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**INTERNATIONAL BUREAUCRACIES FROM A PUBLIC  
ADMINISTRATION AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS  
PERSPECTIVE**

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International organizations (IOs), defined as intergovernmental entities based on a multilateral treaty and possessing a permanent secretariat, have always been of concern to scholars of International Relations (IR). Students of IR used to focus on the international system by analytically separating the international level from national domestic politics. International organizations were viewed as an outcome of a struggle between national governments; from this perspective, IOs were expected to change according to the changing national interests that were responsible for creating them. With the spread of institutionalist thinking in IR (fuelled by the end of the Cold War and efforts to strengthen regional integration), IOs are increasingly considered to be more than the mere instruments of their members. International Relations scholars have, for example, started to identify differential state preferences in order to permanently delegate certain competences to IOs (Abbott and Snidal 1998). Yet the consequences of intra-organizational variation in formal administrative structures or the informal behaviour of international civil servants, especially when it comes to the explanation of organizational policies, are largely still outside the focus of 'standard' IR.

Public Administration (PA) scholars have recently taken up such questions. Their starting point is the increasing domestic importance of collective decisions in which IOs are involved. This perspective focuses on the role of the growing international bureaucratic bodies that actually prepare international policy decisions and programmes as well as supervise the domestic implementation of international agreements (Bauer and Weinlich 2011). Thus, PA scholars conceive of IOs as an additional level of policy making in an already highly differentiated system. For them, the interaction of politics and administration within and across the different levels (regional, national and international) is the key to a proper analysis of what has been termed 'multi-level governance' (Hooghe and Marks 2003). For IR scholars, politics at the international level continues to be seen by and large as a function of interactions between states, whereas PA is better equipped to conceptualize the 'actorness' and 'exogenous' role of entities emerging at the international level. Simply put, IR usually is better in explaining why IOs are created, whereas PA is better suited to analyzing the policy-making role of IOs and their bureaucracies in day-to-day politics.

In view of these tendencies, this chapter looks to what could be called 'international bureaucracy research' at the intersection of the disciplines of PA and IR. We structure this contribution as follows: first, we review the literature on international bureaucracies within PA and IR; then we identify topics that make up common ground and that should be examined more closely in order to broaden our understanding of international bureaucracies. Our central proposition is that the more IR becomes an analysis of international policy making, the more important it becomes to systematically consider the bureaucratic dimension of governance, in particular the role of the international bureaucracies themselves. Bureaucracy, not anarchy, is likely to be the defining feature of the international system in the twenty-first century.

## **Public Administration as the basis for studying international bureaucracies**

An understanding of PA as a sub-discipline of Political Science is driven by the assumption that the process of public policy making is always characterized by hierarchical information processing (Hammond 1993) and the interaction not only between elected politicians but also, and crucially, between administrative actors. Thus,

international bureaucracies have to be taken into account if we wish to study global governance and the behaviour of IOs. What, then, have PA scholars contributed to this discussion thus far?

Starting from the observation that political authority has been reallocated 'upward, downward, and sideways from central states' (Hooghe and Marks 2003: 233), we note that *upward* reallocation is probably most visible in regional integration arrangements (Börzel et al. 2012). Of these organizations, the European Union (EU) is the most authoritative and independent (Haftel and Thompson 2006). Hence, it comes as no surprise that interest in international bureaucracies is most pronounced in the field of European Public Administration, where the European Commission, as the administration of the EU, is by far the most intensively studied institution. In these studies the Commission is first and foremost viewed as a public administration in its own right (Michelmann 1978; Hooghe 2005; Egeberg 2006). Despite the pronounced focus on the EU system in internationally oriented PA (for an overview of the distinct features of this discipline, see Heady 1998), other organizations have also received scholarly attention. We distinguish three topics that PA scholars have found particularly puzzling: 1) the functioning of the international civil service, 2) management reforms and organizational change, and 3) the influence of bureaucrats on international policy making.

#### *The international civil service*

The staff of international secretariats has been on the research agenda of PA scholars since the foundation of the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the establishment of its independent international civil service (Phelan 1932). Since the founding of the League of Nations and other IOs, countless PA scholars, who often enough had been employees of these organizations, have written extensively about the role of the international civil service over the last 80 years (for exemplary works, see Ranshofen-Wertheimer 1943; Beigbeder 1988). In 1970, a special issue of *Public Administration Review* entitled 'Towards an International Civil Service' (Mailick 1970) reflected the pronounced interest of PA scholars in research on international bureaucracies and international civil servants in particular. Right from the beginning, scholars recognized that international bureaucracies are subject to multinational staffing procedures, which creates problematic repercussions in the cooperation of people from different countries and cultures within the administration (Langrod 1963). Whereas early efforts have been criticized as largely descriptive and insufficiently backed by general theory (Weiss 1975: xv), more recent projects have studied the supranational norms of international civil servants (Hooghe 2005; Ellinas and Suleiman 2011). In the same vein, the personality of the top civil servants of these organizations, such as Dag Hammarskjöld (United Nations) and Jacques Delors (EU), proved to be crucial elements of direction and leadership that helped keep these heterogeneous administrations together and facilitated efficient functioning of the organization (Langrod 1963: 201). These case studies have contributed to the understanding of processes within individual organizations and have pointed to the need for national governments to promote more independence for international civil servants. However, it was not until the spread of ideas from 'new public management' from national to international administrations (Geri 2001) that an opportunity opened for more systematic research on international bureaucracies.

#### *Management reforms and organizational change*

In contrast to studies on international civil servants, research on institutional reforms and change focuses heavily on formal rules. Such research is often inspired by a wish to counter the increasingly popular criticisms of organizational pathologies and mismanagement with academically grounded knowledge from management studies (Dijkzeul and Beigbeder 2003). Not least owing to its severe organizational crisis and the subsequent reform efforts, the European Commission continues to attract a great deal of academic attention (Kassim 2008). In this context, researchers have investigated the perception of reform within organizations and found that civil servants are quite tolerant towards administrative reform on the condition that the personal goals of international officials remain unharmed (Bauer 2012). On the other hand, management reforms have also been studied with regard to their effects on the working capacities of middle managers. These studies suggest that stronger output orientation and increased administrative steering in fact weaken the capacity for policy innovation within the Commission's administration (Bauer 2008). Some authors have reversed the question and inquired not into the consequences but rather into the drivers of management reform. In accordance with Bauer's (2012) conclusion regarding administrators' perception of Commission reform, Nay (2011) found that the poorly equipped UNAIDS secretariat became an important entrepreneur of reform which, together with its political principals, promoted organizational change in order to expand its coordinating role. In recent years, the study of organizational change has become more comparative: scholars have discovered both national administrations (Balint et al. 2008; Bauer and Ege 2012) and other international bureaucracies (Bauer and Knill 2007) as cases for fruitful comparison with the Commission administration. As a consequence, nowadays one hears less and less that old *sui generis* verdict declaring any effort to compare the Commission to other administrations a project of limited value (Pollack 1997: 102). Furthermore, students of PA have started to explore behavioural dynamics within other international (compound) bureaucracies, such as the secretariats of the World Trade Organization and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (Trondal et al. 2010), and the classic PA topic of the role of bureaucrats in public policy making (Suleiman 1984) has appeared on the 'internationalized' research agenda as well.

### *The influence of international bureaucracies on policy output*

This third strand of research clearly remains in the tradition of the older literature on international civil servants but increasingly examines their influence and power in international governance (Mathiason 2007; Welter and Xu 2010). Identifying the 'administrative footprint' in IO policy making is, on the one hand, driven by the desire to limit the influence of illegitimate international 'mandarins' and to increase the steering capacities of political leaders (Eppink 2007). From such a perspective, the study of international policy making adheres to the basic assumptions of public choice theory, whose emphasis on the pathological effects of unconstrained self-interested bureaucrats may be even more troubling at the international level (Haas 1964: 98). On the other hand, scholars have highlighted the benefits of output-oriented legitimacy by emphasizing that powerful bureaucracies do not necessarily constitute a crisis of democracy, as a lack of input legitimacy by means of direct election may be justified if the solutions provided are more effective in achieving the public interest (Scharpf 1999). Irrespective of one's trust in international institutions, several characteristics seem to put these international bodies in a particularly advantageous position to develop

autonomous preferences and act according to them; even though international bureaucracies have, in comparison with national administrations, rather limited policy competences and weaker implementation powers, the existence of multiple political principals, the high volatility of their external environment, and the existence of accountability gaps - in particular, the lack of parliamentary scrutiny - may actually strengthen their autonomy. Thus, political control of highly educated expert bureaucrats by heterogeneous member-states in the absence of a strong public sphere seems difficult. Although the academic community repeatedly assumes that factors like high levels of attributed moral or expert authority, the technical complexity of the policy field, or the salience of a decision form specific conditions for bureaucratic influence, these conditions are rarely subject to systematic empirical scrutiny. One of the few exceptions is the 'Managers of Global Change' project (Biermann and Siebenhüner 2009), which uses nine case studies to determine the conditions for autonomous bureaucratic influence. Mainly by altering the knowledge and belief systems of different actors, the environmental bureaucracies under scrutiny are found to be particularly influential if there are low costs for public action and regulation and if there is low salience for national decision makers. In addition to these problem-specific factors, organizational variables such as the mandate and material resources turn out to be less important conditions for bureaucratic influence. Most surprisingly, however, the project identified intra-organizational factors related to staff and procedures as crucial conditions that have been largely overlooked in previous studies. Bureaucratic expertise (often in combination with organizational neutrality), flexible hierarchies, and strong administrative leadership (Biermann and Siebenhüner 2009: 337-44) explain a large degree of variation in bureaucratic influence.

In sum, PA as a Political Science sub-discipline has made some advances in studying inter-national bureaucracies. It is, however, just beginning to explore the bureaucratic dimension of governance *above* the state. Much will depend upon whether the sub-discipline is able to adjust (or even innovate upon) its traditional assumptions and concepts to the less stable and vastly more heterogeneous context of internationalized policy making.

## **The conception of international bureaucracies in the field of International Relations**

The conception of IOs has changed over the last five decades. Whereas nation-states were long considered the only relevant actor in the anarchic international system, IOs are now being recognized as autonomous actors in global governance. Quite obviously, this debate is embedded in the broader controversy over the influence of institutions in the international system more generally. It seems to be broadly recognized today (though not unchallenged, see Moravcsik 1999) that IOs do indeed matter independently and autonomously of their national governments' principals (Reinalda and Verbeek 1998). Hence, our focus here is on how such independence, particularly with a view to the bureaucratic bodies involved, has been conceived in recent decades. In so doing, we follow David Lake (2007: 221) and employ the common distinction between principal-agent approaches rooted in rational-choice institutionalism and sociological institutionalism, which takes a more constructivist point of view.

### *Principal-agent approaches*

The principal-agent theory is applied to various political and economic phenomena that are based on contractual relationships. In IR, such an approach is typically applied in order to model a delegation relationship between IOs and their member-states (Hawkins et al. 2006).

Although the research agenda was initially driven by the question of why IOs are created in the first place and how member-states are able to control IOs in the face of information asymmetries (Abbott and Snidal 1998; Stone 2011), scholars gradually have become more interested in the internal mechanisms of IOs. When we look at how the research questions of principal-agent studies are currently being framed, we see more and more studies taking into account bureaucratic characteristics. These studies increasingly narrow down the agent role to the international secretariat (Elsig 2010: 351) and include administrative features such as independent staffing and the secretariat's ability to initiate or recommend policies as indicators of higher IO independence (Haftel and Thompson 2006).

Studies by Grigorescu (2010) and Brown (2010) illustrate the paths that IR scholars increasingly pursue. Whereas most studies focus on whether and how IOs are able to act autonomously, Grigorescu (2010) approaches the puzzle of delegation from the opposite direction and inquires into the determinants of bureaucratic oversight mechanisms that constrain the autonomy of international bureaucracies. The author collects information on oversight mechanisms (such as inspections, personnel evaluations, investigations and transparency requirements) in order to construct an additive index of bureaucratic oversight. His data on 73 IOs indicate that three groups of explanatory factors can account for the variation in oversight functions. First, there are the preferences of democratic member-states to symbolically erect this kind of control over international bureaucracies in order to signal to their domestic constituencies that democratic values are being pursued in the international realm as well. Second, some states try to maintain control over organizational policies and resources and substitute for a loss in *ex ante* control over policy making (i.e. through majority voting) by means of increased bureaucratic oversight. Finally, the author has detected a learning process in which an IO is found to implement a certain oversight mechanism if a partner organization has previously adopted the same mechanism.

The mainly conceptual work of Brown (2010) aims to construct an empirical yardstick for comparing delegation across time and organizations. Even though the author does not provide data for a larger sample of IOs, the study provides a generally applicable indicator-based measurement framework. By distinguishing between three sub-dimensions of delegation and various indicators, Brown's study is probably the most detailed administration-centred application of the principal-agent approach to IOs. Member-states' characteristics play hardly any role in his study. At the same time and in line with most other principal-agent approaches in IR, however, Brown is reluctant to explicitly attribute agency (which is largely measured by means of bureaucratic attributes) to the bureaucracy itself and instead refers to the organization as an agent without further explicating what the organization actually is.

### *Sociological institutionalism*

In addition to principal-agent approaches, advocates of sociological institutionalism became increasingly unsatisfied with the instrumental conception of IOs and shifted attention to the inevitable autonomy inherent in bureaucratic organizations. For the pioneers of organizational theory, such as Robert K. Merton (1936), Herbert Simon

(1947) and Philip Selznick (1949), an instrumental or epiphenomenal understanding of organizations as applied by IR scholars after the Second World War was completely unrealistic:

As organizations become infused with value, they are no longer regarded as expendable tools; they develop a concern for self-maintenance. By taking on a distinct set of values, the organization acquires a character structure, an identity. Maintaining the organization is no longer simply a matter of survival but becomes a struggle to preserve a set of unique values.

(Scott 1995: 18-19)

On the basis of this basic understanding of organizations as systems of value and meaning, sociological institutionalism makes use of a broad definition of *institutions*. For these scholars, institutions are not necessarily formal and written rules, but can be

viewed as a relatively stable collection of practices and rules defining appropriate behavior for specific groups of actors in specific situations. Such practices and rules are embedded in structures of meaning and schemes of interpretation that explain and legitimize particular identities and the practices and rules associated with them.

(March and Olsen 1998: 948)

Often motivated by increasing dissatisfaction with the rationalist conception of IOs, scholars started to use this understanding of institutions to continue where regime theory has struggled to provide an approach that can be operationalized and that is suitable to the study of international bureaucracies. Taking the sociological concept of bureaucracy (Weber 1978) as a theoretical starting point, institutionalist scholars managed to correct conceptual flaws rooted in the 'wooliness' and 'imprecision' of regime analyses (Kratochwil and Ruggie 1986: 763) by drawing on a more explicit conceptual framework. The studies of Michael Barnett and Martha Finnemore (Finnemore 1993; Barnett and Finnemore 1999, 2004) are probably the most influential works in this field. In their book *Rules for the World: International Organizations in Global Politics* (2004), the authors use a Weberian understanding of bureaucracy to create a common analytical framework for evaluating different kinds of authority in international bureaucracies. The authors aim to show how different kinds of authority enable the bureaucracy to influence organizational policy making and, at the same time, highlight the organizational potential for dysfunctional processes and pathological outcomes. In their view, it is less important what international bureaucracies (by which in fact they mean the entire organization) are formally allowed to do, and more important what kind of authority they possess and how they can use this authority to give meaning to problems and ultimately influence the way in which their member-states perceive and interpret reality.

An impressive number of studies (most of them case studies) have been conducted in which scholars apply similar sociologically inspired institutionalist thinking to international bureaucracies. Without attempting to be exhaustive, one can identify four broad topics around which sociological studies cluster: organizational change, the interaction of IOs with the environment, pathologies and power, and administrative leadership. We now turn to each of them separately.

In addition to PA scholars who study the development of domestic and international agencies over time, organizational sociologists have also shown an interest in the analysis of change in IOs (Barnett and Carroll 1995). Whereas standard rationalist explanations for timing, content and direction of change are often found to be rooted in the organizational environment - that is, in member-states and other stakeholders - organizational sociologists emphasize that organizations themselves may be strategic agents of change depending on their level of organizational security and the congruity of internal culture with external pressure (Barnett and Coleman 2005). The finding that processes of organizational change are determined by both internal factors (often bottom-up) and external factors (often top-down) is also supported by studies of organizational reform (Nielson et al. 2006) and research on organizational learning in United Nations (UN) peacekeeping missions (Benner et al. 2009; Junkctal. 2013).

Second, the literature on change (and the systemic approach of IR in general) suggests that intra-organizational phenomena can frequently be explained by looking at the organization's relationship to external actors. Within this strand of research the lion's share of studies has concluded that it is less the formal competences of organizations that allow them to exert influence (for an exception, see Batory and Lindstrom 2011) and more the authority and legitimacy that stakeholders attribute to them (Hurd 1999).

Third, research on (the sources of) the pathologies and dysfunctional behaviour of IOs has also attracted considerable attention in the IR discourse (see Barnett and Finnemore 1999). Whereas some authors claim that organizational failure is sometimes a desired coping strategy for public bureaucracies (Seibel 1996), others highlight that the same characteristics that lend power to organizations also render them 'unresponsive to their environments, obsessed with their own rules at the expense of primary missions, and ultimately lead to inefficient, self-defeating behavior' (Barnett and Finnemore 1999: 700; Barnett and Finnemore 2004: Chapter 5).

Finally, building upon functionalist studies on the power of knowledge (Haas 1990), some scholars have come to view both technocratic expertise and particular norms shared among the members of epistemic communities as decisive non-material resources in the hands of international bureaucracies, enabling them to become powerful supranational entrepreneurs (Kamradt-Scott 2010). When it comes to bureaucratic entrepreneurship, the most important individuals within the organization, however, are the administrative leaders (Cox 1969: 205) at the top of the bureaucracy who fulfil both administrative and political tasks. In the tradition of Robert W. Cox's seminal study on leadership, the power of persuasion and deliberation is often attributed to the executive head of the respective IO, such as the UN secretary-general (Johnstone 2003) and the executive of the UN's HIV programme (Harman 2011).

If we consider the topics that feature prominently within the sociologist school of thought in IR, we see that the phenomena under scrutiny are quite similar to that examined in PA. Hence, it is not always easy to determine to which disciplinary tradition a study may best be attributed. Despite some important improvements over the last decade, sociological institutionalist studies in the tradition of Barnett and Finnemore (2004) often share some of the conceptual flaws usually associated with principal-agent approaches, such as the tendency not to conceptually differentiate between the administrative and the political part of the organization (Bauer et al. 2009: 27). Whereas principal-agent studies usually view the IO as being made up solely of political institutions, sociological institutionalists refer to the bureaucracy when they speak about IOs, but neglect its interaction with the political arm within the organization.

## Perspectives in studying international bureaucracies

Dennis Dijkzeul and Yves Beigbeder (2003: 15-16) identified four main shortcomings in the classic literature on IOs. Table 10.1 applies the four fields of criticism that Dijkzeul and Beigbeder expressed a decade ago (in rows) to the current state of the art of international bureaucracy research in each of the three (sub-)disciplines presented earlier in this contribution (in columns). As we see in Table 10.1, certain aspects seem to have changed; yet some observations of Dijkzeul and Beigbeder still appear to be highly relevant. The gathering of empirical information (see row 1) is probably best viewed as a gradually achievable long-term endeavour. Over the last decade, however, we have seen an increasing number of empirical studies on the internal mechanisms of IOs across disciplines. Has this development increased our systematic knowledge of how and when international bureaucracies matter? We believe

Table 10.1 Developments in the study of international bureaucracies

<i>Sub-discipline</i>		<i>International Relations</i>		
		<i>Public Administration*</i>	<i>Rational-choice institutionalism</i>	<i>Sociological institutionalism</i>
<i>Crucial aspects</i>				
1	Empirical information on the actual functioning of IOs	Interest of European PA in international bureaucracies has spread to other IOs and sparked empirical research	Increasing availability of comparative data and evident tendencies to include administrative variables	Increasing number of single case studies that often explore the impact of values and norms
2	Theory about the inner functioning of IOs	Views IO as additional level in the multilevel system of joint decision-making	Views IO as (largely unitary) agent; focuses on issues of control and IO independence	Views IO as bureaucratic organization that necessarily develops a life of its own; focuses on value, culture and perception
3	Dialogue among scholars	Minor tendencies towards mutual recognition of the different approaches, especially between PA and sociological institutionalism in IR, but the major cleavages are still clearly visible		
4	Research design	Comparative case studies (often sector-specific) and process-oriented explanation	Highly diverse research designs ranging from single case studies to large-N comparison	Single case studies with a focus on longitudinal research design; lack of systematic conceptual frameworks

\* The discipline of PA might also be split up into a rational-choice and a sociologically oriented strand of research. Owing to the scarcity of empirical studies in the international context, we do not further distinguish here.

so only to a limited extent because we still lack *comparative* studies that allow for reasonable generalizations. This lack of comparative empirical information is, of course, related to the different conceptualizations of international bureaucracies in the different disciplines. Considering the second row, we see a minor trend of conceptual convergence in the recognition of administrative characteristics in principal-agent studies (Brown 2010; Grigorescu 2010; Elsig 2011). In broader terms, however, we agree with previous evaluations (Xu and Weller 2008: 35; Bauer et al. 2009: 27) that the major shortcoming in the literature is the failure to properly define the bearer of agency within IOs. This criticism, however, holds not only for principal-agent approaches but also for sociological studies in the tradition of Barnett and Finnemore (2004). Even though these authors highlight the importance of the international bureaucracy as the central unit of analysis and the bearer of agency, bureaucratic characteristics (be they formal or informal) and the interaction with the worlds of politics remain conceptually blurry.

As regards academic dialogue across fields (row 3), traditional sub-disciplinary boundaries remain strong. The fact that international bureaucracies lie at the intersection of PA and IR, with the different epistemological traditions of these disciplines, and that IR itself is divided over the question of how to treat international bureaucracies, obviously limits the potential for dialogue between the sub-disciplines. As long as the research questions in the disciplines differ, this may not be much of a problem. Ever since the heyday of the analysis of international regimes in IR, some scholars have observed an increasing convergence of research questions towards a common interest in the explanation of public policies and global governance (Martin and Simmons 1998: 737; Ellis 2010: 15). Considering the similarity of topics studied in (sociologically oriented) IR and PA, our review supports this argument. Much as in the study of public policies in a national context (Egeberg 1995: 157), these developments will naturally shift the attention to international bureaucracies. The level (or the unit) of analysis and the research design, however, vary considerably between the disciplines (row 4; also row 2). Whereas PA's process-oriented approaches seem to have adopted a perspective that allows one to distinguish between different 'forces' within the IO, IR scholars from both the sociological and the rationalist schools of thought have rarely made use of the differentiation between different organizational branches or 'subsystems' as advocated by Cox and Jacobson (1973).

Thus, the time is indeed ripe for a 'third generation of [IO] study' (Trondal et al. 2010: 10) that not only is able to distinguish different behavioural dynamics of international bureaucracies but also takes into account the potential impact of structural characteristics such as decision-making rules and bureaucratic hierarchies (see Egeberg 1999) on organizational behaviour and policy making. In order to overcome the still evident problems in present international bureaucracy research as summarized in Table 10.1, we present by way of conclusion a perspective on IOs that is less driven by disciplinary peculiarities and that covers intra-organizational relationships, processes and the role of international public servants in its attempt to explain IO behaviour.

First of all, we argue for a more explicit distinction between the political and the administrative in the study of IOs. Whereas the political branch of the organization includes the collective of member-state representatives meeting in the assembly, the administrative branch refers to the more or less hierarchically organized bureaucracy that is less active during the actual decision-making process but prepares and implements political decisions. Some scholars

have recently distinguished the two intra-organizational branches by using principal-agent theory (Elsig 2010). As Comparative Politics and Policy Analysis in national contexts have taught us, this must not come at the cost of neglecting the institutional milieu and the embeddedness of the administration within it. We see particular analytical potential in an approach that views IOs as a political system (Reinalda and Verbeek 2004; Rittberger et al. 2012) which produces particular policy outcomes in the form of organizational decisions (Cox and Jacobson 1973: *tiff*).

In order to summarize different topics of analysis and present a compass for future research endeavours, it seems useful to also distinguish between an actor-focused and a structure-focused perspective for each of the two organizational branches. Table 10.2 provides an overview of how different research topics could be allocated within such a two-dimensional perspective.<sup>1</sup> Following the argument that the logics of appropriateness and expected consequences are non-exclusive categories of individual behaviour (March and Olsen 1998: 952), we subsume not only the preferences but also the norm-oriented values of actors (what is often referred to as institutions in a broader sense) under the actor-focused perspective. Whereas IR research in particular, in both its sociological and its rationalist tradition, has focused on the actors in the political and administrative branches of the IO, PA adds a rather structure-centred perspective to complement the picture. Formal rules and organizational characteristics within and between the two branches of IOs are found to constrain individual behaviour and ultimately the policy outcome of an organization (Scharpf 1997).

The factors displayed in Table 10.2 may be studied as both dependent and independent variables, but considering the shift towards the study of governance and policy making in current research on IOs, we see particular potential if these factors and their interactions are studied as independent variables that shed light on the explanation of policy outcomes. We see two important advantages of such a conception of IOs. In consideration of the lack of systematic empirical information in the current study of international bureaucracies, a political system approach would first foster a comparative analysis of different features of IOs (both actor- and structure-related), much as is practised successfully in the disciplines of Comparative Politics and Comparative Government. Second, it would improve the analysis of policy outcomes and the intra-organizational mechanisms during different phases of the

Table 10.2 Summary of different agendas of IO research from a political system perspective

	<i>Focus on actors</i>	<i>Focus on structures</i>
<b>Political branch of IO</b>	Preferences and behaviour of political principals (i.e. member-states)	Rules of decision making in political bodies of the IO
Member-state representatives and institutions	Socialization dynamics of member-state representatives Resources of political principals	Formal control mechanisms available to political principals (e.g. bureaucratic oversight)
<b>Administrative branch of IO</b>	Preferences and behaviour of international personnel	Hierarchical steering and politicization Budgetary constraints
The bureaucracy	Socialization dynamics of international civil servants Administrative styles, identities and cultures Leadership Organizational learning	Specialization/division of labour between departments Design and trajectories of international civil service system Formal competences of the secretariat vis-à-vis the political institutions

policy-making process, such as the agenda setting (Pollack 1997) and the implementation phase (Joachim et al. 2008). The second argument is particularly important because our literature review indicates that IR research is indeed undergoing a shift in focus away from the question of whether or not IOs matter and towards more fine-grained questions about internal processes. The more IR studies in general and IO studies in particular continue to focus on governance mechanisms and the outcome of international policy making, the more important it becomes to systematically include the bureaucracy in the analysis. If we do so, however, it is essential to differentiate more explicitly between an actor-centred and a structure-centred perspective.

What we have in mind comes close to what Jarle Trondal and his colleagues propose when they promote 'normalization' in the study of IOs and the necessity that a 'public administrative turn comes to characterize IO studies' (Trondal et al. 2010: 3). In this regard, we see a particularly promising approach in organizational theory, which works equally well for different kinds of organizations and has already proven to be a possible bridge builder between PA and IR visions of IOs. One should not forget that organizational theory is open to both rationalist and sociological considerations (Scott 1995). The study of the effects of organizational design (Hammond 1993; Egeberg 1999) seems particularly fruitful to complement a purely behavioural perspective on individual motives or socialization processes (see also Scharpf 1997). Overall, the crucial issue in international bureaucracy research seems to be the ability to combine research efforts from within these two perspectives and to look at the interaction of structure and personnel in order to finally overcome the rather artificial disciplinary divide between international Public Administration and International Relations.

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