# P02 / Bureaucratic Influence in Global Public Policy

**Topic :** POLICY FORMULATION, ADMINISTRATION AND POLICYMAKERS

**Chair :** Jörn Ege (German University of Administrative Sciences Speyer / University of Exeter)

## GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

In recent years, scholars have started to increasingly study the role of international and transnational administration in global (public) policy (Stone & Ladi, 2015; Stone & Moloney, 2019). Today, it is an established finding, for instance, that International Public Administrations (IPAs), i.e., the secretariats of international organizations (IOs) that constitute the international counterparts to national administrative bodies, wield independent influence on the development and implementation of public policies (Biermann & Siebenhüner, 2009). Previous research has successfully identified different administrative, political and context-related factors that might enable bureaucratic influence on global policies to occur. However, an integrative approach that allows for the systematic empirical analysis of several explanatory factors under a common theoretical framework has not yet emerged (Eckhard & Ege, 2016). An important reason for this deficit is the dearth of comparative policy studies that would allow researchers to identify and explain variation in bureaucratic influence across policy cases.

Against this background, the panel aims to contribute to the current debates on transnational and international public administration as well as global policy, IO policy-making and policy implementation in order to advance the study of the policy impact of international bureaucracies. Starting from the assumption that policy-making is a result of (often strategic) interactions among multiple actors that vary substantially in terms of their policy-making capacities and goals, two major questions emerge that will be addressed in the panel:

How can we conceptualize and measure bureaucratic influence on IO policy-making and global public policy (especially across cases)?

What are relevant administrative tools and strategies and how are they used to exert policy influence?

**References:**

Biermann, F., & Siebenhüner, B. (Eds.). (2009). Managers of Global Change: The Influence of International Environmental Bureaucracies. Cambridge (MA): MIT Press.

Eckhard, S., & Ege, J. (2016). International bureaucracies and their influence on policy-making: A review of empirical evidence. Journal of European Public Policy, 23, 960–978.

Stone, D., & Ladi, S. (2015). Global Policy and Transnational Administration. Public Administration, 4, 839–855.

Stone, D., & Moloney, K. (2019). The Rise of Global Policy and Transnational Administration. In D. Stone & K. Moloney (Eds.), Oxford Handbook on Global Policy and Transnational Administration (pp. 1–25). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

## CALL FOR PAPERS

Scholars have started to increasingly study the role of international and transnational administration in global (public) policy. Previous research has successfully identified different administrative, political and context-related factors that might enable bureaucratic influence to occur. However, an integrative approach that allows for the systematic empirical analysis of several explanatory factors under a common theoretical framework has not yet emerged. Thus, we still lack systematic knowledge of how international administrative bodies affect policy-making processes of IOs and global governance more generally. An important reason for this deficit is the dearth of comparative policy studies that would allow researchers to identify and explain variation in bureaucratic influence across policy cases.

Against this background, the panel aims to contribute to the current debates on transnational and international public administration as well as global policy, IO policy-making and policy implementation in order to advance the study of the policy impact of international bureaucracies. Based on this (broadly understood) perspective, the panel invites papers from different social science disciplines that study the

administrative toolkit for policy-related action available to individual and collective administrative actors in order to conceptualize, describe and explain their policy impact.

The panel is especially interested in papers that aim to conceptualize and measure bureaucratic influence on IO policy-making and global public policy across cases. We also especially welcome papers that ask what are relevant administrative tools and strategies and how are they used to exert policy influence?

The panel invites conceptual and empirical research on bureaucratic influence in the provision of (global) public policy that may come from a variety of disciplines such as Policy Analysis, Public Administration, International Relations or Comparative Politics. Preferential treatment is given to papers that that a comparative perspective.

# P02 / Bureaucratic Influence in Global Public Policy

**Chair :** Jörn Ege (German University of Administrative Sciences Speyer / University of Exeter)

## Session 1Bureaucratic influence in Global Public Policy - part 1

Thursday, June 27th 10:30 to 12:30 (MB 5.215 )

### Discussants

Yves Steinebach (University of Oslo)

### What do international bureaucrats (really) want? The role of administrative preferences in International Organization research

Jörn Ege (German University of Administrative Sciences Speyer / University of Exeter)

As a consequence of the growing delegation of competences and resources to international organizations (IOs), their autonomous actions have been subject to increasing research efforts in recent years. While existing work has provided valuable insights into the capacities of IOs to take independent decisions and highlighted the influence of IO's permanent secretariats (hereafter International Public Administrations, IPAs), the preferences of IPA staff often remain underspecified. This is lamentable because understanding the unifying motivations and goals of international civil servants helps us to make sense of their behavior and influence in global policy-making. The paper thus looks at current research on the policy influence of IPAs and reviews how these studies determinate the preferences of IPA staff empirically. It also aims to link the results of IO studies with insights of Public Administration and organizational studies, where bureaucratic preferences have been a recurring topic for several decades. Based on these insights, the paper proposes a typology of different ideal-typical bureaucratic goals and advocates a more explicit empirical recognition of administrative preferences in IPA research and IPA influence research more specifically.

### Rights of Access Transparency in International Organizations

Kim Moloney (Australia New Zealand School of Government (ANZSOG))

There are significant literatures on domestic civil servant abilities to access justice within nation-state systems (for a start, see Green 2006; Elling 2008). This literature observes an inherently unequal relationship between the government employer and the civil servant. In the United States, this has led to three legal exceptions to protect civil servants: (a) public policy exceptions; (b) implied-contract exceptions; and (c) covenant of good faith exceptions.

But what about the world's 800+ formal and informal international organizations? How do their international civil servants access justice? What the ramifications of their justice access rights for international organization accountability and transparency?

By drawing on administrative tribunal case law and the international administrative law literatures, this paper argues that international civil servant access to justice is more circuitous and often less transparent than the rights given to national civil servants by the democratic member-states of Indo-Pacific international organizations. The ramifications are not only personal for the civil servant (e.g. retaliation, loss of job) but will also impact the transparency and accountability of international organizations.

Using the 'access to justice' metric within IAL's Legitimacy Index, the paper utilizes a two-pronged evaluation of seven international organizations in the Indo-Pacific: (1) internal institutional access points including whistleblowing procedures, staff associations, ethics offices, and grievance procedures; (2) semi-internal, semi-external institutional access points including administrative tribunals. Each evaluative mechanism will be contextualized within an evolving international administrative law literature. Each mechanism cannot be delinked from an international organization's institutional immunities. While such

immunities encourage a necessary organizational independence from member-states and an underlining of the international organization's international character, such immunities may also limit the ability of international civil servants to access justice and thus, limit the transparency and accountability of such organizations.

### International Bureaucracies- frame bridging in global policy

Sevasti Chatzopoulou (Roskilde University)

The internationalisation of the public sector and the development of new forms of policy processes beyond the state, despite the state's dominance, diffused public authority over time. These developments paved the way for the emergence of international bureaucracies (IBs), creating and transferring policy-making within global governance that strengthened the IBs role in managing globalisation.

IBs studies have identified explanatory factors for the increasing role of IBs in global policy. Such factors are the IBs administrative capacity developed over time, their distinctive organisational characteristics, expertise, knowledge, autonomy and will. While these elements are significant in understanding the international bureaucracies role in global policy, it has not yet been thoroughly analysed what can enhance or impede the international bureaucracies' role on policy-making and how this differs from the state.

IBs most often are established by or with the support of states and intergovernmental actors (the principals) in the effort to strengthen international cooperation and enable problem-solving initiatives. Yet, despite their common interests, these principals represent diverse interests, which the IBs have to reconcile and bridge differences in the effort to establish common policy initiatives. This paper looks into exactly this phenomenon. How IBs frame global policy so that they can ensure the support of their principles and strengthen their role in global policy. Inspired mostly by transnational social mobilisation, this paper introduces concepts as *bridging, framing, scale shift* and combines them with international public administration organisational theories.

The main argument is that although the IBs have the potential to create, promote and influence global policy, they lack some important characteristics that are mostly present in national bureaucracies, mainly the competence to create specific policy instruments and responses to address specific problems and ensure that their effective implementation. Lack of these characteristics and since IBs do not usually, with a few exceptions, address specific problems, their role in policy-making differs than the state. Besides, IBs have to consider the diverse interests of their members as well their capacity in adapting and implementing these policies.

Consequently, IBs try to bridge differences in policy interests and frame policies in a way that will ensure the support of their principals. In this process, IBs act as 'policy' and 'norm' entrepreneurs and they focus on the general frameworks of policies, such as ideas, norms, orientation and direction of policies, not actual policy instruments. Consequently, the policy proposals introduce broadly normative concepts, blurring the already ill-defined scope and targets of global policy. Consequently, despite their common framework, these policies may differ when adopted by the different regional or national governments who will specify them further and define precise relevant policy instruments. However, setting the policy frame and bridging differences is already significant as it puts the basic global policy principles. Empirically, the sustainability and the SDGs exemplify the theoretical argument.

### The Road to Influence: Bureaucrats as Legislators

Luca Bellodi (Università Bocconi)

Do bureaucratic bodies affect the decisions of elected politicians, and if so, under what conditions? In this paper, I propose that agencies with a stronger institutional capacity – i.e., endowed with more independence and competences – are more likely to influence legislation, and this effect is moderated by the characteristics of the market in which they operate. I develop a spatial model that shows that such agencies are more likely to draw the final legislative output closer to their ideal points. Empirically, I test this argument by looking at the impact of Independent Regulatory Authorities (IRAs) on the liberalisation of the railway industry in Europe, using the institutional capacity of IRAs in other network industries as instrumental variables. By employing computer-based text analysis techniques, I also introduce a novel approach to the estimation of IRAs' ideal points, thus offering a flexible empirical strategy to measure the ideology of the bureaucracy and its influence on legislative outputs. The findings show that IRAs with stronger institutional capacity that regulate sufficiently liberalised markets are more likely to exert influence over legislation.

# P02 / Bureaucratic Influence in Global Public Policy

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## Session 2Bureaucratic influence in Global Public Policy - part 2

Thursday, June 27th 16:30 to 18:30 (MB 5.215 )

**Discussants**

Jörn Ege (German University of Administrative Sciences Speyer / University of Exeter)

### Patterns of Policy-Making in International Organizations: Progressive Friction and the Nature of the Principals

Yves Steinebach (University of Oslo)
Louisa Bayerlein (European University Institute)
Christoph Knill (LMU Munich)
Constantin Kaplaner (Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München)

A key assumption of the Punctuated Equilibrium Theory (PET) is that policy-making in democratic systems is characterized by so-called ‘institutional frictions’. In essence, frictions imply that policy-makers generally underrespond to changes in the severity of problems when these remain below some threshold of urgency, focusing attention instead on those few areas where concerns are so great that they must be attended to immediately. While frictions are of universal nature, previous scholarly contributions examining the patterns of policy-making at the national level have shown that frictions tend to increase (1) as we look at processes further along the policy cycle (‘progressive friction’) and (2) with decision-making bodies that requiring higher coordination efforts.

In this paper, we apply the PET to explain pattern of policy-making in eight international organizations (FAO, ILO, IMF, IOM, NATO, UNEP, UNHCR, WHO) between the years 2008 and 2018. More precisely, we examine the stability and change in the orientation of IOs’ policy agendas in both (1) the press releases provided by the IOs’ bureaucracies as well as (2) in the final resolutions adopted by the IOs’ key decision-making bodies. In line with the PET, we expect that the change distributions show progressively higher kurtosis values the more we move along the policy cycle, i.e. from the more general announcements to the IOs’ final policy decisions. Moreover, we intend to analyze in how far the composition of the IOs’ key decision-making bodies affects the patterns of policy-making observed. Here, we pay particular attention to the potential cleavages between rich and poor, and democratic and autocratic member states. We hypothesize that the change distributions of IOs with heterogeneous member states are characterized by higher kurtosis values compared to those with more homogenous principals. Our analysis draws on a (supervised) machine-learning process that relies on a novel data set containing all press releases and resolution over the entire investigation period.

### Blue economy and circular economy: The European Union and the definition of influential global policy concepts

Fabrizio De Francesco (University of Strathclyde)

How do international organizations influence the formulation of global policy? This paper contributes to the underlining question of this panel by comparing the recent European Union’s efforts to define the global environmental policy concepts of blue economy and circular economy. Like ‘magic concepts’ (Pollitt and Hupe, 2011), both blue economy and circular economy are broad, normatively attractive, universal, and fashionable. These features give rise to incongruities in the application and operationalization of the policy concepts. As a global environmental leader, the European Union needs to sort these complexities by providing operational definitions and designing indicators of policy input, outputs and outcome. And the

translation of such broad concepts into policy objectives concerns also policy instruments, administrative procedure and practice impels the European Union to rely on internal and external knowledge.

By comparing similar environmental policy concepts, this paper focuses on the difference in the extent of policy outcome and therefore on the European Union's global leadership. Why has the European Union been able to extensively define and operationalize circular economy but not blue economy? The main explanations of this variation are the European Commission's problem-solving capacity and the consolidation of scientific expertise on policy concepts. The empirical analysis is based on a content analysis of key EU documents as well as academic literature for tracing the evolution of external knowledge related to the policy concepts. This paper is the first step towards a broader theoretical contribution that aim to differentiate country-level policy making from the policy making of international organizations and bureaucracies.

### Epistemic Communities as Scientific Principals of International Secretariats: Explaining the Neglect and Emancipation of Qualitative Research at the World Health Organization

Jan Thiel (ETH Zurich, Center for Comparative and International Studies (CIS))

In this paper, I theorize the role of such epistemic communities as "scientific principals" of international organizations and analyze its implications for the autonomy and strategic influence of international secretariats in global governance. The contemporary scholarship provides rich theories and evidence for the role of epistemic communities as an instrumental resource for international secretariats. In contrast, I argue that epistemic communities not only enable but also constrain the autonomy and policy space of international secretariats. International bureaucrats cannot use technical expertise at its own discretion. Instead, they are accountable to the scientific paradigms and consensus within epistemic communities, who monitor and potentially sanction international secretariats by questioning the scientific validity and normative legitimacy of its technical work. Scientific paradigms and consensus are however not permanent but the outcome of a continuous "boundary work" within epistemic communities in an effort to demarcate "science and some less authoritative residual non?science" (Geiryn 1999: 4f.). I argue that international secretariats are therefore both constrained by but also seeks to strategically influence the negotiations of scientific boundaries within epistemic communities as global orchestrators of research and policy. The explanatory power of this argument is demonstrated with an in-depth case study of guideline development at the World Health Organization (WHO). Guidelines are the most important policy output of the WHO. They serve as the normative gold-standard for "evidence-based" health policy and practice worldwide. In 2014, the WHO initiated a silent revolution by reforming its internal regulations to formally authorize its technical units to also use evidence from qualitative research in the development of guidelines. Contemporary commentaries locate the causes for the WHO's longstanding neglect of qualitative research inside the Secretariat, pointing to the WHO's bureaucratic inertia and cognitive biases of its predominantly biomedical-trained thousands of staff. In this paper, I provide an alternative explanation. I locate the explanatory power for both the neglect and emancipation of qualitative research in the strategic relationship and interaction between the WHO and the health science community. I show how the emergence of the so-called "evidence-based medicine" (EBM) paradigm during the 1980s, which institutionalized scientific meta-analysis, so-called systematic reviews, as the evidentiary gold-standard for health science and practice, initially prevented WHO to use qualitative evidence. However, the EBM paradigm also provided a strategic opportunity for WHO to spearhead and influence international efforts to develop universal standards for systematic reviews of qualitative studies. I find that the use of qualitative systematic reviews since 2014 started to fundamentally transform the definition of policy problems and solutions not only in WHO guidelines but health policymaking worldwide. I draw on evidence collected from more than twenty interviews with staff from WHO, collaborating research centers, and national health agencies; documentary research at WHO's archives; and three months of participant observations as part of an internship at the Director-Generals Office at WHO's headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, in 2017. This paper may thus be of further relevance to researchers interested in promises and challenges of using ethnographic methods inside international bureaucracies.