
UCDP External Support Dataset (ESD) Codebook Version 18.1

Uppsala Conflict Data Program

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Always include the version number in analyses using the dataset. When referring to the dataset, make sure to use the correct name: the UCDP External Support Dataset (ESD).

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1 Introduction

This document describes the UCDP External Support Dataset (ESD), a project within the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP), at the Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University.

The dataset was first presented in Högbladh, Pettersson & Themnér (2011) and subsequently presented in Meier, Karlén, Pettersson & Croicu (2021) and is available for download from <http://ucdp.uu.se/downloads/>.

The dataset contains information on external support to primary warring parties in all active conflicts in the period 1975-2017. It records information on ten different types of external support including:

- i. troops
- ii. access to infrastructure/joint operations
- iii. weapons
- iv. materiel/logistics
- v. training/expertise
- vi. funding
- vii. intelligence
- viii. access to territory
- ix. other support
- x. unknown support

It provides this information for all identified state, non-state and sub-state supporters providing support to both state and non-state recipients involved in active armed conflict. Information on the alleged or confirmed nature of support, the supporter's potential membership in a coalition, and on support provided to both sides in a conflict is also available.

The ESD builds on the UCDP Dyadic Dataset 18.1 derived from the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset 18.1 but goes beyond the dyad-level and offers the warring party-opponent-year (actor-year) as well as the warring-party-supporter-opponent-year (or triad-year) as units of analysis in addition to the dyad-year. It is thus fully compatible with a range of other datasets provided by UCDP.

Units of Analysis

When using the ESD, researchers can choose between the following three different units of analysis: the triad-year version (ESD TY), the actor-year version (ESD AY), and the dyad-year version (ESD DY). Further units of analysis, e.g. at the conflict-level or the actor-level, can be created from the triad-year version.

ESD TY: Triad-year

The triad-level dataset (ESD TY) is the most disaggregated and extensive version of the data.

It contains yearly information on the external supporter and the recipient of support specific to the conflict-dyad the recipient is involved in. It thus contains one observation (row) for each combination of external supporter, recipient, and opponent per year. Table 1 presents a schematic representation of the data structure in the ESD TY.

Table 1: Schematic Representation of ESD 1 (triad-year version)

Year	Actor	Opponent	External Supporter	External support	
				state	non-state
2017	Government	Rebels	A	1	0
2017	Government	Rebels	B	1	0
2017	Government	Rebels	C	0	1
2017	Rebels	Government	D	0	1

The triad-year level includes cases of alleged support and support provided by elements of a state. It also contains information on some inactive years, but the dataset is not complete for years without conflict (cf. 5.2 Inactive conflict-years). All aggregated versions of the dataset can be built from this version.

This version is appropriate where the focus rests on the individual external supporters and can be used to create aggregate measures of characteristics of the external supporter such as, e.g. combined military capabilities.

ESD AY: Actor-year

The actor-year dataset (ESD AY) contains all support a recipient receives in a given dyad-year. If more than one external supporter provides external support, the external support is combined and presented as aggregate measures. It thus contains one observation (row) for each actor per dyad-year. Table 2 presents a schematic representation of the data structure in the ESD 2.

Table 2: Schematic Representation of ESD 2 (actor-year level)

Year	Actor	External Supporter		External support	
		state	non-state	state	non-state
2017	Government	A, B	C	1	1
2017	Rebels		D	0	1

This version is appropriate where the focus rests on the recipients of external support regardless of which external supporters provide the support.

ESD DY: Dyad-year

The dyad-level dataset (ESD DY) is the most aggregated version of the three datasets and presents information on external support to the conflict-dyad as a whole at the dyad-year unit of analysis. If more than one external supporter provides external support, the external support is combined and presented as aggregate measures. As such it contains one observation (row) for each dyad per year. Table 3 presents a schematic representation of the data structure in the ESD DY.

Table 3: Schematic Representation of ESD 3 (dyad-year level)

Year	Dyad	External Supporter Dyad		External Support Dyad	
		state	non-state	state	non-state
2017	Gov-Reb	A, B	C, D	1	1

This version is appropriate where existing data is in a dyad-year structure or the focus rests on the impact of external support on conflict more generally. It can be merged with the UCDP Dyadic 18.1 as a 1:1 inner join (cf. 5.1 Naming Conventions on differences between identifiers).

All aggregated versions are built considering confirmed cases of support only and contain cases of elements of a state providing external support (cf. 4.5 Elements of state support). Since ESD TY contains information on inactive years and alleged cases of external support, the two aggregated datasets (ESD AY and ESD DY) do not contain identical information as ESD TY. Aggregated versions containing all information can however be built from ESD TY if desired.

The datasets contain information on all conflict-dyads presented in the UCDP Dyadic Dataset 18.1 including where no external support occurred and contain no missing values (cf. 6. Missing Data). Therefore, it is not necessary to merge the datasets with the UCDP Dyadic Dataset 18.1 to obtain a complete list of observations. Note, however, that if observations are dropped to build new aggregate versions from ESD TY, it is advised to merge the data with the UCDP Dyadic Dataset 18.1 first before aggregating it to the appropriate unit of analysis to avoid an incomplete list of armed conflicts. The UCDP Dyadic Dataset 18.1 can be downloaded from <http://ucdp.uu.se/downloads/>.

2 Definition of external support

External support is defined as the provision of militarily relevant assistance by an outside party to a primary warring party in a state-based armed conflict with the intent to assist that party in that conflict. .

The separate elements of the definition are operationalized as follows:

- (1) Militarily relevant assistance: materiel, knowledge, or services with a direct role in the pursuit of armed conflict.
- (2) Outside party: any state or organised armed group listed in the UCDP Actor Dataset that is not a primary warring party in the conflict in a given year including in a different conflict-dyad.
- (3) Primary warring party: a government of a state or any opposition organisation or alliance of organisations that uses armed force to promote its position in the incompatibility in an intrastate or an interstate armed conflict.
- (4) Intent to assist: the support is provided deliberately and with the clear (long-term) goal of facilitating military victory of the support recipient over the opponent the recipient shares an incompatibility with.
- (5) State-based armed conflict: a contested [incompatibility](#) that concerns [government](#) and/or territory where the use of armed force between two parties, of which at least one is the government of a [state](#), results in at least 25 [battle-related deaths](#) in one calendar year.¹

3 Variables in the UCDP ESD TY

Variable name	Content	Type
id	A unique identifier for each entry in the dataset.	Integer
active	Variable identifying all dyad-years active in the UCDP External Support Dataset 18.1. (0) Inactive dyad-year (1) Active dyad-year	Integer
year	The year of observation (1975-2017).	Integer
actor_id	The unique identifier of the potential support recipient (government or opposition actor). Note that this is a primary party to the conflict. This variable does not correspond to the variable <code>side_a_id</code> in the UCDP Dyadic dataset since it includes observations on government and opposition actors.	Integer
actor_name	The name of the potential support recipient (government or opposition actor). Note that this is a primary party to the conflict.	String

¹ A more detailed definition of state-based armed conflict can be found in Appendix 1.

This variable does not correspond to the variable side_a in the UCDP Dyadic dataset since it includes observations on government and opposition actors.

actor_nonstate	Variable identifying all observations where the potential support recipient is a non-state actor. (0) State recipient (1) Non-state recipient	Integer
oppo_id	The unique identifier of the opponent (government or opposition actor) involved in an active armed conflict with the potential support recipient. Note that this is a primary party to the conflict. This variable does not correspond to the variable side_b_id in the UCDP Dyadic dataset since it includes observations on government and opposition actors.	Integer
oppo_name	The name of the opponent (government or opposition actor) involved in an active armed conflict with the potential support recipient. Note that this is a primary party to the conflict. This variable does not correspond to the variable side_b in the UCDP Dyadic dataset since it includes observations on government and opposition actors.	String
dyad_id	The unique identifier of the dyad as given in the UCDP Dyadic Dataset 18.1.	Integer
dyad_name	The name of the dyad.	String
civil	Variable identifying all dyad-years in which one of the primary warring parties is a non-state actor (intrastate conflict). (0) Interstate conflict (1) Intrastate conflict	Integer
conflict_id	The unique identifier of the conflict to which the dyad belongs as given in the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset 18.1.	Integer
location	The name of the country/countries whose government(s) has a primary claim to the incompatibility as given in the UCDP Dyadic 18.1. Note that this is not necessarily the geographical location of the conflict. If multiple countries are listed, this is comma-separated.	String
gwno_a	In intrastate conflicts, the Gleditsch and Ward country code of the conflict-country. In interstate conflicts, the Gleditsch and Ward country code of one of the primary warring parties. ²	Integer
country_a	In intrastate conflicts, the name of the conflict-country. In interstate conflicts, the name of one of the primary	String

² A full list of Gleditsch and Ward country codes can be found in Appendix 5.

warring parties.

gwno_b	In interstate conflicts, the Gleditsch and Ward country code of one of the primary warring parties. Empty in intrastate conflicts.	Integer
country_b	In interstate conflicts, the name of one of the primary warring parties. Empty in intrastate conflicts.	String
ext_id	The unique identifier of the external supporter (government or opposition actor).	Integer
ext_name	The name of the external supporter (government or opposition actor).	String
ext_nonstate	Variable identifying all observations in which the external supporter is a non-state actor. (0) State supporter (1) Non-state supporter	Integer
ext_coalition	Variable identifying all observations in which external support is provided as part of a coalition effort. (0) Bilateral support (1) Coalition support	Integer
ext_coalition_name	The name of the coalition.	String
ext_elements	Variable identifying all observations in which external support is provided by a substate actor. (0) No substate support (1) Support provided by substate actor	Integer
ext_bothsides	Variable identifying all observations in which an external supporter provides support to both primary warring parties in a conflict-dyad. (0) Support to one side (1) Support to both sides	Integer
ext_alleged	Variable identifying all observations in which external support was alleged but could not be confirmed. Note that this variable is set to 0 if one of the types of support can be confirmed. (0) Confirmed support (1) Alleged support	Integer
ext_sup	Variable identifying all observations in which external support was provided. (0) No external support (1) External support	Integer
ext_x	Variable identifying all observations in which troop support was provided (1). Note that observations on troop support correspond to	Integer

observations of secondary warring support in the UCDP Dyadic Dataset. Non-state troop support is set to 0 in all observations (cf. 5. Coding Decisions).

ext_p	Variable identifying all observations in which a foreign troop presence was observed but did not reach the threshold of troop support (1). Non-state troop support is set to 0 in all observations (cf. 5. Coding Decisions).	Integer
ext_y	Variable identifying all observations in which access to infrastructure/joint operations was provided (1).	Integer
ext_w	Variable identifying all observations in which weapons support was provided (1).	Integer
ext_m	Variable identifying all observations in which materiel and logistics support was provided (1).	Integer
ext_t	Variable identifying all observations in which training and expertise support was provided (1).	Integer
ext_f	Variable identifying all observations in which funding support was provided (1).	Integer
ext_i	Variable identifying all observations in which intelligence support was provided (1).	Integer
ext_l	Variable identifying all observations in which access to territory was provided (1).	Integer
ext_o	Variable identifying all observations in which other support was provided (1).	Integer
ext_u	Variable identifying all observations in which unknown support was provided (1).	Integer
ext_sum	Count of the number of different types of support provided.	Integer

4 Additional information on variables in the dataset

4.1 *External supporter*

The external supporter is an outside party providing external support. The ESD only considers foreign governments and organised armed groups listed in the UCDP Actor List as potential external supporters.³ Support by international organisations or coalitions of states is disaggregated and attributed to the contributing countries (cf. 5. Coding Decisions). Support is considered external if it originates from an outside party that is not a primary warring party to the conflict including in a different conflict-dyad in the same conflict in a given year. For state support, this includes all foreign governments that do not share an incompatibility with one of the warring parties in the conflict. For non-state support, this includes all organised armed groups that do not share an incompatibility with the government side in the conflict in the same year, although they might be physically present in the same territory. Outside parties providing support to an external supporter, e.g. granting access to bases to an external

³ Note that government is defined as the party controlling the capital of the state.

supporter or financing a coalition providing external support, do not enter the dataset (cf. 5. Coding Decisions). Support from diaspora groups, lobby groups, private businesses, religious institutions, criminal networks, charities, and individuals is not included.

4.2 External support

External support needs to be intentional, direct, and aimed at enhancing military capabilities. It thus excludes cases where support is provided unintentionally, e.g. because of state weakness, such as porous borders or indirectly, e.g. measures that effectively weaken a warring party but are not designed to support the opposing side, such as sanctions. Advocacy in front of international bodies, offers to mediate, humanitarian assistance, and diplomatic support are not considered external support in this context as they do not constitute the provision of resources with a direct role in the pursuit of armed conflict and/or with the clear intent to facilitate (military) victory of one side over the other. If any of the 10 types of external support listed below is present, the overall measure for external support is set to 1, indicating external support in a given year. References to external support without specified supporter or recipient are not included.

4.3 Alleged support

All efforts were made to confirm (or refute) each claim of external support, however, this was not always conclusive. Where it was impossible to confirm support with any credible reference, but allegations of such support were widespread and influential, they were added as alleged support. Allegations of external support against a rival found exclusively in state-controlled outlets and not echoed by a third party were not included. Confirmed external support of unclear type was added as unknown support.

This is by definition a backup category and the use of this data should include further research into the cases listed thereunder. Yet, it allows the inclusion of some much-discussed cases whose non-inclusion would equally cause concern.

4.4 Coalition support

External support is considered part of a coalition effort if three or more states formally agree to coordinate their efforts and to provide assistance to the same warring party or multiple warring parties jointly. This can take on the shape of an *ad hoc* coalition with a conflict-related purpose or operations run by established multilateral organisations such as the United Nations, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization or regional organisations. Over the observation period, 20 such coalitions formed. Appendix 1 contains a list of all coalitions that appear in the ESD. Contributing countries are listed separately but contain the same coalition name in the coalition variable. Alliances between non-state actors also exist, but do not appear in the coalition variable.⁴ Support provided by an international organisation directly and not administered through contributing countries is not included.

4.5 Elements of states support

External support is considered to be provided by elements of a state when it is provided by a sub-state entity or a part of the regime without authorization from the central government. These include intelligence organisations, rogue parts of the military, political parties not in

⁴ Note that some UCDP primary warring parties are alliances of non-state actors such as the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) or the Sudan Revolutionary Front (SRF). Here, support to any member of the alliance enters as support to the coalition actor.

power, and regional and local administrations acting independently. If the actions of the sub-state actor are, according to all available information, likely to be condoned by the government, but such approval is publicly denied, external support is coded as regular (or alleged) state support instead.

4.6 *Support to both sides*

External support is considered to be provided to both sides when the same external supporter provides assistance to both primary warring parties in a conflict-dyad in the same year. This is sometimes the case when external supporters switch sides within a calendar year or when opposition actors replace the government and become the government side, turning the ousted government into the opposition actor. In rare cases, the leadership of an external supporter provides assistance to one side in a conflict while a substate actor supports the opposition (cf. 4.5 Elements of states support). The variable allows to easily identify these cases so that they can be handled in a manner appropriate to the research interest.

4.7 *Troop support (X/P)*

An external supporter sends combat troops to fight alongside a primary warring party.

This is the most intensive type of support and corresponds to the secondary warring support in the UCDDP Dyadic Dataset. It includes state combat troops (including special forces) sent to directly engage in military operations against an opponent or expert personnel (e.g. tank drivers, aircraft pilots, UAV operators) directly engaged in combat operations.

It does not include alleged cases of troop support or a troop presence without a clear combat mandate (P), troop support by non-state actors (Y), joint operations by two or more states where the external supporter is also in a conflict of its own with the opponent (Y), joint operations or alliances by two or more non-state actors (Y), deployment of military trainers, technicians, and experts (T). Troop support by foreign fighters or private military corporations is not included in the dataset.

Where the high threshold of secondary warring support as recorded in the UCDDP Dyadic Dataset is not met, but foreign troops with a combat role were present, observations were coded as troop presence (P). This includes cases of alleged troop support (coded as alleged) and cases without an official mandate to support a warring side but observed involvement.

This procedure ensures that the troop support variable corresponds to the definition of secondary warring support in the UCDDP Dyadic Dataset, while allowing users to include additional cases of troop presence that follow a similar pattern.

4.8 Access to infrastructure/joint operations (Y)

An external supporter allows a warring party to use its own military infrastructure or conducts joint operations.

This category denotes considerable cooperation short of combat support (cf. 4.7 troop support). It includes the use of the supporter's bases, intelligence infrastructure such as satellites, and communication technology. For states, it includes joint operations such as border patrols, joint intelligence operations short of combat support, and joint operations with a combat mandate by two or more states where the external supporter is also in a conflict of its own with the opponent. It further includes troop support by non-state actors to state or non-state recipients (cf. 5. Coding Decisions) and alliances between two or more non-state actors.

It does not include training troops of support recipients on the external supporter's territory (T) or troop support by state supporters to state recipients (X).

4.9 Weapons (W)

An external supporter provides weapons or ammunition to a warring party on conciliatory terms or through non-conventional channels.

It includes the donation of weapons, weapons bought on extremely conciliatory terms, e.g. symbolic prices, weapons sales to non-state actors, weapons transfers violating an embargo the supporter is bound by, e.g. a UN arms embargo, and any sale of weapons of mass destruction.

It excludes the intermediating of weapons transfers (O), e.g. granting access to transportation channels for illicit trade or changing labels to deceive origins, the transfer of expertise to build weapons or technical assistance in doing so (T), the deployment of expert personnel operating weaponry in combat operations (X), e.g. tank operators, and the financing of weapons transfers by another party (F). The sale or lease of weapons or ammunition between states in accordance with standard commercial terms, e.g. authorized trade, and for primarily economic motives is not included in the dataset.

4.10 Materiel/logistics (M)

An external supporter provides non-weaponry equipment with a military purpose to a warring party free of charge or on conciliatory terms or assists with logistical tasks.

It includes the donation of vehicles, uniforms, tents, field hospitals, medical supplies, rations, repair and support facilities for advanced weaponry, and communication and reconnaissance equipment such as radar, night vision technology, and surveillance drones. It also includes assistance with logistical tasks such as troop transports, the running of field hospitals, the building of military installations, e.g. training camps, and maintenance work.

It does not include the provision of equipment with a weapon capability (W), the transfer of expertise to build equipment or technical assistance in doing so (T) or the deployment of expert personnel operating equipment in combat operations (X), e.g. aircraft pilots.

4.11 Training/expertise (T)

An external supporter provides training to members of a warring party, sends military experts or otherwise makes available technical know-how.

It includes the provision of military trainers, specialists, planners or experts not directly engaged in combat operations training military personnel, providing technical assistance or joining in operational planning as well as (repeated) joint training exercises between state troops with a direct conflict link. It also includes the transfer of technical expertise and know-how such as the ability to construct and produce weaponry. Training support can take place on the supporter's territory, the recipient's territory or on the territory of an outside party.

It does not include the deployment of expert personnel operating equipment in combat operations (X).

4.12 Funding (F)

An external supporter provides any form of economic aid to a warring party destined to fund waging the armed conflict.

It includes the provision of military loans, grants or aid with a direct link to the conflict, the transfer of money or financial assets to non-state groups, and the financing of weapons transfers.

It does not include funding converted into training or equipment before transfer (T, W/M). Humanitarian, development or balance of payments aid or loans, the financing of peacekeeping operations, and security sector assistance without a direct link to the conflict are not included in the dataset.

In the previous version of the dataset, this category was coded under the \$ literal.

4.13 Intelligence (I)

An external supporter provides a warring party with intelligence. .

It includes intelligence material such as maps of enemy positions, satellite imagery, information on troop capability and location of rebel leaders, codes, and signal intelligence. It further includes information-sharing agreements between an external supporter and a support recipient.

It does not include access to the supporter's intelligence infrastructure, e.g. use of satellites or reconnaissance equipment (Y) or large-scale collaboration and integration of intelligence organisations (Y).

4.14 Access to territory (L)

An external supporter allows a warring party to use territory under its control.

It includes granting access to territory to set up bases, to conduct cross-border raids, to cross into supporter's territory on border patrols or to use as sanctuary for combatants. It further includes enabling the transfer of personnel or goods through the supporter's territory, e.g. "facilitation pipelines".

It does not include leases of bases, access to military infrastructure on bases or joint border patrols with a supporter on the supporter's territory (Y). Unauthorized access to territory, e.g. because of porous borders or low state capacity, sheltering refugees, granting sanctuary for non-combatants, self-imposed exiles by the political leadership, and access to airspace are not included in the dataset.

4.15 Other support (O)

An external supporter provides material assistance with direct bearing on the waging of armed conflict to a warring party which does not fit any of the previous categories.

It includes activities such as intermediating the transfer of weapons, providing recruitment opportunities, and running, harbouring or funding communication platforms of warring parties, e.g. radio stations.

It does not include the provision of political, moral or ideological support or activities subsumed under information warfare.

4.16 Unknown support (U)

An external supporter provides material assistance of unspecified type to a warring party.

It includes mentions of "military support" or efforts to build "military capabilities" without details of the military support provided.

It does not include allegations of a specific type of support (alleged support). External support by an unknown supporter, to an unknown recipient or at an unidentified time are not included in the dataset.

5 Coding decisions

5.1 *Naming conventions*

The names and unique identifiers assigned to support recipients (`actor_name/actor_id`), the opposition (`oppo_name/oppo_id`), the dyad (`dyad_name/dyad_id`), and non-state external supporters (`ext_name/ext_id`) follow naming conventions in the UCDP Dyadic Dataset 18.1. The name of state external supporters is abbreviated to include only the country name with the prefix “Government of” removed. Where “elements of” a state provide external support, the name assigned to the external supporter (`ext_name`) reads “[Country adjective] elements”. These cases were assigned a new unique identifier (`ext_id`) so as not to confuse them with official state support sanctioned by the central government.

The dataset diverts from this pattern in two cases. The unique identifiers (`actor_id`, `oppo_id`) of the actors “Government of United Kingdom, Government of United States of America” and “Government of Australia, Government of United Kingdom, Government of United States of America” contain a string of the individual country identifiers in the UCDP Dyadic Dataset 18.1. Since this complicates merging the dataset based on actor identifiers, the joint identifiers 6356 for “Government of United Kingdom, Government of United States of America” and 3822 for “Government of Australia, Government of United Kingdom, Government of United States of America” used in later versions of the UCDP Dyadic Dataset are used in the ESD.

5.2 *Inactive conflict-years*

The ESD aims to provide a complete list of cases of external support for active conflict-years only, i.e. years that resulted in at least 25 battle-related deaths. Yet, much external support precedes or succeeds active conflict-years and continues to be provided when conflict intensity dips below the threshold of 25 battle-related deaths a year with dyads (temporarily) exiting the dataset. While it was not feasible to code external support for all inactive dyad-years, where research on active dyad-years revealed information on external support during inactive dyad-years, it was included in the ESD. Users of the data should be aware that the information on inactive dyad-years is incomplete. The variable `active` allows to easily drop all inactive observations from the dataset. Users interested in external support during inactive dyad-years can take the coding of inactive dyad-years as a starting point.

5.3 *Support of affiliates*

All Islamic State-affiliated groups are entered as “Islamic State” in the dataset. Support between the Islamic State and its provinces is not included in the dataset but considered intra-organisational support. A non-state actor becomes an IS affiliate from the moment it pledges allegiance to the Islamic State and the pledge is accepted. It returns to being considered an independent actor the moment it renounces its pledge of allegiance.

Support between al-Qaida and al-Qaida-affiliated groups is not included in the dataset but considered intra-organisational support unless the group has an independent name in the UCDP Actor List, e.g. al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) or al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM).

5.4 Support of supporters

The dataset focuses on the relationship between recipients and their first-degree external supporters. Therefore, outside parties assisting external supporters in providing external support to recipients (second-degree supporters) are not recorded in the dataset. These include cases like states providing logistical assistance, e.g. the refuelling of planes (not coded) to air strike operations (X), or states funding regional actors, e.g. the G5 Sahel coalition, to pursue opposition actors (X). Although these assisting parties in many cases provide valuable and at times indispensable support to first-degree external supporters, including support of second-degree supporters increases the number of (potential) supporters considerably and makes data collection on all cases unfeasible given available resources.

5.5 Coalition support

Support provided by groups of states jointly through ad hoc coalitions or established multilateral organisations is included in the ESD if it otherwise meets the criteria of external support provision. Rather than including one observation for each coalition actor, each contributing country is listed separately and enters the triad-level dataset (ESD1) as a new observation. This approach maintains the greatest possible level of detail in the dataset and provides information on coalition members.

For coalitions with a clear joint mandate a special coalition coding rule applies to troop support: If at least one of the contributing countries qualifies as a secondary warring supporter, i.e. provides troop support, all contributing countries that deploy troops on the ground or in airspace are coded as providing troop support (X) regardless of whether personnel from the contributing country engages in combat activity or takes on enabling roles such as reconnaissance, logistics or training. Given the joint mandate and the overall high level of engagement in very large coalitions it is assumed that all contributing countries are aware of and at least condone the troop support provided. The individual support portfolio is then assumed to be the result of a division of labour rather than a deliberate choice to provide a certain type of support over another. The coding of other types of external support provided by the coalition remains specific to the contributing country. The coding for contributing countries that do not deploy troops on the ground or in airspace and external supporters that are not part of the coalition similarly follows regular coding rules.

The coding decisions on coalition support leads to an artificial expansion of the ESD TY in years with one or more large coalitions. Users interested in the count of supporters or the count of troop support provided should keep this in mind when using the ESD TY. The coalition variable allows to identify these observations easily and combine them to one coalition observation if desired. The effect is less noticeable in the aggregated versions (ESD DY and ESD AY) where support is aggregated to the actor- and dyad-level except with regard to the count of supporters and frequency of support types registered.

5.6 Troop support

Coding on troop support in the dataset mirrors the coding on secondary warring support in the UCDP Dyadic Dataset. Hence no case of troop support occurs in the ESD that is not recorded in the UCDP Dyadic Dataset and vice versa.⁵ Cases where foreign troops were present in a combat role but did not meet the high threshold of secondary warring support in another regard or where troop support was merely alleged were added in the auxiliary category troop presence (P) (cf. 4.7 Troop Support (X/P)).

In line with UCDP coding rules on secondary warring support, troop support is not coded when the external supporter is in an active armed conflict with the same opposition actor. It is coded as access to military infrastructure/joint operations (Y) instead. An exception to this rule is being made when the troop support precedes the onset of conflict in the supporter and it is clear that troop support occurs irrespective of the conflict in the supporter.

Likewise, non-state actors such as opposition organisations are not coded as providing troop support in the dataset. If non-state actors provide the equivalent of troop support, it is coded as access to infrastructure/joint operations (Y) in the ESD. This procedure has the advantage that observations in the troop support category are fully compatible with the definition of secondary warring support in the UCDP Dyadic Dataset.

Where external state supporters provide support to an opposition actor in a country they are also involved in an interstate conflict with, troop deployments are counted as part of the interstate conflict and are not included as troop support to the opposition actor in the dataset.

5.7 Coding on Syria

The conflict in Syria presents a particular challenge to coding external support due to the multitude of actors on the ground. Since the UCDP Dyadic Dataset 18.1 only distinguishes between Kurdish opposition forces, i.e. the Democratic Union Party (PYD) and the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), the Islamic State, and the composite actor “Syrian insurgents” it is difficult to attribute external support precisely. Support extended to any Syrian opposition actor other than the PYD, SDF or the Islamic State was hence coded as support to the “Syrian insurgents”.⁶

Although non-state supporters play an important role in the Syrian conflict, it was impossible to code non-state support to the “Syrian insurgents”. Since the category contains all Syrian opposition groups that are not the PYD, SDF or the Islamic State, it is difficult to discern whether a non-state actor is part of the Syrian insurgents and hence a primary warring party or an external supporter to the primary warring party “Syrian insurgents”. To err on the side of caution, no cases of non-state support to the “Syrian insurgents” were included.

Following UCDP coding rules, Hezbollah is coded as part of the Syrian government forces and not as a non-state supporter of the Syrian government. The rationale behind this decision is

⁵ This includes cases of external troop support that were added/removed in later versions of the UCDP Dyadic Dataset until v. 20.1. Therefore the coding of troop support is not identical to the coding of secondary warring support in the UCDP Dyadic Dataset 18.1 specifically.

⁶ Similarly, external support to any opposition actor operating in the Kashmir regions of India and Pakistan was coded as support to the composite actor “Kashmir insurgents”.

that Hezbollah acts under the command of the Syrian government and not as an independent actor in Syria.

Support by the United States and its allies to Kurdish opposition actors such as the PYD and the SDF is not coded as external support in the dyads Government of Syria – PYD and Government of Syria – SDF since the support is at least nominally intended to support the SDF in their conflict with the Islamic State, a parallel non-state conflict, and not with the Syrian regime. Therefore, clear intent to assist in the conflict against the Syrian government is missing. Likewise, any support provided by Iran and Russia to the Syrian government is not coded in the dyads Government of Syria – PYD and Government of Syria – SDF since clear intent to support the Syrian government in the Kurdish conflict is also missing.

The Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS is coded as providing external support in the conflict in Iraq, but not in Syria. To qualify as external support, support needs to be intentional and direct, i.e. aimed at assisting one side in a conflict to gain victory over another (cf. 2. Definition of External Support). In Syria, the Global Coalition did not aim to support the Syrian government, but to defeat the Islamic State. While the aims of the Syrian government and the Global Coalition in the conflict with the Islamic State align, the Global Coalition efforts against the Islamic State on Syrian territory do not qualify as external support. In Iraq, the aim is to assist the Iraqi government in the conflict with Islamic State and Global Coalition efforts against the Islamic State on Iraqi territory are thus included in the dataset.

5.8 *Miscellaneous*

al-Qaida

In the United States – al-Qaida dyad support to al-Qaida is included even if conflict activity took place outside the conflict location United States.

Boko Haram

Reports of support to “Boko Haram” in Nigeria were coded as support to the Islamic State in Nigeria from 2015 on since media reports generally do not distinguish between the Boko Haram faction that pledged allegiance to the Islamic State and the splinter group that re-founded Boko Haram around the same time. It is assumed that media reports referring to “Boko Haram” if not otherwise specified refer to the larger and more prominent Islamic State-affiliated branch.

6 Missing data

Observations with missing data are left blank. The dataset only contains missing values on variables related to external support for observations in which no external support was provided. The variables `ext_nonstate`, `ext_coalition`, `ext_coalition_name`, `ext_elements`, and `ext_bothersides` are set to empty where no external support was provided.

7 References

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Appendix 1 Definition of state-based armed conflict

UCDP defines state-based armed conflict as: “a contested incompatibility that concerns government and/or territory where the use of armed force between two parties, of which at least one is the government of a state, results in at least 25 battle-related deaths in a calendar year.”

The separate elements of the definition are operationalized as follows:

- (1) *Use of armed force*: use of arms, resulting in deaths.
 - (1.1) *Arms*: any material means, e.g. manufactured weapons but also sticks, stones, fire, water etc.
- (2) *25 deaths*: A minimum of 25 battle-related deaths per year and per dyad (cf. 3.3 in this definition) in an incompatibility.⁷
- (3) *Party*: A government of a state or any opposition organization or alliance of organizations. UCDP distinguishes between primary and secondary parties. Primary parties are those that form an incompatibility by stating incompatible positions (cf. 5. in this definition). At least one of the primary parties is the government of a state. Secondary parties are states that enter a conflict with troops to actively support one of the primary parties. The secondary party must share the position of the primary party it is supporting in the incompatibility.
 - (3.1) *Government*: The party controlling the capital of a state.
 - (3.2) *Opposition organization*: Any non-governmental group of people having announced a name for their group and using armed force to influence the outcome of the stated incompatibility (cf. 5. in this definition). The UCDP only deals with formally organized opposition. The focus is on armed conflict involving consciously conducted and planned political campaigns rather than spontaneous violence.
 - (3.3) *Dyad*: A dyad consists of two conflicting primary parties. At least one of the primary parties must be the government of a state. In interstate conflicts, both primary parties are state governments. In intrastate and extrasystemic conflicts, the non-governmental primary party includes one or more opposition organization(s). A conflict can include more than one dyad. If e.g. a government is opposed by three rebel groups over the same incompatibility, the conflict is made up of three dyads. Note that secondary parties (i.e. intervening states supplying troops to one of the primary parties) do not lead to the formation of additional dyads.
- (4) *State*: A state is an internationally recognised sovereign government controlling a specific territory or an internationally unrecognised government controlling a specified territory whose sovereignty is not disputed by another internationally recognized sovereign government previously controlling the same territory. See Appendix 5 for details on the sample of countries covered by this definition.
- (5) *Incompatibility concerning government or territory*: The incompatibility, as stated by the parties, must concern government and/or territory.

⁷ Note that an incompatibility involving two opposition groups, each involved in clashes with the government resulting in 20 deaths, would not be recorded as a conflict (neither dyad reached the minimum casualty threshold), whereas an incompatibility involving a single opposition group that caused 25 battle-deaths would be included in the dataset.

- (5.1) *Incompatibility*: The stated general incompatible positions.
- (5.2) *Incompatibility concerning government*: Incompatibility concerning type of political system, the replacement of the central government, or the change of its composition.
- (5.3) *Incompatibility concerning territory*: Incompatibility concerning the status of a territory, e.g. the change of the state in control of a certain territory (interstate conflict), secession or autonomy (intrastate conflict).

Appendix 2 List of coalitions in the UCDP ESD

Abbreviation in ESD	Full Name	Location of conflict	TCC ^a	First in data	Last in data
AMISOM	African Union Mission in Somalia	Somalia	8	2012	2017
Coalition forces	ad hoc coalition	Iraq	38	2004	2011
EUTM-Somalia	European Union Training Mission in Somalia	Somalia	14	2009	2017
EUTM-Mali	European Union Training Mission in Mali	Mali	17	2013	2017
G5 Sahel	ad hoc coalition	Chad, Niger	4	2013	2017
Global Coalition	Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS	Iraq	29	2014	2017
Gulf War Coalition	ad hoc coalition	Iraq	33	1990	1991
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force	Afghanistan	50	2006	2014
KFOR	NATO Kosovo Force	North Macedonia	4	2001	2001
MINUSMA	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali	Mali	37	2013	2017
MNJTF	Multinational Joint Task Force	Cameroon, Chad, Niger, Nigeria	4	2014	2017
MONUSCO-FIB	United Nations Force Intervention Brigade	DR Congo, Rwanda, Uganda	4	2013	2017
Multinational Coalition	ad hoc coalition	Afghanistan	42	2002	2005
NATO	ad hoc coalition	Ukraine	19	2014	2017
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom	Afghanistan	19	2001	2001
RCI-LRA	Regional Cooperation Initiative for the Elimination of the Lord's Resistance Army	Uganda	3	2011	2017
Saudi-led coalition	ad hoc coalition	Yemen	40	2015	2017
RS	Resolute Support Mission	Afghanistan	11	2015	2017
US-led coalition	ad hoc coalition	Iraq	45	2003	2003
War on Terror	ad hoc coalition	United States ⁸	25	2001	2017

^a Troop-contributing countries

⁸ Note that UCDP codes the September 11 attacks on targets in the United States and the subsequent "War on Terror" as an intrastate conflict between the United States and al-Qaida. Although the United States pursues al-Qaida around the globe, the location remains coded as the United States in the dataset.

Appendix 3 External support variables in the ESD AY

Variable name	Content	Type
ext_id	The unique identifier of the external supporter (government or opposition actor). Comma-separated if multiple.	String
ext_name	The name of the external supporter (government or opposition actor). Comma-separated if multiple.	String
ext_nonstate	Variable identifying all observations in which at least one of the external supporters is a non-state actor. (0) State supporters only (1) Non-state supporter	Integer
ext_coalition	Variable identifying all observations in which external support is provided as part of a coalition effort in at least one case. (0) Bilateral support only (1) Coalition support	Integer
ext_coalition_name	The name of the coalition.	String
ext_elements	Variable identifying all observations in which external support is provided by at least one substate actor. (0) No substate support (1) Support provided by substate actor	Integer
ext_bothsides	Variable identifying all observations in which at least one external supporter provides support to both primary warring parties in an armed conflict. (0) Support to one side only (1) Support to both sides	Integer
ext_sup ext_sup_s ext_sup_ns	Variable identifying all observations in which external support was provided by any supporter/at least one state supporter/at least one non-state supporter. (0) No external support (1) External support	Integer
ext_count ext_count_s ext_count_ns	Count of the number of all external supporters/state supporters/non-state supporters that provide any type of external support.	Integer
ext_* ext_*_s	Variable identifying all observations in which * support was provided (1) by any supporter/at least one state supporter/at least one non-state supporter.	Integer

ext*_ns	* x, p, y, w, m, t, f, i, l, o, u	
ext*_count	Count of the number of all external supporters/state supporters/non-state supporters providing * support.	Integer
ext*_count_s		
ext*_count_ns	* x, p, y, w, m, t, f, i, l, o, u	
ext_sum	Count of the number of different types of support provided by all supporters.	Integer

Appendix 4 External support variables in the ESD DY

Variable name	Content	Type
side_a_id	The unique identifier of the actor on side A. This variable corresponds to side_a_id in the UCDP Dyadic.	Integer
side_a	The name of the country/countries of Side A in a conflict. Always the government side in intrastate conflicts. Note that this is a primary party to the conflict. This variable corresponds to side_a in the UCDP Dyadic.	String
side_b_id	The unique identifier of the actor on side B in the dyad. This variable corresponds to side_b_id in the UCDP Dyadic.	Integer
side_b	Identifying the opposition actor or country of side B in the dyad. In an intrastate conflict, this includes a military opposition organization. Note that this is a primary party to the conflict. This variable corresponds to side_b in the UCDP Dyadic.	String
ext_id	The unique identifier of the external supporter (government or opposition actor) supporting the dyad. Comma-separated if multiple.	String
ext_name	The name of the external supporter (government or opposition actor) supporting the dyad. Comma-separated if multiple.	String
ext_coalition	Variable identifying all observations in which external support to the dyad is provided as part of a coalition effort in at least one case. (0) Bilateral support only (1) Coalition support	Integer
ext_coalition_name	The name of the coalition supporting the dyad.	String
ext_elements	Variable identifying all observations in which external support to the dyad is provided by at least one substate actor. (0) No substate support (1) Support provided by substate actor	Integer
ext_bothsides	Variable identifying all observations in which at least one external supporter provides support to both primary warring parties in an armed conflict. (0) Support to one side only (1) Support to both sides	Integer

ext_sup ext_sup_s ext_sup_ns	Variable identifying all observations in which external support was provided to the dyad by any supporter/at least one state supporter/at least one non-state supporter. (0) No external support (1) External support	Integer
ext_count ext_count_s ext_count_ns	Count of the number of all external supporters/state supporters/non-state supporters that provide any type of external support to the dyad.	Integer
ext_* ext*_s ext*_ns	Variable identifying all observations in which * support was provided (1) to the dyad by any supporter/at least one state supporter/at least one non-state supporter. * x, p, y, w, m, t, f, i, l, o, u	Integer
ext*_count ext*_count_s ext*_count_ns	Count of the number of all external supporters/state supporters/non-state supporters providing * support to the dyad. * x, p, y, w, m, t, f, i, l, o, u	Integer
ext_sum	Count of the number of different types of support provided by any supporter to the dyad.	Integer

Appendix 5 List of system members since 1946

StateNum	StateAb	StateName	StartYear	EndYear
2	USA	United States of America	1946	
20	CAN	Canada	1946	
31	BHM	Bahamas	1973	
40	CUB	Cuba	1946	
41	HAI	Haiti	1946	
42	DOM	Dominican Republic	1946	
51	JAM	Jamaica	1962	
52	TRI	Trinidad and Tobago	1962	
53	BAR	Barbados	1966	
70	MEX	Mexico	1946	
80	BLZ	Belize	1981	
90	GUA	Guatemala	1946	
91	HON	Honduras	1946	
92	SAL	El Salvador	1946	
93	NIC	Nicaragua	1946	
94	COS	Costa Rica	1946	
95	PAN	Panama	1946	
100	COL	Colombia	1946	
101	VEN	Venezuela	1946	
110	GUY	Guyana	1966	
115	SUR	Surinam	1975	
130	ECU	Ecuador	1946	
135	PER	Peru	1946	
140	BRA	Brazil	1946	
145	BOL	Bolivia	1946	
150	PAR	Paraguay	1946	
155	CHL	Chile	1946	
160	ARG	Argentina	1946	
165	URU	Uruguay	1946	
200	UKG	United Kingdom	1946	
205	IRE	Ireland	1946	
210	NTH	Netherlands	1946	
211	BEL	Belgium	1946	
212	LUX	Luxembourg	1946	
220	FRN	France	1946	
225	SWZ	Switzerland	1946	
230	SPN	Spain	1946	
235	POR	Portugal	1946	
260	GFR	German Federal Republic	1949	
265	GDR	German Democratic Republic	1949	1990
290	POL	Poland	1946	
305	AUS	Austria	1946	
310	HUN	Hungary	1946	
315	CZE	Czechoslovakia	1946	1992
316	CZR	Czech Republic	1993	
317	SLO	Slovakia	1993	

StateNum	StateAb	StateName	StartYear	EndYear
325	ITA	Italy/Sardinia	1946	
338	MLT	Malta	1964	
339	ALB	Albania	1946	
340	SER	Serbia	2006	
341	MNG	Montenegro	2006	
343	MAC	Macedonia (FRY)	1991	
344	CRO	Croatia	1991	
345	YUG	Yugoslavia (Serbia)	1946	2006
346	BOS	Bosnia-Herzegovina	1992	
347	KOS	Kosovo	2008	
349	SLV	Slovenia	1992	
350	GRC	Greece	1946	
352	CYP	Cyprus	1960	
355	BUL	Bulgaria	1946	
359	MLD	Moldova	1991	
360	RUM	Rumania	1946	
365	RUS	Russia (Soviet Union)	1946	
366	EST	Estonia	1991	
367	LAT	Latvia	1991	
368	LIT	Lithuania	1991	
369	UKR	Ukraine	1991	
370	BLR	Belarus (Byelorussia)	1991	
371	ARM	Armenia	1991	
372	GRG	Georgia	1991	
373	AZE	Azerbaijan	1991	
375	FIN	Finland	1946	
380	SWD	Sweden	1946	
385	NOR	Norway	1946	
390	DEN	Denmark	1946	
395	ICE	Iceland	1946	
402	CAP	Cape Verde	1975	
404	GNB	Guinea-Bissau	1974	
411	EQG	Equatorial Guinea	1968	
420	GAM	Gambia	1965	
432	MLI	Mali	1960	
433	SEN	Senegal	1960	
434	BEN	Benin	1960	
435	MAA	Mauritania	1960	
436	NIR	Niger	1960	
437	CDI	Cote D'Ivoire	1960	
438	GUI	Guinea	1958	
439	BFO	Burkina Faso (Upper Volta)	1960	
450	LBR	Liberia	1946	
451	SIE	Sierra Leone	1961	
452	GHA	Ghana	1957	
461	TOG	Togo	1960	
471	CAO	Cameroon	1960	
475	NIG	Nigeria	1960	
481	GAB	Gabon	1960	

StateNum	StateAb	StateName	StartYear	EndYear
482	CEN	Central African Republic	1960	
483	CHA	Chad	1960	
484	CON	Congo	1960	
490	DRC	Congo, Democratic Republic of (Zaire)	1960	
500	UGA	Uganda	1962	
501	KEN	Kenya	1963	
510	TAZ	Tanzania/Tanganyika	1961	
511	ZAN	Zanzibar	1963	1964
516	BUI	Burundi	1962	
517	RWA	Rwanda	1962	
520	SOM	Somalia	1960	
522	DJI	Djibouti	1977	
530	ETH	Ethiopia	1946	
531	ERI	Eritrea	1993	
540	ANG	Angola	1975	
541	MZM	Mozambique	1975	
551	ZAM	Zambia	1964	
552	ZIM	Zimbabwe (Rhodesia)	1965	
553	MAW	Malawi	1964	
560	SAF	South Africa	1946	
565	NAM	Namibia	1990	
570	LES	Lesotho	1966	
571	BOT	Botswana	1966	
572	SWA	Swaziland	1968	
580	MAG	Madagascar (Malagasy)	1960	
581	COM	Comoros	1975	
590	MAS	Mauritius	1968	
600	MOR	Morocco	1956	
615	ALG	Algeria	1962	
616	TUN	Tunisia	1956	
620	LIB	Libya	1951	
625	SUD	Sudan	1956	
626	SSD	South Sudan	2011	
630	IRN	Iran (Persia)	1946	
640	TUR	Turkey/Ottoman Empire	1946	
645	IRQ	Iraq	1946	
651	EGY	Egypt	1946	
652	SYR	Syria	1946	
660	LEB	Lebanon	1946	
663	JOR	Jordan	1946	
666	ISR	Israel	1948	
670	SAU	Saudi Arabia	1946	
678	YEM	Yemen (Arab Republic of Yemen)	1946	
680	YPR	Yemen, People's Republic of	1967	1990
690	KUW	Kuwait	1961	
692	BAH	Bahrain	1971	
694	QAT	Qatar	1971	
696	UAE	United Arab Emirates	1971	

StateNum	StateAb	StateName	StartYear	EndYear
698	OMA	Oman	1946	
700	AFG	Afghanistan	1946	
701	TKM	Turkmenistan	1991	
702	TAJ	Tajikistan	1991	
703	KYZ	Kyrgyz Republic	1991	
704	UZB	Uzbekistan	1991	
705	KZK	Kazakhstan	1991	
710	CHN	China	1946	
711	TBT	Tibet	1946	1950
712	MON	Mongolia	1946	
713	TAW	Taiwan	1949	
731	PRK	North Korea	1948	
732	ROK	South Korea	1948	
740	JPN	Japan	1946	
750	IND	India	1947	
760	BHU	Bhutan	1949	
770	PAK	Pakistan	1947	
771	BNG	Bangladesh	1971	
775	MYA	Myanmar (Burma)	1948	
780	SRI	Sri Lanka	1948	
781	MAD	Maldives	1965	
790	NEP	Nepal	1946	
800	THI	Thailand	1946	
811	CAM	Cambodia (Kampuchea)	1953	
812	LAO	Laos	1954	
816	DRV	Vietnam, Democratic Republic of	1954	
817	RVN	Vietnam, Republic of	1954	1975
820	MAL	Malaysia	1957	
830	SIN	Singapore	1965	
835	BRU	Brunei	1984	
840	PHI	Philippines	1946	
850	INS	Indonesia	1946	
860	ETM	East Timor	2002	
900	AUL	Australia	1946	
910	PNG	Papua New Guinea	1975	
920	NEW	New Zealand	1946	
940	SOL	Solomon Islands	1978	
950	FJI	Fiji	1970	