

Protein network centralities as descriptor for QM region construction in QM/MM simulations of enzymes

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Supporting Information

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S1 Computational Details

The initial structures for QM/MM calculations were generated according to the following protocols in our previous work [1, 2]. Molecular dynamics (MD) calculations were performed using GROMACS 2019.3 [3, 4] with the AMBER99SB-ILDN [5] force field. The different substrates were parametrized using ANTECHAMBER [6, 7] and ACPYPE [8, 9].

For COMT the equilibrated initial reactant and product structures provided by Kulik *et al.* [10] were solvated in TIP3P [11] water molecules in a cubic simulation box with 1 nm distance from the enzyme to the borders. After neutralizing the system by adding six sodium cations the solvent molecules and ions were minimized with the enzyme structure held fixed. Finally, a spherical droplet with a radius of 33 Å from the COMT center of mass was extracted containing COMT with substrates, sodium ions and the corresponding water molecules as starting structure for the QM/MM calculations.

The TIM reactant and product structures were prepared starting from the monomer A of the crystal structure with co-crystallized inhibitor phosphoglycolohydroxamic acid (PGH) (PDB: 7TIM [12]) by modification of PGH to dihydroxyacetone phosphate (DHAP) and glyceraldehyde phosphate (GAP), respectively. After solvating and neutralizing (3 sodium ions, protocol see COMT) the structure was minimized and equilibrated in an NVT and NPT ensemble, respectively.

All QM/MM calculations for atom-economical QM regions were performed using the Amsterdam Modeling Suite (AMS Version 2020.203) [13]. The Amsterdam Density Functional (ADF) engine [14] was used for the QM part applying density functional theory (DFT) with the PBE exchange-correlation functional [15] employing a DZ and a TZP Slater-type orbital basis set [16] for all geometry optimizations and single point calculations, respectively. In case of occurring convergence problems during the geometry optimizations (especially for TIM) the optimization was started using the B3LYP [17,18] XC functional

and afterwards continued with PBE. For the MM region the ForceField engine of AMS was used with the AMBER95 force field [19], which was extended by parameters for the substrates. The FIRE [20] minimization algorithm was used for all QM/MM geometry optimizations with all MM solvent molecules and ions fixed to their initial coordinates.

Input files for QM/MM were generated using the PDB2ADF tool provided provided by AMS. Electrostatic embedding as implemented in AMS [21] was applied for the interaction between the QM and MM regions. Link atoms were placed on the C_α -C and C_α -N bonds only including the α -carbon atom in the QM region for single QM amino acids, while also including the remaining backbone atoms between two subsequent QM amino acids to reduce the number of link atoms. All charges evaluated for the assessment of convergence and atom-economical QM regions are calculated from the Voronoi deformation density (VDD) [22] of the reactant structures only.

The construction of QM regions using saaPCVA results for COMT and TIM were generated following the corresponding protocols shown in our previous work (using the *standard* variant) [1,2]. The PCVA QM regions used here are identical to those constructed previously. Residues included in the QM regions for each system are listed in Tables S2 and S3 for COMT and in Tables S6 and S7 for TIM. These tables also give the corresponding QM region charge and the number of atoms and link atoms.

For the calculation of centrality descriptors, molecular dynamics (MD) calculations were performed as described above. For both, COMT and TIM, the identical protocol was executed featuring the solvation in TIP3P water in a cubic simulation box with 1 nm distance from the enzyme to the borders and the neutralization with sodium ions followed by minimization, NVT and NPT equilibrations runs and finally the productive 100 ns MD simulation resulting in 10,000 frames as basis for graph construction.

The analysis of results was achieved with Python. Network analysis and centrality calcu-

lation were also performed in Python using the WISP script [23] for correlation matrix and contact map construction and the networkx module [24, 25] for calculating d-, b- and e-centralities. Plots were generated with MATPLOTLIB [26, 27] and structures were visualized using Visual Molecular Dynamics (VMD) [28].

S2 Additional data for COMT

The rankings of the amino acid residues generated using PCVA, the three different centrality descriptors, and with the mixed *b-half* and *b-norm* approaches are listed in Table S1.

The residues included in the QM regions of increasing size (used in Fig. 2 A/B) are listed in Table S2, the residues included in the atom-economical QM regions (used in Fig. 2 C/D) are listed in Fig. S3.

Table S1: Comparison of residues included in a 16-residue (17 for d -centrality) QM region of COMT using PCVA, using d -, b -, and e -centrality descriptors, and using the mixed b -half and b -norm approaches. Numbers indicate the rank of the amino acid according to different descriptors. The highest-ranked 16 residues are marked in red. Residues in the d -centrality ranking can have the same rank if they are assigned the same centrality value. For the mixed approaches, 16 residues are assigned to their detection method indicated by b for b -centrality and by p for PCVA.

| Residue | PCVA | d | b | e | b-half | b-norm |
|---------|------|-----|-----|-----|--------|--------|
| ILE8 | 155 | 1 | 12 | 98 | b | b |
| MET39 | 8 | 18 | 139 | 171 | p | — |
| ASN40 | 25 | 93 | 20 | 110 | — | — |
| VAL41 | 15 | 66 | 27 | 51 | — | — |
| GLY42 | 53 | 110 | 104 | 86 | — | — |
| LYS45 | 16 | 3 | 18 | 23 | — | — |
| LEU62 | 52 | 28 | 13 | 20 | — | b |
| GLU63 | 23 | 18 | 10 | 17 | b | b |
| GLY65 | 2 | 132 | 21 | 105 | p | p |
| ALA66 | 6 | 93 | 11 | 79 | p | p |
| TYR67 | 14 | 28 | 6 | 99 | b | b |
| TYR70 | 34 | 17 | 4 | 36 | b | b |
| VAL73 | 138 | 9 | 7 | 35 | b | b |
| ARG74 | 186 | 9 | 24 | 27 | — | — |
| MET75 | 79 | 9 | 1 | 9 | b | b |
| GLU89 | 7 | 46 | 22 | 117 | p | — |
| MET101 | 113 | 3 | 29 | 65 | — | — |
| ILE122 | 87 | 3 | 17 | 46 | — | — |
| MET136 | 81 | 3 | 2 | 1 | b | b |
| VAL137 | 48 | 46 | 26 | 10 | — | — |
| PHE138 | 12 | 28 | 14 | 6 | — | b |
| LEU139 | 13 | 66 | 50 | 16 | — | — |
| ASP140 | 1 | 66 | 9 | 28 | p | p |
| HIS141 | 5 | 110 | 71 | 68 | p | p |
| TRP142 | 10 | 202 | 203 | 149 | — | — |

| | | | | | | |
|--------|-----|-----|-----|-----|---|---|
| LYS143 | 11 | 66 | 64 | 52 | — | — |
| TYR146 | 17 | 1 | 16 | 5 | — | — |
| THR150 | 71 | 9 | 37 | 12 | — | — |
| THR163 | 134 | 9 | 32 | 13 | — | — |
| LEU165 | 56 | 18 | 15 | 3 | — | — |
| LEU166 | 33 | 46 | 42 | 8 | — | — |
| ALA167 | 19 | 46 | 67 | 7 | — | — |
| ASP168 | 3 | 9 | 5 | 2 | p | p |
| ASN169 | 4 | 3 | 8 | 11 | p | p |
| VAL170 | 21 | 18 | 83 | 14 | — | — |
| PRO173 | 24 | 202 | 198 | 160 | — | — |
| PHE178 | 45 | 9 | 44 | 15 | — | — |
| SER195 | 43 | 152 | 146 | 123 | — | — |
| LEU197 | 27 | 66 | 48 | 100 | — | — |
| GLU198 | 9 | 28 | 3 | 64 | b | b |
| ASP204 | 29 | 28 | 69 | 49 | — | — |
| GLY205 | 32 | 28 | 111 | 24 | — | — |
| LEU206 | 30 | 46 | 78 | 26 | — | — |
| GLU207 | 47 | 3 | 30 | 4 | — | — |
| TYR211 | 192 | 9 | 34 | 37 | — | — |

Table S2: Information on the QM regions of increasing size for COMT constructed by PCVA with a variation of -0.5 . Reproduced from *J. Chem. Theory Comput.* **18**, 2584-2596 (2022), DOI: 10.1021/acs.jctc.1c01093.

| Region | Charge | Residues | Link atoms | Included residues |
|--------|--------|----------|------------|---|
| 1 | +1 | 0 | 0 | MG SAM CAT |
| 2' | 0 | 3 | 6 | D140 G65 D168 * |
| 3' | -1 | 7 | 8 | D140 G65 D168 N169 H141 A66 E89 * |
| 4' | -1 | 13 | 12 | D140 G65 D168 N169 H141 A66 E89 M39 E198 W142 K143 F138 L139 * |
| 5' | 0 | 19 | 18 | D140 G65 D168 N169 H141 A66 E89 M39 E198 W142 K143 F138 L139 Y67 V41 K45 Y146 L64 A167 * |
| 6' | 0 | 22 | 22 | D140 G65 D168 N169 H141 A66 E89 M39 E198 W142 K143 F138 L139 Y67 V41 K45 Y146 L64 A167 C172 V170 N91 * |
| 7' | -1 | 26 | 22 | D140 G65 D168 N169 H141 A66 E89 M39 E198 W142 K143 F138 L139 Y67 V41 K45 Y146 L64 A167 C172 V170 N91 E63 P173 N40 C94 * |
| 8' | -2 | 34 | 24 | D140 G65 D168 N169 H141 A66 E89 M39 E198 W142 K143 F138 L139 Y67 V41 K45 Y146 L64 A167 C172 V170 N91 E63 P173 N40 C94 L197 I90 D204 L206 G174 G205 L166 Y70 * |
| 9' | -2 | 43 | 26 | D140 G65 D168 N169 H141 A66 E89 M39 E198 W142 K143 F138 L139 Y67 V41 K45 Y146 L64 A167 C172 V170 N91 E63 P173 N40 C94 L197 I90 D204 L206 G174 G205 L166 Y70 R145 I88 A175 I171 D144 W37 S118 T87 S195 * |

* + MG SAM CAT H₂O

Table S3: Information on the atom-economical, 16-residue QM regions for COMT constructed based on PCVA schemes, centrality descriptors and mixed approaches. Residues are ordered according to their position in the indicator ranking.

| Region | Charge | Residues | Link atoms | Included residues |
|-------------|--------|----------|------------|--|
| PCVA | 0 | 16 | 16 | D140 G65 D168 N169 H141 A66 E89 M39 E198 W142 K143 F138 L139 Y67 V41 K45 * |
| degree | 1 | 17 | 28 | Y146 I8 E207 N169 M136 I122 M101 K45 Y211 F178 D168 T163 T150 M75 R74 V73 Y70 * |
| between | -2 | 16 | 26 | M75 M136 E198 Y70 D168 Y67 V73 N169 D140 E63 A66 I8 L62 F138 L165 Y146 * |
| eigenvector | -1 | 16 | 16 | M136 D168 L165 E207 Y146 F138 A167 L166 M75 V137 N169 T150 T163 V170 F178 L139 * |
| half | -3 | 16 | 24 | D140 G65 D168 N169 H141 A66 E89 M39 M75 M136 E198 Y70 Y67 V73 E63 I8 * |
| norm | -2 | 16 | 22 | D140 G65 D168 N169 H141 M75 M136 E198 Y70 Y67 A66 V73 E63 I8 L62 F138 * |

* + MG SAM CAT H₂O

To save computational time concerning the preceding MD simulation we investigated the composition of exclusively *b*-centrality-constructed QM regions with reducing the simulation time and consequently also the number of snapshots at the same time. Table S4 shows the ranks for the 16 highest-ranked residues in the full 100 ns simulation for all other truncated setups in a range between 90 and 10 ns in 10 ns steps. If we assume the longest simulation with the most snapshots to deliver the best results a 60 ns simulation would be sufficient as it only misses TYR146 by one rank. Consequently, the simulation time for this system to converge the centrality results is very short and together with the PCVA calculations the whole procedure can be executed in less than one day which still is faster compared to other established methods.

Table S4: The ranks for the 16 residues detected by the betweenness centrality approach in COMT based on a 100 ns MD simulation are shown for shorter simulation times ranging from 90 ns to 10 ns. Residues that are ranked under the first 16 amino acids are marked red.

| Residue | 100 ns | 90 ns | 80 ns | 70 ns | 60 ns | 50 ns | 40 ns | 30 ns | 20 ns | 10 ns |
|---------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| MET75 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 9 |
| MET136 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 22 | 21 |
| GLU198 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 5 | 2 | 6 |
| TYR70 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 6 | 7 | 9 | 2 |
| ASP168 | 5 | 5 | 7 | 7 | 8 | 7 | 7 | 8 | 5 | 14 |
| TYR67 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 8 | 8 | 9 | 4 | 4 |
| VAL73 | 7 | 7 | 9 | 9 | 5 | 10 | 9 | 6 | 7 | 11 |
| ASN169 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 12 | 9 | 10 | 10 | 12 | 7 |
| ASP140 | 9 | 9 | 13 | 13 | 13 | 21 | 20 | 19 | 25 | 17 |
| GLU63 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 19 | 19 | 27 | 18 | 26 |
| ALA66 | 11 | 11 | 11 | 11 | 11 | 12 | 14 | 11 | 8 | 10 |
| ILE8 | 12 | 12 | 14 | 14 | 16 | 15 | 13 | 15 | 16 | 25 |
| LEU62 | 13 | 13 | 12 | 12 | 9 | 6 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 5 |
| PHE138 | 14 | 14 | 5 | 5 | 7 | 5 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| LEU165 | 15 | 15 | 15 | 15 | 14 | 11 | 12 | 14 | 26 | 13 |
| TYR146 | 16 | 17 | 16 | 16 | 17 | 22 | 18 | 18 | 31 | 29 |

S3 Results and additional data for TIM

For COMT, we have shown in the main that the using *b*-centrality descriptor combined with PCVA for the construction of atom-economical QM regions is able to push both ligand charges and reaction energies towards the best estimate. To verify this trend, we applied the analogous analysis to triosephosphate isomerase system (PDB: 7TIM), which we previously used as a test case for systematic QM region construction in Ref. 2.

We again generated centrality rankings for all three centrality descriptors based on the TIM molecular dynamics trajectory (see Table S5) and constructed atom-economical, 16-residue QM regions (see Table S7) based on these rankings and the *half* approach combining PCVA and the *b*-centrality ranking. The results for the ligand charges and reaction energies are shown in Fig. S1 (see lower part, C/D) in comparison to those for QM regions of increasing size constructed using PCVA (see upper part, A/B)

Regarding the DHAP ligand charge (see Fig. S1C), with a 16-residue QM region the standard PCVA approach severely underestimates the negative ligand charge (-0.1 for PCVA vs. the best estimate of -0.25). The *d*- and *e*-centrality yield a ligand charge of zero, while using the *b*-centrality pushes the charge in negative direction towards the best estimate. The *b-half* approach severely overestimates the negative energy, but overall the results indicate that applying the *b*-centrality descriptor is capable of shifting results into the right direction.

For the reaction energy, the 16-residue QM region constructed using standard PCVA yields a slightly negative reaction energy, i.e., this QM region is not adequate, which we attributed to an insufficient size of a 16-residue QM region for this particular system in our previous work [2]. Using the *d*-centrality, a similar result is obtained, while all other approaches shift the resulting reaction energy into the right direction, but with overestimation compared to our best estimate of 9.5 kcal/mol. Here again, the *b*-centrality

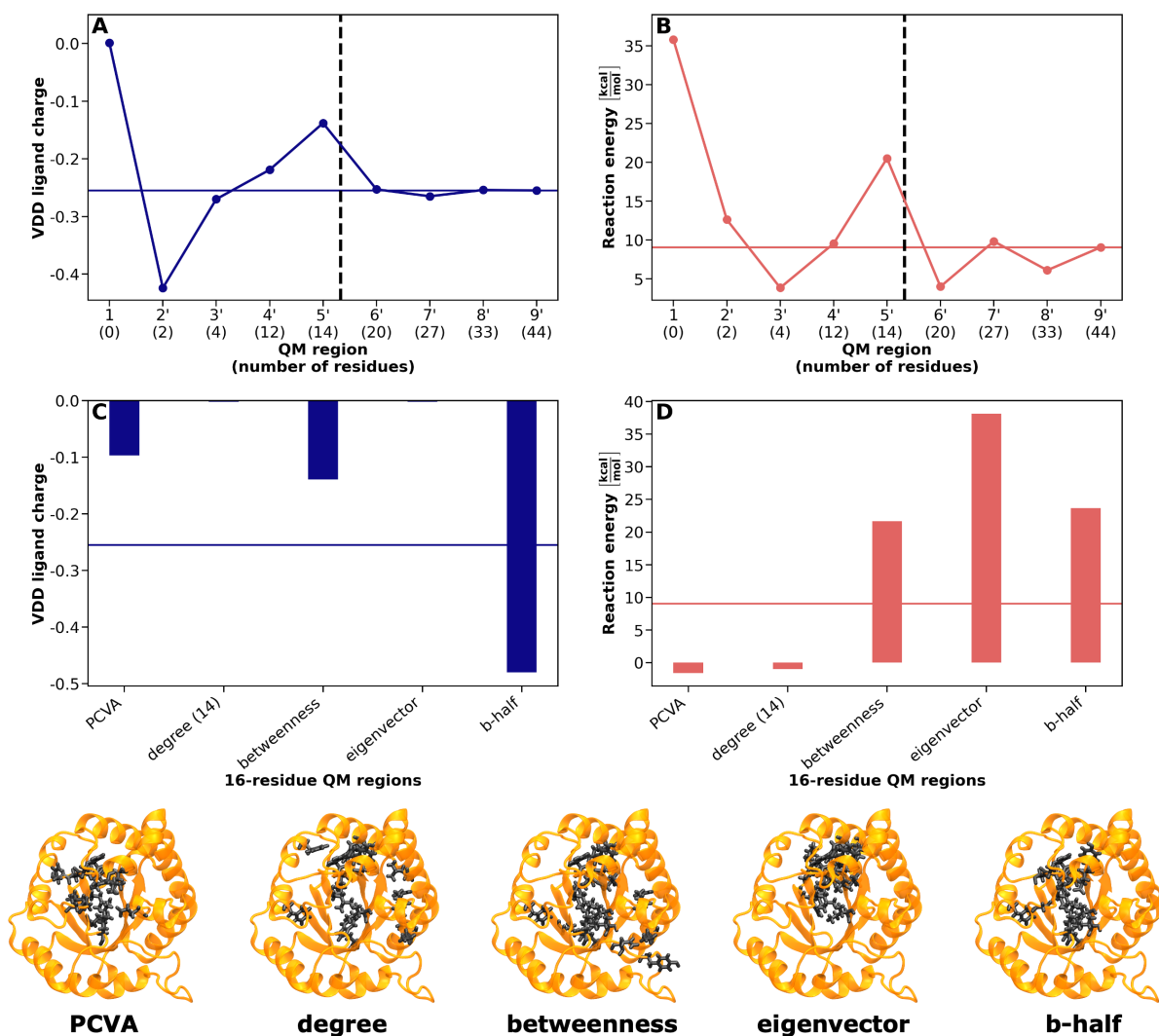


Figure S1: Ligand VDD charges and reaction energies from QM/MM calculations for TIM using QM regions of increasing size constructed using PCVA (upper part, adapted from Ref. [2]) and for atom-economical 16-residue QM regions constructed using PCVA as well as centrality-based descriptors (middle part). In the bottom part, the different QM regions are visualized without ligands. A: Convergence of the DHAP ligand VDD charges with increasing QM region size. B: Convergence of the QM/MM reaction energy for the interconversion reaction from DHAP to PGH in TIM with increasing QM region size. Best estimate results (corresponding to QM region **9'**) are indicated by a solid horizontal line. C: DHAP ligand VDD charge for atom-economical 16-residue QM regions (indicated by dashed vertical line in A) constructed using different centrality-based descriptors. D: QM/MM reaction energies for atom-economical 16-residue QM regions (indicated by dashed vertical line in B) constructed using different centrality-based descriptors.

performs best with about 22 kcal/mol, and the result is not improved by a combination with PCVA (about 24 kcal/mol).

Especially considering the previously discussed difficulties for TIM with non-detected high-impact residues such as HIS95 and the insufficient size of atom-economical QM regions (see Ref. 2), the observation that using the *b*-centrality moves both ligand charges and the reaction energy in the right direction is encouraging, and our results for TIM are thus a promising starting point for further investigations.

Table S5: Comparison of residues included in a 16-residue (14 for *d*-centrality) QM region of TIM using PCVA, using *d*-, *b*-, and *e*-centrality descriptors, and using the mixed *b-half* approach. Numbers indicate the rank of the amino acid according to different descriptors. The highest-ranked 16 residues are marked in red. Residues in the *d*-centrality ranking can have the same rank if they are assigned the same centrality value. For the mixed approach, 16 residues are assigned to their detection method indicated by b for *b*-centrality and by p for PCVA.

| Residue | PCVA | d | b | e | b-half |
|---------|------|-----|----|-----|--------|
| PHE6 | 56 | 30 | 36 | 13 | — |
| ASN10 | 12 | 66 | 79 | 67 | — |
| LYS12 | 3 | 96 | 11 | 130 | p |
| VAL39 | 113 | 15 | 10 | 31 | — |
| ASN65 | 80 | 96 | 16 | 123 | — |
| TYR67 | 152 | 30 | 13 | 191 | — |
| TRP90 | 158 | 4 | 1 | 22 | b |
| ILE92 | 75 | 44 | 8 | 54 | b |
| HIS95 | 17 | 66 | 23 | 77 | — |
| GLU97 | 13 | 139 | 32 | 165 | — |
| ARG99 | 127 | 4 | 9 | 66 | — |
| LYS112 | 148 | 8 | 14 | 80 | — |
| THR113 | 233 | 10 | 41 | 53 | — |
| ILE124 | 71 | 10 | 5 | 12 | b |
| LEU147 | 128 | 10 | 24 | 34 | — |
| VAL162 | 61 | 30 | 15 | 10 | — |

| | | | | | |
|--------|-----|-----|-----|-----|---|
| ALA163 | 23 | 66 | 65 | 15 | — |
| TYR164 | 34 | 1 | 3 | 5 | b |
| GLU165 | 5 | 66 | 50 | 44 | p |
| ILE170 | 14 | 120 | 55 | 180 | — |
| GLY171 | 9 | 240 | 244 | 239 | p |
| HIS185 | 54 | 4 | 42 | 2 | — |
| ILE188 | 91 | 15 | 49 | 11 | — |
| ARG189 | 116 | 1 | 12 | 4 | — |
| ARG205 | 90 | 15 | 4 | 8 | b |
| ILE206 | 60 | 15 | 72 | 3 | — |
| LEU207 | 31 | 10 | 19 | 1 | — |
| TYR208 | 16 | 4 | 6 | 6 | b |
| GLY209 | 6 | 139 | 77 | 45 | p |
| GLY210 | 4 | 190 | 157 | 73 | p |
| SER211 | 1 | 171 | 122 | 84 | p |
| ALA212 | 7 | 66 | 67 | 52 | p |
| ASN213 | 15 | 171 | 166 | 156 | — |
| PHE220 | 42 | 10 | 22 | 33 | — |
| VAL226 | 46 | 30 | 81 | 9 | — |
| ASP227 | 66 | 15 | 57 | 7 | — |
| GLY228 | 38 | 96 | 96 | 16 | — |
| LEU230 | 8 | 8 | 2 | 14 | b |
| VAL231 | 11 | 15 | 43 | 32 | — |
| GLY232 | 10 | 120 | 114 | 96 | — |
| GLY233 | 2 | 139 | 149 | 131 | p |
| PHE240 | 58 | 3 | 7 | 38 | b |

Table S6: Information on the QM regions of increasing size for TIM constructed by PCVA with a variation of -0.5 . Reproduced from *Phys. Chem. Chem. Phys.* **25**, 14484–14495 (2023), DOI: 10.1039/D3CP01263H.

| Region | Charge | Residues | Link atoms | Included residues |
|--------|--------|----------|------------|--|
| 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | DHAP/PGH |
| 2 | 0 | 2 | 4 | S211 G233 * |
| 3 | 1 | 4 | 6 | S211 G233 K12 G210 * |
| 4 | 0 | 12 | 12 | S211 G233 K12 G210 E165 G209 A212 L230 G171 G232 V231 N10 * |
| 5 | -1 | 14 | 14 | S211 G233 K12 G210 E165 G209 A212 L230 G171 G232 V231 N10 E97 I170 * |
| 6 | -1 | 20 | 20 | S211 G233 K12 G210 E165 G209 A212 L230 G171 G232 V231 N10 E97 I170 N213 Y208 H95 G173 A169 A175 * |
| 7 | -1 | 27 | 28 | S211 G233 K12 G210 E165 G209 A212 L230 G171 G232 V231 N10 E97 I170 N213 Y208 H95 G173 A169 A175 N14 F229 A163 A234 P166 C216 L236 * |
| 8 | -1 | 33 | 28 | S211 G233 K12 G210 E165 G209 A212 L230 G171 G232 V231 N10 E97 I170 N213 Y208 H95 G173 A169 A175 N14 F229 A163 A234 P166 C216 L236 G8 F11 I243 L207 L13 A176 * |
| 9 | -1 | 44 | 30 | S211 G233 K12 G210 E165 G209 A212 L230 G171 G232 V231 N10 E97 I170 N213 Y208 H95 G173 A169 A175 N14 F229 A163 A234 P166 C216 L236 G8 F11 I243 L207 L13 A176 Y164 A217 Q64 G214 G228 Y101 S96 V7 F220 L174 A181 * |

* + DHAP in reactants or PGH in products, respectively

Table S7: Information on the atom-economical, 16-residue QM regions constructed for TIM based on PCVA schemes, centrality descriptors and mixed approaches. Residues are ordered according to their position in the indicator ranking. Remark: degree consists of 14 residues.

| Region | Charge | Residues | Link atoms | Included residues |
|-------------|--------|----------|------------|---|
| PCVA | -1 | 16 | 14 | S211 G233 K12 G210 E165 G209 A212 L230 G171 G232 V231 N10 E97 I170 N213 Y208 * |
| degree | 3 | 14 | 24 | R189 Y164 F240 Y208 H185 R99 W90 L230 K112 F220 L207 L147 I124 T113 * |
| betweenness | 5 | 16 | 32 | W90 L230 Y164 R205 I124 Y208 F240 I92 R99 V39 K12 R189 Y67 K112 V162 N65 * |
| eigenvector | 1 | 16 | 16 | L207 H185 I206 R189 Y164 Y208 D227 R205 V226 V162 I188 I124 F6 L230 A163 G228 * |
| b-half | 1 | 16 | 22 | W90 L230 Y164 R205 I124 Y208 F240 I92 S211 G233 K12 G210 E165 G209 A212 G171 * |

* + DHAP in reactants or PGH in products, respectively

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