes not only INTPA but also other DGs such as DG for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (NEAR) and DG for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO). Therefore, using this database does not allow for a granular INTPA-specific approach. A similar issue of aggregating ODA at the level of the EC also appears with data from EU Aid Explorer, which makes IATI's d-portal the only suitable source of data for research purposes. The issue is that the d-portal mirrors the official monthly data from INTPA which does not undergo any third-party verification process, meaning that data inferences are less robust. Yet, since it is the only

database allowing focusing on INTPA exclusively, it is used as a source for the dependent variable.

Using WDI and WGI for independent variables is warranted by data availability and quality. WGI acknowledges its limitations as it is based on perceptions and estimates, which cannot fully reflect reality (Kaufmann, Kraay and Mastruzzi 2010). An alternative to using the WGI data was a prominent governance indicator developed by Transparency International – the corruption perception index (CPI), yet since it is available only from 2012 due to the change of methodology, WGI indicators were chosen as providing better coverage for the selected time period. WDI is another respected source for data on development indicators. Its' main limitations come from the fact that the World Bank aggregates the information reported by member countries, which means that there is variation in data quality provided by the countries' respective agencies (Sartorius and Sartorius 2014, 12). However, it provides the largest pool of potential independent variables and provides coverage for the entire time period covered in this research.

2.2 Methodology and Research Design

The population of this study consists of all UN-recognized countries. The study is constrained to available data which means that 125 countries remained in the final version. It is also worth noting that by default, the d-portal also records overseas territories as separate entities, which were also dropped. The period analyzed spans from 2004 to 2019 as it has the latest available comprehensive data on all independent variables. Dependent variable data was slightly modified since the d-portal records only the countries that have received at least some funding from INTPA, which means that countries that stopped receiving INTPA funding are assigned an NA value, which is de-facto 0. Therefore, the author treats NAs in the dependent variable as 0s. The acquired sample was analyzed as panel data to determine factors that matter for INTPA's aid targeting.

There are also a few limitations of this study. Firstly, in panel data relations between donors and recipients are assumed to be independent, while these could be related since the

donor's behavior affects the recipient and vice versa (Bermeo 2017). This could warrant the use of a dyadic model, which could be done in the future. Moreover, there is no explicit strategy for checking omitted variable bias. Although at the stage of an initial macro analysis, this could be accepted as a limitation, for more precise inferences, it could be tested by either using an instrumental variable or conducting a natural experiment.

The dependent variable is ODA distributed by INTPA and its predecessors. It is recorded in US dollars, and automatically converted based on the official currency exchange rate that existed at the date of recorded disbursement. Even though INTPA operates in EUR, converting to the latter complicates the analysis for replication purposes since for reverse conversion, only current exchange rates would apply. Since INTPA retrospectively records negative amounts for ODA if disbursed money was withheld for a year and then disbursed simultaneously for two years, the variable was normalized using the following formula: new normalized variable = (x-min(x))/(max(x)-min(x)). This allowed analyzing INTPA's ODA flows without the distortion of the negative ODA registered by IATI's d-portal.

Independent variables selected for the final model include the following:

- GDP per capita (log_gdp_pc): recorded in current US dollars and logged to reflect overall trajectory changes, it serves as the main indicator of the economic performance of a given country. It is expected to be negatively correlated with the amount of development aid disbursed by IATI since wealthier countries would receive less development aid or even none. Aid contingent on the GDP per capita positions INTPA as a normative donor that provides aid to the ones with a greater need.
- CO2 emissions per capita (co2_tons_per_capita): measured in tons per capita, it is part of an EU climate agenda and the Consensus. This variable is part of a normative hypothesis, and it is expected to be positively correlated with volumes of development aid since less economically developed countries rely on more polluting consumption (Huang and Tian 2021), which identifies a greater need for

aid.

- Net migration (net_migration): it is recorded as an absolute number with negative values identifying that a given country's population is emigrating, while positive values identify more immigrants than emigrants for a given country. Migration prevention is not mentioned among the goals of INTPA's development aid, and it represents a self-interest variable. After the 2015 migration crisis this issue became particularly salient for the EU (Kiratli 2021) and, therefore, net migration is expected to be negatively correlated with development aid since the EU would want countries with higher migration to improve their standards of living to prevent more people from migrating to, potentially, the EU.
- Net ODA per capita (net_oda_per_capita): recorded in current US dollars. Positive values mean that a country is receiving an identified amount of USD per capita as ODA, while negative values identify that a given country is giving out more ODA than it receives. This is the defining variable for an institutionalist approach to INTPA's aid, yet it also could be a self-interest variable if seen as transaction cost reduction. In both cases, it is expected to have a positive correlation with INTPA's ODA.
- Trade export volume index (trexpvol): it uses the year 2000 as a starting point of 100 units and compares how export volumes of a given country changed compared to the base year 2000. Therefore, an increase in this indicator would mean greater exports than in 2000, while values less than 100 would indicate a decrease in exports compared to the year 2000. This is a self-interest variable, which is expected to be positively associated with INTPA's aid since greater trade means that a country can produce goods that are in great demand and could constitute a strategic interest for the EU.
- Natural resources rents (natresrent): recorded in % of GDP and is comprised of a weighted average of all natural resources rents: oil, natural gas, coal, minerals, and

forest. This is a self-interest variable that is expected to have a positive correlation since countries that poses these natural resources are of significant strategic interest to the EU. The difference from trade export volume in this case is that it focuses on a specific set of strategic resources.

- Under-five mortality rate (childmort): this indicates a probability per 1000 births that a newborn baby will die before reaching the age of 5. Therefore, it serves as a proxy for the overall performance and accessibility of healthcare as well as a proxy for poverty, since more children die in countries with higher poverty (Pritchard and Keen 2016, 739). As an idealist actor that takes a strong anti-poverty stance, while also considering improving the overall quality of life in a given country, children mortality is expected to be negatively correlated with INTPA aid since countries with higher child mortality could deal with aid less efficiently and could have fundamental structural problems that cannot be solved with INTPA's aid.
- Corruption control index (corruption_control): it is an estimate indicator, recorded in units of a standard normal distribution ranging from -2.5 (low control) to 2.5 (high control). It captures the extent to which public power is exercised for private gain. It includes petty corruption, grand corruption and state captures by elites and private interests (Kaufmann, Kraay and Mastruzzi 2010). It is a proxy for good governance, which is one of the Consensus priorities, that could be simultaneously used as a proxy for aid efficiency. Higher corruption control is expected to be positively correlated with INTPA's aid since when corruption control is low, there could be a higher probability of aid ending up in pockets of corrupt actors.

Table 1 following summarizes theoretical approaches and significant variables to be tested for each:

Table 1. Hypotheses and variables overview. Source: Author's summary

Approach	Description	Variables
Realism	INTPA aid targeting prioritizes the EU's self-interest	Net migration, trade export volume, natural resources rents, net ODA per capita
Idealism	INTPA aid targeting prioritizes recipients' needs	GDP per capita, CO2 emissions per capita (tons), corruption control, child mortality
Institutionalism	INTPA aid targeting prioritizes organizational donor coordination	Net ODA per capita

2.3 Empirical Analysis Results

Prior to the regressions, selected variables were checked for multicollinearity (Table 2). CO2 emissions per capita and child mortality get close enough to the levels when multicollinearity with logged GDP per capita becomes an issue with scores of 0.652 and -0.693 respectively. Although this does not exceed the critical value of 0.7 that indicates that inferences could be distorted. To ensure that regression results would not be affected by multicollinearity, a VIF test was performed (Table 3) with the highest score of 2.954 ascribed to logged GDP per capita, which was expected after Table 1 results, but which is safe to proceed with regressions as it is less than 5.

Table 2. Pairwise correlations. Source: Author's calculations, based on data from d-portal and the World Bank

Variables	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
(1) intpa_n	1.000								
(2) log_gdp_pc	-0.336	1.000							
(3) co2_tons_per_c~a	-0.258	0.652	1.000						
(4) net_migration	-0.080	0.153	0.123	1.000					
(5) net_oda_per_ca~a	-0.021	-0.076	-0.162	0.061	1.000				
(6) corruption_con~l	-0.154	0.411	0.133	0.117	0.183	1.000			
(7) trexpvol	0.044	-0.061	-0.065	0.018	0.039	-0.032	1.000		
(8) natresrent	0.028	-0.030	0.270	0.119	-0.002	-0.331	-0.035	1.000	
(9) childmort	0.327	-0.693	-0.456	-0.059	-0.049	-0.391	0.134	0.237	1.000

Table 3. Variance inflation factor overview. Source: Author's calculations, based on data from d-portal and the World Bank

	VIF	1/VIF
log gdp pc	2.954	.339
childmort	2.277	.439
co2 tons per capita	2.152	.465
natresrent	1.491	.671
corruption control	1.481	.675
net oda per capita	1.133	.883
net migration	1.059	.945
trexpvol	1.031	.97
Mean VIF	1.697	.

To check for endogeneity, Hausman test was performed, comparing two panel data regression models: one with fixed effects, which does not allow for endogeneity, and another with random effects, which allows for it. The P-value of 0 identified that the null hypothesis (presence of endogeneity) must be rejected, and the fixed effects model was selected (Table 4).

Table 4. Hausman specification test results. Source: Author's calculations, based on data from d-portal and the World Bank

	Coef.
Chi-square test value	190.156
P-value	0

To test for the stability of coefficients, eight models were run with Model 8 being the final one (Table 5). Based on the results, net ODA per capita and child mortality have the highest statistical significance with P-values less than 0.01, while logged GDP per capita and net migration are significant at a slightly lower p-value of less than 0.05. What is intriguing, is that CO2 emissions per capita, corruption control, and natural resources rents have no statistically significant associations with INTPA's funding according to this research, although corruption control was statistically significant with a p-value less than 0.1, which is found in non-final models. What could be derived from this?

First, realist H1 is partly confirmed. Net migration is among the statistically significant variables, and it is negatively associated with INTPA's development aid as expected. Since a unit increase in migration variable means that the country is sending out fewer immigrants,

Table 5. Regression models results. Source: Author's calculations, based on data from d-portal and the World Bank

VARIABLES	(1) Model 1	(2) Model 2	(3) Model 3	(4) Model 4	(5) Model 5	(6) Model 6	(7) Model 7	(8) Model 8
log_gdp_pc	0.00835	0.0113	0.0141**	0.0200**	0.0157*	0.0152*	0.0152*	0.0147**
	(0.00727)	(0.00744)	(0.00705)	(0.00842)	(0.00795)	(0.00806)	(0.00800)	(0.00655)
co2_tons_per_capita		-0.00418*	-0.00393*	-0.00336	-0.00343	-0.00341	-0.00345	-1.63e-05
		(0.00218)	(0.00218)	(0.00225)	(0.00225)	(0.00224)	(0.00225)	(0.00216)
net_migration			-2.61e-08	-2.66e-08*	-2.60e-08*	-2.59e-08*	-2.59e-08*	-3.16e-08**
			(1.72e-08)	(1.48e-08)	(1.49e-08)	(1.50e-08)	(1.48e-08)	(1.26e-08)
net_oda_per_capita				0.000142**	0.000141**	0.000141**	0.000140**	0.000165***
				(6.27e-05)	(6.18e-05)	(6.19e-05)	(6.13e-05)	(5.67e-05)
corruption_control					0.0228*	0.0230*	0.0229*	0.0170
					(0.0120)	(0.0120)	(0.0122)	(0.0114)
trexpvol						2.08e-06	2.06e-06	-2.61e-06
						(1.62e-06)	(1.58e-06)	(2.92e-06)
natresrent							3.45e-05	3.74e-05
							(0.000410)	(0.000427)
childmort								-0.00159***
								(0.000272)
Constant	-0.0380	-0.0512	-0.0722	-0.122**	-0.0783	-0.0746	-0.0752	0.0223
	(0.0503)	(0.0510)	(0.0477)	(0.0574)	(0.0549)	(0.0555)	(0.0552)	(0.0487)
Observations	1,901	1,901	1,901	1,901	1,901	1,901	1,901	1,901
R-squared	0.180	0.181	0.183	0.191	0.193	0.193	0.193	0.219
Number of country_id	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125
Country FE	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Year FE	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

Robust standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

this means that migration-sending countries receive more aid that the countries where immigrants go. Therefore, the realist assumption that aid is used to hold migration could be depicted here. However, one should not perceive it as a causal inference since there is a possibility that as development aid improves the overall economic situation and migration reduction could be one of the externalities. Therefore, this is not enough to claim that INTPA deliberately focuses on migration reduction for aid targeting. Net ODA per capita is also statistically significant, which could mean that from a self-interest perspective, transaction cost reduction could be a motivation behind providing more development aid to the recipients that already have high ODA per capita. Although the latter must be confirmed by qualitative analysis since there are other interpretations of this variable being statistically significant discussed under H3. However, existing research supports a realist interpretation of these

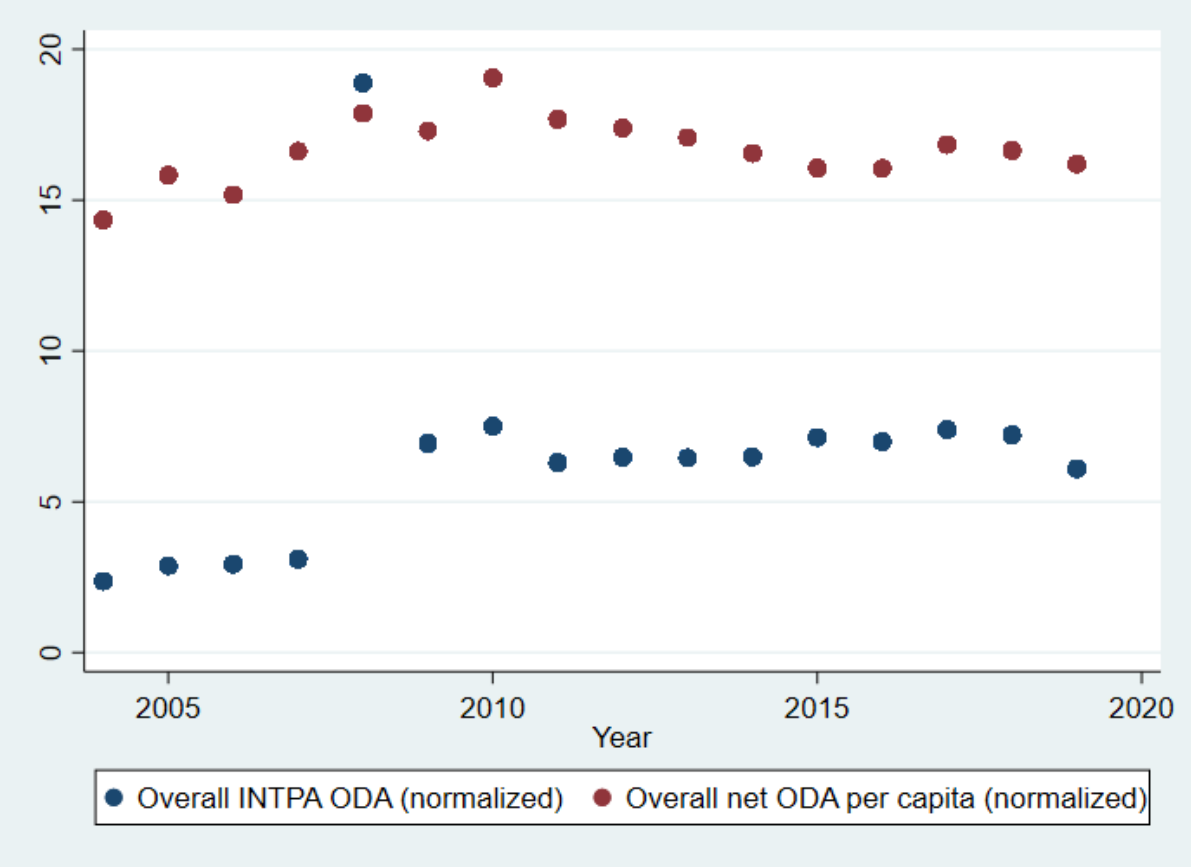
results, noting that they hold only for development darlings (Davies and Klasen 2019). Finally, assumptions regarding the importance of strategic resources were not confirmed as both natural resources rents and trade export volume are statistically insignificant in the model.

Idealist H2, which positions INTPA as a normative actor, also receives partial support. Logged GDP per capita is positively associated with INTPA's development aid, which could appear counterintuitive, suggesting that countries with higher GDP receive more aid from INTPA. In this case, INTPA's aid might come as an overall incentive for continuing economic development as a more developed economy could open more opportunities for setting up INTPA projects. Child mortality is also statistically significant in the final model with a P-value less than 0.01 and is negatively associated with INTPA's aid. This, again, does not mean that countries with severe problems receive less aid. Instead, countries where child mortality probability under 5 stays high, probably have structural issues that might not be necessarily addressed with aid. Also, there could be some countries that could eventually become development aid orphans since their situation would be considered so dire that INTPA would not think about spending money there. CO2 emissions per capita and corruption control are not statistically significant in the final model. This could be more telling once analyzed for different periods, since the climate change agenda was not prominent in the EU throughout the entire period analyzed, as climate agenda importance grew steadily from 2009 (Rayner and Jordan 2016, 17). The insignificance of corruption control is more surprising as it was expected to be positively associated with development aid from INTPA, yet an answer to this could be the fact that from 2006, the EU was not particularly fond of a conditionality principle, meaning that good governance is not that relevant from this perspective, allowing for a greater space for development policies (Carbone 2010, 26).

Institutionalist H3 is statistically supported by the model as development assistance from other donors to a recipient country is statistically significant with a p-value less than 0.01 and is positively associated with aid flows from INTPA. As was mentioned earlier, this means that the presence of other donors is important for INTPA when providing development aid.

This, however, does not imply that this is not done out of the realist incentive of minimizing transaction costs. For this theory to be true, INTPA's aid must be allocated to the countries where other donors are present on the premises of coordination efforts and maximizing positive effects achieved with development aid. The existing literature is more in favor of a realist approach to aid herding (Davies and Klasen 2019, 243). It is also worth noting that INTPA's aid allocation largely follows patterns of aid allocations from other donors. Figure 2 illustrates the overall volume of development aid INTPA and other donors by normalizing net ODA to bring it to the same unit level as INTPA and summarizing all aid distributed in a given year. What is worth noting is that in 2008, INTPA's aid skyrocketed which could be explained by the financial crisis and its consequences yet a closer inspection is needed to make more elaborate inferences.

Figure 2. Overall aid distribution for INTPA and other donors from 2004 to 2019. Source: Author's visualization, based on data from d-portal and the World Bank.



To summarize, realist H1 and idealist H2 hypotheses of INTPA's aid targeting strategies find limited approval, while institutionalist H3 is not fully supported either, since INTPA's motivations behind providing more aid to the countries that already receive

significant support from other donors should be analyzed. The following qualitative chapter will provide more information on the future implications of these results.

Chapter 3 – Qualitative Analysis

The qualitative part is augmentative to the quantitative analysis and enables broadening the horizon of research. The latest data available for quantitative analysis was limited to 2019, which is even before the transformation of DEVCO to INTPA, which happened only in 2021. Therefore, to acquire the most relevant information and understand whether data inferences from the quantitative analysis are legitimate, qualitative methods were utilized.

3.1 Methodology and Research Design

To gain greater insights into the aid targeting process by INTPA, an expert interview format was chosen. For this purpose, two interviews were planned with only one interviewee being able to fit it into their schedule. This raises potential limitations of this part, yet experts agree on salient issues (Dorussen, Lenz, and Blavoukos 2005), which means that for this format, proceeding with a single expert interview is still a valid strategy, especially given that it focused more on technical processes that cannot be misperceived by people who are actively involved in aid allocation, while statements implying personal perception are of a higher suspicion under these limitations.

The interview took place in-person in Brussels. Participating expert is a current INTPA employee with a substantive work experience at the organization and is actively involved in aid allocation. Their experience also allows for comparisons between the work of DEVCO and INTPA, which could also explain why some variables were neglected and how they could have changed up to now. The interview was organized in a semi-structured format with 10 open-ended questions, covering the key questions regarding INTPA's aid targeting strategies and work with various stakeholders.

3.2 Findings and Discussion

Since INTPA funding is rather external, originating in NDICI, it may appear that INTPA has little influence on the volumes of final aid allocations, which is far from being

true. Even though INTPA cannot solely determine its budget under NDICI, they actively participate in negotiations (Interview 1). When it comes to country-specific allocations, the expert shared that there is a specifically designed allocation model formula that uses data from international databases and accounts for the recipient's needs that are used as a primary reference point when determining final allocations, suggesting that the model's influence is so big that even with lobbying efforts, 85-90% of development aid is still allocated based on the model (Interview 1). Although these numbers are perceptional, it is safe to assume that the model plays a major role. While aid allocation factors are kept secret, they cover all countries and all aspects that could identify a potential need:

> "The formula is based on different dimensions of partner countries and uses an international database with different variables. We account for population, gross national income per capita, governance indicators, environmental sustainability, and performance of the country, something that we call economic vulnerability. We also take into account some of the dimensions that are strategic for us like some indicators referring to the digital transformation or youth. And also, something related to areas that are critical for us, that are health and education. Based on these allocation factors, the regional resources available for each region are distributed between those countries in that region. And then, once we have distributed those, it is true that we have done some cost adjustments based on our assessment of which are the priorities. So perhaps some of the countries consider that the theoretical allocation for whatever reason is too low. We increase it, but we always provide an explanation why we would like to adjust that" (Interview 1).

This implies that the selection of independent variables for normative H2 is in line with INTPA's allocation model. GDP per capita, although different from national income per capita is close enough. For Child mortality in this case, it is possible it is negatively associated with INTPA's aid not due to the neglect of recipient countries' healthcare or poverty but due to other reasons that could indicate the lack of capacity to govern and where it is challenging for INTPA to implement their programs in the first place. It appears surprising that despite being mentioned here, an environmental variable of CO2 emissions was not statistically significant in the model. This could mean that either the EU's climate agenda is not statistically reflected through this variable for the research time span, or this variable is not enough to capture the environmental dimension of INTPA's aid allocation model, which still suggests a normative approach. Governance indicators are also present in the model, yet

corruption control is not statistically significant in the final model. Similarly, it could be the case that INTPA measures governance differently. According to an interviewee, the formula hadn't been used for the entire period analyzed in the quantitative chapter, – it was implemented first in 2014 and then in 2021, as INTPA's overall budget is allocated for 7 years (Interview 1).

Realist H1 is not reflected in the INTPA model but the interviewee admitted that there is some space for self-interest although without mentioning specifications:

> "If you are providing something that is strategic for you in a certain country, because you are really involved in the transformative process of this country, or you have considered that this country specifically is important for strategic reasons for the European Union – you have to invest more even if the allocation model would provide you a lower rate" (Interview 1).

It appears to be hard to define the self-interest of the EU and, probably, that is why net migration is statistically significant while natural resources rents and trade export volume are not. Moreover, the EU might have had varying self-interests across countries and time which could lead to these indicators being significant at the country level or only at a selected smaller time frame even with the time and country fixed effects model. There is also the potential of adding more independent variables from the dimension of security, which could be included in the future to capture the dimension of military security. For self-interest, the interviewee also identified a programming stage where INTPA faces both internal and external lobbying pressure when recipient countries try to secure more funding than was proposed by the model and when INTPA personnel running programs do their best to secure funding for their programs:

> "It is up to our regional directorate to make proposals. For instance, we would like to finance out of our overall budget, 20% is going to be financing our regional programs and 80% is going to be financing the country allocation, which means our bilateral comparison with the different countries of the region. This is a proposal that most, a lot of people would like to try to influence. Because, of course, there are people internally, who are managing programs, and who would like their program, to keep on going for the next period" (Interview 1).

For institutionalist H3, the interviewee stated that coordination is important for INTPA, especially with the EU-member states bilateral donors, and is implemented through the Team Europe approach:

> "Now we have the Team Europe approach. Within the different areas that we have identified in the MIP, we identify which areas and how we are going to coordinate with the different member states. Team Europe initiatives are not only in our strategic programs, but they're also in the strategic program of our member states. There are certain member states that are more focused on a certain area and work with civil society, while others are working in a kind of budget support approach. In the end, we try to generate a kind of consistent approach to partner countries" (Interview 1).

This suggests that the significance of net ODA per capita for INTPA allocations could fit both H1 and H3. For H3 it would mean that for INTPA and the EC, it is organizationally important to create an image of a united EU in development aid and therefore they push member-states towards better coordination. However, this better coordination still allows for cost reduction since it enables maximizing aid effect while avoiding implementing programs targeting the same issues. It is also worth noting that the first real attempts to coordinate with EU bilateral donors took place only in 2016, which is not enough to explain this variable statistical significance throughout the entire period from 2004 to 2019:

> "Before Team Europe we had the joint programming process. We were trying to build up joint strategic documents for the different member states present in one of our partner countries. This has been done in 2016-2017 but only for some countries because it's extremely difficult" (Interview 1).

While currently aid coordination enables the EU to position itself as a united actor in global development matters, prior to 2015, little coordination existed and it is likely to be driven by the need for cost reduction, leaning more towards realist H1.

After providing evidence supporting each of the three hypotheses, the interviewee was asked to reflect on the phenomenon of development aid darlings and orphans and whether it could be safe to assume that lobbying occurring at various stages of budget allocations could result in a situation when some countries are systemically favored for development aid, while others are neglected despite having a more objective need for aid:

> "There are no development aid orphans for us. There are countries with whom we cannot cooperate for reasons that have been approved by our hierarchy and justified. For instance, we cannot cooperate with Venezuela and Nicaragua due to sanctions.

> But you cannot say that Venezuela or Nicaragua are orphans, because before the sanctions, Nicaragua was one of our main recipients in the region. In Asia we have Yemen, but because we don't have a government there. Another example is Myanmar but there are sanctions. If you take Africa, most of the countries are receiving aid, even if is difficult to implement programs in certain countries. We are having some problems implementing projects in Ethiopia, but it is the situation that is happening in Ethiopia."

What one sees here is a slight contradiction. Even though there are orphans, the interviewee was unwilling to acknowledge their existence. To them, it was rather an outcome of an objective process of political sanctions implemented by various institutions or a technical inability of INTPA to implement programs in certain countries as they lack the capacity to govern as in the case of Yemen.

Conclusion

This research focused on factors that matter for INTPA's development aid allocation. It showed, that over time, aid allocation factors followed realist, idealist, and institutionalist patterns. Quantitative data analysis provided limited support for each theory, suggesting that there is a dominant approach. This is expected since INTPA's rich history of organizational evolution and change meant that there were different instruments and motivations behind various periods of its existence. This means that if analyzed by periods, a theoretical division into a realist, idealist, and institutionalist patterns could be more visible. However, what is seen from the qualitative part, is that INTPA consciously combines these approaches as they are not mutually exclusive.

Is it legitimate to say that if there is a justifiable reason for INTPA not to distribute development aid to a given country, this does not make this country an orphan? For this research, it appears to be a contradiction even though it must be admitted that the very existence of darlings and orphans is speculative and contingent on equitable allocation models that should not be perceived as being truly objective. This objectivity trap is what makes INTPA modern-day aid orphans such as Venezuela, Nicaragua, Yemen, Ethiopia, Myanmar, and others appear as non-orphans in the eyes of presumably rational decision-makers. Moreover, INTPA aid orphans are not necessarily categorized as such from a global perspective: based on the model of Tengstam and Isaksson, out of the previously mentioned aid orphans, only Ethiopia is considered pure orphan, while Nicaragua and Myanmar are borderline orphans for periods spanning from 2009 to 2013 (2022). Prior to the outbreak of the civil war in Yemen, the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan, and EU sanctions against Venezuela in 2017, these countries were considered pure darlings (Ibid). An alternative would be using Mitchell and Hughes's (2020) darling-orphan model, where among previously mentioned countries only Ethiopia is considered an aid orphan. Therefore, darling-orphan dynamics are not clearly defined and could vary from one source to another based on the

optimal aid allocation model one selects. In this context, INTPA's aid allocation model could be as objective as the ones mentioned yet still allow for the creation of darlings and orphans.

Future iterations of this study could focus on reducing the number of limitations present in this study. Namely, analyzing data using a dyadic model while analyzing INTPA's previous organizational formations separately. Additionally, regional distributions could be analyzed separately to allow for the fact that INTPA cannot determine regional funding as it is given rather externally under NDICI. Moreover, it could be analyzed how the entrenchment of INTPA program managers affects darling-orphan dynamics.

Do we still need to talk about darlings and orphans if it is all precautionary and varies from model to model? Swiss and Brown suggest that a darling-orphan metaphor is not helpful yet acknowledge that there are issues with equitable aid allocation and suggest focusing on these instead (2015). Therefore, even if one abandons the darling-orphan metaphor, it remains important to reveal which factors are important as one investigates equitable aid allocations. Analyzing INTPA, allowed us to focus on the factors that might create potential darlings and orphans from a perspective of a single organization. The research showed how INTPA's internal organizational processes function and why there is a perception of the absence of orphans from a decision-maker perspective.

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