

Prof. Dr. Michael W. Bauer
Jean Monnet Professor
Chair of Comparative Public Administration and Policy Analysis
michael.bauer@uni-speyer.de

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MICHAEL W. BAUER

**INTRODUCTION: MANAGEMENT REFORMS IN
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

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Chapter 1

Introduction: Management Reforms in International Organizations

Michael W. Bauer

1. Gaps, blind spots and black boxes: management reforms in international organizations as a new research focus

Transnational interdependencies, resulting collective action problems and the challenges of externalities constitute the context for the growing importance of international organizations. Studying international organizations is certainly not a new academic venture (cf. Huntington 1973; Gould/Kelman 1970). International organizations have been the focus of scholarly interest for many years (for an overview cf. Barnett/Finnemore 1999, 2004; Rochester 1989). This long-standing interest in international organizations makes it even more astonishing that we have so little systematic understanding of the factors and conditions that determine the changes of their internal management (Abbott/Snidal 1998: 29; Liese/Weinlich 2006). For example, we do not know whether there is a particular international administrative management culture or whether international organizations are best treated just like national public sector bodies. We know precariously little about the crucial factors determining how routine administrative processes interrelate with the organizational leadership of international organizations. Last but not least, we are unaware of the patterns of adaptation and persistence with respect to administrative modernization of international organizations and whether international organizations - compared to national administrations - have been less, more or equally affected by the spread of New Public Management ideas during the last 25 years.

The reason for the dearth of studies concerned with the internal management and administration of international organizations is difficult to discern (Geri 2001; Bauer 2006). Probably the disinterest in the modernization of international executive bodies is related to the fact that this topic falls between the boundaries of various social science sub-disciplines. Put simply, the sub-disciplines of international relations and comparative politics, as the two most prominent epistemic communities studying international organizations, usually restrict their research interest to questions like 'what effects do international organizations and international cooperation have with regard to the sovereignty of states' or 'how do collective choices of or within international organizations affect domestic politics and policies' (Krasner 1988; Pollack 2003). There is no doubt that these are crucial questions. However, the point is that in such perspectives international organizations often are merely analyzed as a sort of a device or platform for transnational decision-making. The bureaucratic interior of international organizations deliberately remains outside the analytical focus. To

put it bluntly, scholars of international relations or comparative politics treat international organizations most of the time as ‘black boxes’.

Given the specific perspectives of international relations and comparative politics, public administration appears to be a ‘natural’ discipline to consult in order to learn about international organizations as bureaucratic entities. Is it not business as usual for public administration scholars to connect internal administrative structures with political processes and policy output? However, the vast majority of scholars of public administration have confined their research to the public sector of nation states. And also in those cases where a comparative perspective on public sector reform is the focus, the major efforts usually aim to compare national administrative systems (Peters 2001; Pollitt/Bouckaert 2004).

But is this neglect a result of chance or of structural implications? Are there any principal barriers that would prevent us from applying research strategies and hypotheses developed in the domain of comparative public sector reform to international organizations? At first sight, the political environment of international organizations seems to differ in important aspects from those of national or sub-national administrations. For example, issues of participation, representation, responsiveness, communication, party-ideological cleavages etc. appear to be less pronounced in the international sphere than in case of public administrations operating exclusively in the national arena (Frey/Stutzer 2005). However, such differences seem to be a matter of degree rather than of kind. Moreover, it is precisely such variation between an international organization’s political environment and national public administrations which point to promising theoretical avenues with respect to the formulation and the comparative testing of competing hypotheses. Results of studying systematic studies of administrative reform processes in international organizations may thus not only help us to uncover explanations for the international administrations but reflect back productively to the study of public sector reform in the national sphere. In other words, the hope is that by studying administrative reform at the international level we will eventually be able to develop superior analytical leverage for assessing the specific weight of individual causal factors, or, we might end up being able to define more precisely the scope conditions of our conventional theories. Hence, looking systematically at management reforms in international organizations should help us to construct more conclusive explanations for national as well as for international administrative change. Consequently, apart from the obvious gap of empirical knowledge that we address by systematically tackling administrative reforms of international organizations we may be able to contribute to the broader project of theory development in the field of comparative public administration.

To say that up to now the administrations of international organizations as an important feature of an increasingly important layer of emerging multi-level order have remained outside the focus of standard public administration analyses is true with probably one exception: the European Union’s supranational administration (cf. Hix 2005; Moravcsik 1998; Page 1997; Richardson 2006). What could be termed the ‘public administration turn’ of studying the European Union (Héritier 1997; Héritier/Knill 2001; Knill 2001) has provided us with a number of important insights into

the internal dynamics of the European Commission and its effects on supranational institution building and domestic policy outcomes (cf. Bauer 2005b for an overview; Egeberg 2006). The interest in the European Commission as a supranational administration originated in the 1970s (Michelmann 1978; Coombes 1970). Yet, it is only since the dramatic resignation of the Commission under the presidency of Jacques Santer that the administrative reform issue enjoys greater academic interest (cf. chapter 1 in this volume). In other words, it is exactly this exception that emphasizes the lack of general knowledge and the dearth of empirical case studies about management reforms in international organizations. This fact underlines once more that management reforms of international organizations are a plainly under-researched topic.

The present volume aims at taking on this research gap in two ways. First, a number of empirical examples of recent management reforms of international organizations are studied. Second, much effort has been invested in working out the analytical puzzles behind the various empirical reform stories. The authors collaborating in this volume do not aspire to fill a research gap with just one edited book. Yet, we think that the chapters are helpful in identifying crucial analytical questions and point to plausible answers to important aspects as regards reforming the internal administration of international organizations. We therefore hope that the empirical evidence and the theoretical arguments developed in this volume may contribute to setting the stage and motivating more academic interest in managerial change in international organizations.

This introduction is structured in the following way. After the current prologue a short section defines the crucial features of an international organization, if this international organization is to qualify as an object for studying managerial change (section 2). Section 3 formulates first expectations and hypotheses about the causes and scope of management reforms of international organizations. Sections 4 and 5 elaborate in turn on the ‘dependent variables’ as well as ‘independent variables’ as regards management reform issues. The last section gives an overview of the structure of the volume and introduces the main arguments of the individual chapters (section 6).

2. Defining international organizations

Defining what qualifies as an international organization is by no means a trivial task. Although one could make an argument that there are differences in kind between what we usually refer to as intergovernmental and supranational organizations, we suggest for the purpose of the analyses within this volume to stick to the innocuous term of ‘international organization’ comprising both intergovernmental and supranational international organizations. In our understanding an international organization is an organization of international scope or character. That is to say this volume

focuses only on such public international organizations whose members are predominantly sovereign states.¹ Non-governmental organizations, i.e. private international organizations are not part of our sample.² In accordance with the Yearbook of International Organizations³ we define public international organizations as a body

- being based on a formal instrument of agreement between the governments of nation states;
- including three or more nation states as parties to the agreement;
- possessing a permanent Secretariat performing ongoing tasks.

All in all, the yearbook lists around 5,000 such international public organizations and another 25,000 international organizations of various other types.⁴ These 5,000 public international organizations are active in virtually all existing states and even in 'stateless' territories. If we speak below of international organizations, we are therefore primarily concerned with the administrative basis of these organizations. It is their permanent Secretariats that constitute the bureaucratic real life existence of intergovernmental and supranational administrations.

3. Theoretical starting points for empirical analysis

There is some anecdotic evidence suggesting that many international organizations have recently started to buy into modernizing their administrative structures and internal practices. But how can we be sure to witness a new phenomenon? It could well be that we just lack the sufficient analytical tools to detect incremental modernization diachronically, so that we are now wrongly led to conclude that recent

1 As long as the vast majority of members of an international organization are states, we think it is unconvincing to exclude such international organizations or regimes for the only reason that a few other of its members may be public international organization; hence we qualify the members 'predominantly' and not 'exclusively' as states.

2 There is no doubt that it could be revealing to compare management problems of public or private, transnational and international, profit-making or charitable, religious or secular, civil or military international organizations (Huntington 1973). But such comparisons cannot be addressed by the present volume.

3 Cf. <http://www.uia.org/organizations/vol1.php>.

4 The yearbook lists additionally the following types of international organizations: conventional international bodies (type A: federations of international organizations, type B: universal membership organizations, type C: inter-continental membership organizations, type D: regionally oriented membership organizations), other international bodies (type E: organizations emanating from places, persons, other bodies, type F: organizations of special form: funds, networks, etc., type G: internationally oriented national organizations), special sections (type H: dissolved or apparently inactive international organizations, type N: national organizations, type R: religious orders and secular institutes, type S: autonomous conference series, type T: multilateral treaties and agreements), unconfirmed bodies (type J: recently reported or proposed international bodies, type U: untraced or currently inactive nonconventional bodies).

organizational change has been different in kind and intensity than any internal optimization before. Does the innovative analytical focus on management reforms in international organizations seduce us to see a new phenomenon just because scholars did not bother to look more carefully in the past? In addition, it may well be that today the different quality of transnational communication in combination with more critical national politicians and media led international organizations to oversell customary incremental change as revolutionary reform for obvious political reasons. These are serious questions and the truth is that we do not yet have conclusive answers to them.

However, at the very least we can be confident in one thing: management reforms in international organizations is not a bizarre and exotic academic theme but international organizations themselves have been recently increasingly keen on putting more effort - apparent or real - into making their internal administrative structures more effective and more efficient. Virtually all international organizations scrutinized in this volume claim that 'modernizing their administration' is one of their current key objectives. In other words, even if in some cases managerial modernization of international organizations are rather examples of changing public relations than of genuine reformative overhauls, finding out why international organizations feel the need to appear as reformers instead of conservers is still highly interesting and in itself worth the while studying.

The international organizations studied throughout this volume - the European Commission, the European Parliament, the European Central Bank (ECB), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the Nordic Council, the Council of the Baltic Sea States, the World Bank, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) - all appear to feel the need for administrative reform or have already engaged in more or less far-reaching modernization projects.

To weigh the fact that there is a proliferation of reform aspirations among international organizations one has to remember that international organizations - by their very constitution and mission - are meant to be stable entities, isolated from daily politics of their constituents and provided with a high degree of organizational autonomy as regards the running of their internal affairs. Put differently, if preservation is much more likely than reformation as regards internal administrative change, what, if it is indeed true that we witness a new wave of managerial change in international organizations, suspended the administrative conservatism of international organizations just now? And into the same vein, if it is true that international organizations are usually left to themselves as regards their internal administration why should we expect increasing reform efforts within this population now and in such a comprehensive fashion?

Scholars whose epistemology is based on assuming rational actor behavior would argue that there is more than an isomorphic tendency and that organizational change has something to do with policy delivery, organizational success or failure and the

perception of inefficiencies and accomplishments among the individual organizations' principals. But whether we will encounter such relationships is by no means a forgone conclusion. Hence, the question is whether we are indeed able to explain increased reform efforts within international organizations comprehensively just by dissatisfied and disengaged constituents? Increased reform activity may have quite different origins. For example, international organizations could have become more powerful actors, increasingly leaving purely technical soil and thereby trespassing into the area of politics. This would mean that increased modernization activity within international organizations is an ostensive sign that the role of international organizations within trans- or supranational governance has become ever more contested and international organizations are therefore increasingly put under scrutiny by worried national constituents (Frey/Stutzer 2005; Hooghe 2001: 144).

Moreover, administrative modernization could also be a sign of an ongoing struggle for organizational survival. Accordingly, not the increasingly important international organizations should be the most active reformers but those international organizations who are under ever greater threat of being made redundant. In this case, it is not growing importance and increased attention but uncertainty and organizational decline that lead international organizations to reform. There are also scholars who follow organizational life cycle theories. Accordingly, administrative rejuvenation would be a normal feature of the organizational bio-rhythm. The majority of international organizations have been created in the two decades following Second World War. As legitimate children of their time, they have been constructed according to what were then modern administrative standards. Now, however, their environment has changed; and so must they, if they are to stay in business. Finally, one can make an argument based on hegemony theory. In this view, international organizations are seen as regularly dominated by one of their members. Without the economic or military power of this crucial member the very existence of the international organizations would be put into question. In such cases, the logic of management modernization of a hegemonic international organization is that this modernization should follow the state of the art of administrative reform of the hegemony's national administration.

These few paragraphs may underline that there is no shortage of available theoretical approaches that could be used in order to come up with competing hypotheses about time, timing, scope and size of administrative modernizations of international organizations and about particular conditions under which to expect international organizations to engage more or less intensely in management reform. Reforms may be incremental or revolutionary; changes may be more symbolic or more real, depending on the organizational environment in which international organizations operate; their age or performance as well as the extent to which hegemonic members rather than the college of principals actually decide on the content and speed of reform. While the above enumeration of theoretical arguments is by no means exhaustive, it shows by which ways it might be possible to assess the comparative explanatory value of competing theoretical approaches in light of the empirical evidence provided by the subsequent chapters. One major advantage of such

reasoning is that it allows us to identify populations of international organizations, i.e. to group them according to theoretical implications. Such an ordering however is a precondition for designing meaningful empirical tests of the supposed causal relationships.

4. The dependent variable

What exactly constitutes the dependent variable of an individual research project is the first and most important question a researcher has to answer if the aim is to produce a meaningful empirical study. In the case of management reforms in international organizations as a research endeavor there are two basic sets of questions and hence dependent variables. The first, more basic set aims at explaining administrative reform as such. The second more complex set of questions asks what difference this particular administrative reform actually makes - in terms of policy output or even outcome. Neither of these questions has been systematically investigated so far. As it seems reasonable to take the first step before the second, the focus of this volume is on the explanation of administrative reform in international organizations as the dependent variable. If we now attempt to sketch out some - presumably - important features in this respect, that is not to prescribe, and thus limit further empirical investigations on the issue. Rather, one should understand it as a mapping exercise to provide some general orientation.

The first two descriptive distinctions that can be made are substance and process. Substance means that one has to ask for the magnitude or intensity of change of an individual modernization. It is common in the fields of comparative public policy and public administration to distinguish between three to four categories of change (Hall 1993; Sabatier/Jenkins-Smith 1993; Knill 2001; Pollitt/Bouckaert 2004). One thus may differentiate loosely between 'no change', 'optimization', 'reform' and 'transformation'.

'No change' does not need much of an explanation; it is just the absence of any meaningful change. 'Optimization' would be small level change; slack gets cut but no major player gets hurt. 'Reform' is the middle category. We should be here more precise to what is to be expected. The greatest magnitude of substantial change within this category may be 'structural modernization', the second one 'personnel modernization', the lowest 'budgetary modernization'. More precision as regards differentiating the reform class is needed, since it is very likely that many if not most of management modernization cases will come to fall into this category. One can make the case that operational budgetary and finance matters are somewhat easier to handle than a thorough overhaul of personnel policies of an international organization, since the latter affects everybody working within the organization and thus resistance to change can be expected to be very high. Finally, structural modernization in terms of closing down units, outsourcing tasks etc. must include or build upon financial and personnel matters and should therefore be the kind of class of change weighing heaviest within the reform category. The fourth broad category of

change is 'transformation'. Here the international organization really changes next to its budgetary, personnel and internal structures also its mission. It is thus redefining itself, its task and its relation to its organizational environment. Scholars interested in substance have to choose a precise period between t_0 and t_1 , define and operationalize their categories where they expect to detect managerial change and eventually attempt to establish the substance question in terms of nailing down the magnitude and quality of observable changes. If one could establish this magnitude question, one would have some clues about what changed but of course not about how that changes came about. Therefore, it is important to study processes, i.e. the relevant activities of the major players that make up for the time, timing and pace of an international organization's administrative modernization as well as the internal or external triggers that brought about management reform.

It is obvious that substance and process as sketched above are descriptive categories. While we will turn to explanation below, the very fact that we were confronted with a virtual absence of reliable studies about administrative modernization in international organizations suggests that much could be gained if - by using such merely descriptive schemata - we are able to systemize and qualify available observations about management modernization in international organizations.

5. Explanatory strategies

When looking for explanations of management reforms in international organizations, it seems promising to start with the famous standard textbook question of comparative analysis: 'of what is or are my international organization reform(s) a case of?' A priori there are no limits to subsume modernization processes of international organizations to particular and distinct research programs. However, there are a number of approaches which appear to be more promising than others for explaining managerial reform processes within international organizations. For example, management reforms of international organizations fit into the tradition of comparative public administration research on New Public Management ideas, i.e. this explanatory program would be to learn about the effects of the transfer of private management style to the public sector (Osborn/Gaebler 1992; Kettl 1994; Peters/Savoie 1998; Wright 1997; Common 1998). Modernization or reforms of international organizations can also be an issue for cultural theory (heterogeneous workforce, clashing culturally-loaded habits, styles and behavior), discourse theory (role of media), organizational sociology (what leads staff to buy in reform?), management theory (how do organizations learn?), accountability theory (modernization as a means to legitimize organizational existence or expansion), policy analysis (how does reform affect policy outcome?) and so on. It is important to note that - although most of these approaches use as a starting point the occurrence of some kind of organizational crisis - they can be distinguished by, first, whether they want to explain how and to what extent management reform has come about (reform as de-

pendent variable) or, second, whether they take reform as the factor explaining other kinds of organizational or policy change (reform as independent variable).

Table 1: Understanding management reforms in international organizations: phenomena, research questions and theoretical approaches

research process	phenomenon	theories and approaches
constructing populations and formulating hypotheses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> reforms as signs of organizational success reforms as signs of organizational failure age degree of autonomy proficiency (perceived) success structure of principal relationship (hegemonic vs. group of equals) function (economic, social, security) single task vs. multiple tasks relationships to the private sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> public administration life cycle theory principal agent theory New Public Management and its critiques organizational sociology resource dependence theory delegation theory
management reform as the <i>dependent variable</i> , i.e. explaining it as such (focus of this volume)	<p>substance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> no change optimization reform transformation <p>process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> incremental vs. revolutionary time, tempo, timing interests of actors involved losers vs. winners 	<p>internal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> bureaucratic politics cultural theories decoupling veto players garbage can policy entrepreneur <p>hybrid</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> institutionalism policy windows <p>external</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> isomorphism symbolic politics bandwagoning transfer diffusion lesson drawing power hegemony
management reform as the <i>independent variable</i> , i.e. explaining its impact on output and outcome	<p>analytical questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> effects on policy output relationship between organizational leadership and administration paradoxical and unintended consequences legitimacy 	
towards generalizations and synthesis	re-integration of the analysis of management reforms of international organizations in comparative public administration	

In addition, the various approaches can also be distinguished as to whether their research program focuses external or internal factors for explaining reform. We can briefly outline two respective approaches or explanatory programs and how they could help to shed light to understanding management reforms in international organizations.

External factors: A first variety of research programs ask questions of how do organizations or policies become ever more homogeneous, how do complex organizations, such as states, learn from one another, how do policy or organizational solutions travel from one constituency to another, and what are the factors facilitating the acceptance of 'alien' solutions 'at home' (DiMaggio/Powell 1991; Dolowitz/Marsh 2000; Brooks 2005; Meseguer 2006). Transfer, diffusion, lesson drawing, learning as well as bandwagoning and symbolic politics are the mechanisms which - although they can not be discussed in detail here (cf. however Knill 2005; Common 1998) - appear to be of great relevance for this discussion, if a broader explanatory program for understanding management reform processes of international organizations is to be developed.

Internal factors: A second way to unpack change is to look at the internal side of the story. The concepts of veto players (who can obstruct reform?), incrementalism (bounded rational actors), garbage can (contingent decision-making processes), policy entrepreneur (reform advocates), office maximizing strategies (redistributive interests of top managers), principal agent theory (reform pressure from constituencies - in particular those who finance the budget of the organization), decoupling (jumping the modernization trend without implementing meaningful reform) are all approaches that focus - applied to our object - on internal factors driving management reform within international organizations (Tsebelis/Kreppel 1998; Lindblom 1959; Kingdon 2003; Cohen/March/Olsen 1972; Pollack 2003; Dunleavy 1985; 1992; Brunsson 1989).

Particularly important for the internal perspective appears to be the institutional context like decision-making rules, positional and policy-orientation power games, and distribution of power (Shepsle 1989; North 1999; Reinalda/Verbeek 2004). The institutional context in relationship to (expected) power shifts between the affected administrative actors (as reform winners and losers) and reform advocates may thus be crucial. Looking at institutional relationships means focusing on the interrelatedness between internal and external factors.

Research questions within these contexts are probably more heterogeneous than those of the research programs looking at external factors. Moreover, where isomorphism and similar approaches do stress homogenizing effects, bureaucratic politics and related approaches lead us to expect inertia rather than change. The challenge probably is to synthesize the external and internal approaches in order to come to more comprehensive and complete explanations of causes and effects of management reforms in international organizations.

6. *The structure of the volume*

The volume is structured into three parts. A first part brings together the chapters focusing on management reforms in supranational organizations, the second comprises the investigations of management reforms in intergovernmental organizations and the third and last part raises issues of general theoretical interests.

Chapters 2, 3 and 4 tackle the management reform of the European Commission from various perspectives. Emmanuelle Schön-Quinlivan and Anchrit Wille start off by investigating two important features of the recent administrative modernization of the European Commission. Emmanuelle Schön-Quinlivan shows how, if implemented according to textbook, the recent reform of the European Commission increases procedural control and monitoring - and thus adds more red-tape to an already cumbersome internal coordination. Anchrit Wille points out how top bureaucrats in the European Commission assess the advantages and disadvantages of the modernization. She shows that the Directors General, i.e. the highest Commission officials, do actually embrace the reform quite positively - most likely because the reform does improve their individual steering capacity. In chapter 4 Michael W. Bauer adds to our understanding of the recent Commission reform with a historic comparison. He asks the question why the latest reform succeeded where all previous efforts failed. He comes up with a factorial scheme that highlights the politics dimension, i.e. the actor relationships behind reform initiatives. In this perspective organizational leadership, participation and skilful manipulation of internal rules made the difference. Tarvo Kungla presents in chapter 5 the case of management reform within the Secretariat General of the European Parliament. A mixture of internal and external factors is scrutinized. He concludes however that the time, timing and the scope of the reform - though having been structured by outside events - has remained under firm control of internal reform advocates. An even more striking example of a very young organization, namely the European Central Bank, engaging - voluntarily and without obvious external forces - in a serious internal management reform is given by Gabriel Glöckler in chapter 6. It appears that the internal pressure of the highly skilled workforce in spite of frustrating managing procedures played an important role in this unlikely - not to say 'least likely' - and therefore extremely interesting case.

In chapter 7 Daniele Alesani, Mariannunziata Liguori and Ileana Steccolini open the second part of the volume with a comparative study about the practice of accountability communication among several United Nations organizations. Daniele Alesani and his collaborators show that striving for legitimacy is the single most important factor deciding about the individual organization's reporting strategies. Tim Balint and Christoph Knill analyze in chapter 8 to which extent the OECD reformed its human resource management in line with NPM principles. They do not find a high degree of reform. But precisely the non-occurrence is of major theoretical interest since from the perspective of theories of institutional isomorphism pressures for NPM-based adjustments were quite strong for the OECD. This negative finding points to important restrictive scope conditions for expecting isomorphic

change. As they conclude, 'it seems to be the case that organizations are highly selective in deciding upon which type of policy innovations diffusing internationally they adopt. Our case indicates that relative benefits to be obtained from isomorphic adjustments for overcoming existing problems are of crucial importance.'

In chapter 9 Michael Kerler attempts to explain the World Bank's organizational changes in 1987, 1993 and 1997. Michael Kerler's process tracing approach identifies four crucial relationships. Accordingly, management reforms in the World Bank seem to be the consequence of shocks and crises, and less a result of internal feedback and learning. Further, management reforms often go hand in hand with broader policy changes concerning the mission and vision of an international organization. In addition, the function of informal agenda-setting can be fulfilled more readily by top-level actors newly recruited from outside - since they appear to be less restricted by prior loyalties and vested interests. Finally, Michael Kerler points to the importance of the institutional structure and the design of the decision-making procedures for the shape and success of an organizations' managerial reform. Tobias Etzold closes with chapter 10 the second part of the volume on management reform in intergovernmental organizations with case studies on the reorganization processes in the Nordic Councils and the Council of the Baltic Sea States. Especially the Nordic Council is a highly interesting case, since it is about the management modernization of a rather small, innocuous and homogeneous administration with respect to its constituents. Most of the 5,000 international organizations worldwide are, however, much more like the Nordic Council than like the famous UN organizations or the various bureaucracies of the European Union. Tobias Etzold determines that modernization in the Nordic Council progresses incrementally and unspectacularly in a continuous adaptation process. Even major external changes have been managed with little trouble.

The final section of the volume provides space for horizontal issues of a more general interest. Veith Mehde analyzes in chapter 11 the precarious - since indirect - relationship between citizens and international organizations and constructs a theory of 'the missing link' that leads him to expect that management reforms of international organizations are to a large extent attempts to improve their unsteady and unstable political legitimacy. In chapter 12 Soo Mee Baumann, Markus Hagel and Barbara Kobler are interested in the 'human variable' of management reform processes in international organizations. They pose a simple, but crucial question: how important are the heads - usually the Secretary Generals - of international organizations for whether management reforms are successful or not. To answer this question they develop a 'reform broker concept' and investigate ten cases of management reforms in international organizations. They empirically determine that committed leadership correlates positively to the intensity and the success of management reforms in international organizations.

In the final chapter 13 Christoph Knill and Michael W. Bauer attempt to systemize the results of the case studies and sketch the analytical and theoretical added-value of our discussion. Taking the evidence and the analyses of the case studies seriously, they formulate a number of hypotheses which summarize not only the

jointly generated knowledge but aspire to raise crucial questions for further empirical and theoretical investigations into the management reform issue.

Without anticipating the discussion of chapter 13, the case studies within this volume show plainly that it is worthwhile to focus on issues concerning internal reforms of international organizations. Given the growing importance of international organizations for producing collective action on an international scale, implications of substance, scope, timing and policy effects of management reforms of international organizations are of huge interest to academia and society alike. Understanding management reforms of international organizations (better) is - by itself - already a respectable contribution. In addition, management reforms of international organizations may be used as testing ground for broader research programs in the social sciences. However, while we do not see an alternative to starting with questions aiming to explain the substance, scope and process of management reforms, i.e. conceiving of management reforms in international organizations as the dependent variable; we are convinced that in the medium- to long-term the crucial question is what effect, if any, these management reforms have on policy output and policy outcome. In other words, only if we are able to turn the management reform issue into the independent variable and attempt to establish the conditions under which such reforms do affect organizational policy output, will we have succeeded in crafting a lasting contribution - relevant to the academic venture of theorizing organizational change and to our societies who rightfully demand optimal blueprints for organizational engineering under conditions of multilevel governance.