

Ergo FIGO: Identifying Formal Intergovernmental Organizations*

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Introduction

In this effort we probe the conceptual and empirical dimensions related to identifying the existence of intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) in international affairs because we are interested in three major research questions. First, we wish to ascertain the extent to which a formal, institutional dimension of a “new world order” is being created after the end of the Cold War. From a theoretical standpoint, we see the possibility of such new institutional creation as partly a function of the strength possessed by the lead global power in the international system (the U.S.) and the extent of dissatisfaction with its leadership, along with the capacity to construct alternative formal arrangements by other powers. We assume that the creation of organizations with little bureaucratic organization and very limited autonomy are less useful in stabilizing a new world order than a network of organizations that are bureaucratically stable and autonomous (at least in terms of achieving a minimal threshold for both). Likewise, it may be far easier to construct organizations that have neither of these characteristics than ones that do. Including in our conceptualization those IGOs that are easy to assemble but produce little autonomous capability or organization would distort responses to our research queries regarding the importance of great power strength in formal institutional construction.

Our second research concern is about patterns of joining and participation by states in these IGOs. We wish to uncover whether or not states participate in these organizations for reasons similar to, or different from factors correlated with their participation during the Cold War. We assume that joining organizations that lack internal organization and offer little capacity to execute the collective will of members requires much less from states in terms of the costs of joining such organizations. Therefore, analyzing patterns of participation by states in such minimalist organizations may distort our understanding of the conditions under which states may invest

resources in joining IGOs, including possibly confusing membership in these organizations with the willingness of state policy makers to potentially surrender some of their sovereignty as a result of their participation in these organizations.

Related to the second concern is a third one: typically, the number of organizations joined by states is measured and analyzed in models (either monadically or dyadically) as the simple frequency of organizations joined. While such an approach provides a rough approximation of total organizational immersion in institutional architecture by a state, it makes comparisons between states problematic without some controls for the “opportunity” to join organizations. Some IGOs are global in nature and virtually available to all states. This condition pertains however to no more than approximately one quarter of all IGOs in international politics. Typically, half or more of IGOs are regional or sub-regional in nature, and their numbers vary substantially across regions. Thus, the opportunity for an Asian state to join IGOs (regardless of its willingness, or its economic, political, or military capacity to do so) is substantially smaller than for African or European states that have scores more regional organizations available to them. Thus, part of our concern is to create an approach to state IGO participation that factors in a state’s opportunity to join IGOs, rather analyzing joining behavior that we know to be at least in part a function of geo-historical accident.

It is also clear that different approaches to defining what IGOs are have substantial impacts on their empirical enumeration. As Jacobson, Riesinger and Mathers note: “How many ‘real’ IGOs there are in the global political system is obviously a matter of definition; ‘reasonable’ definitions yield numbers that are larger than 344 but less than 1,075 (1986:144).”¹ Below, we discuss

¹ For Jacobson and colleagues this appears to be less of an issue since their analyses indicate that separating emanations from traditional organizations appears to yield similar outcomes with respect to the reasons why states may participate in IGOs. Their inclusion of emanations is the probable reason why they estimate the 344 to 1,075 range of IGOs that are reasonable to expect. While it is plausible that the empirical correlates of participation in “traditional” IGOs versus

previous efforts to enumerate systematically the population of IGOs in international relations, identify our conceptually based definition of what is an IGO and compare it to previous efforts, provide a series of criteria with which to identify the existence of an IGO, and compare the empirical results with the most recent systematic data on IGO population.

Previous efforts

The literature in international relations offers three major efforts to quantify systematically—and over time—the number of intergovernmental organizations in the international system. Each of these efforts provides overlapping empirical criteria with which to identify the existence of an IGO. While proposing empirical criteria, none of the three focus explicitly on the broader conceptual meaning of an IGO that is associated with our research concerns, and therefore these previous efforts create empirical criteria (and empirical enumerations) that differ from those we identify below.

The earliest effort is by Wallace and Singer (1970), who posited four empirical criteria for identifying the existence of an intergovernmental organization: “...the organization must consist of at least two qualified members² of the international system (1970:245)...the organization must hold more or less regular plenary sessions at intervals not greater than once a decade...[and] a permanent headquarters and some sort of permanent headquarters arrangement³ (1970:246).” Finally, they noted that an IGO must be independent of other IGOs, a condition that is satisfied if: “its membership is not selected wholly or in part by another IGO...and the organization is serviced

emanations are similar, our research questions focus also on the aggregate changes to the population of IGOs, and when we focus at the aggregate level, emanations do not appear at the same rate as “traditional IGOs”, requiring their separation from the traditional population. The issue of emanations is further addressed below.

² Units that have national sovereignty with recognition from either of two major powers or membership in the League of Nations/United Nations (Wallace and Singer, 1970:249).

³ Wallace and Singer do not require that such a bureaucracy be international or function independently from other IGOs or any individual state, as long as it can perform ongoing tasks and serves to distinguish between an organization and an ad hoc conference (Wallace and Singer, 1970:246).

by administratively distinct secretariat personnel who function under the authority of the organization plenum (1970:248).”

A second effort (Jacobson, Reisinger, and Mathers, 1986; Shanks, Jacobson, and Kaplan, 1996) provides a similar set of empirical criteria: intergovernmental organizations are defined as having the following empirical attributes: “...associations established by governments or their representatives⁴ that are sufficiently institutionalized to require regular meetings, rules governing decision making, a permanent staff, and a headquarters (1996:593).” Further, these authors define *emanations* as “second-order IGOs created through action of other IGOs (1996:594).”

Finally, Pevehouse and colleagues (2005) represent the most recent and most comprehensive effort to measure annually the number of IGOs in the international system. They define an IGO as an organization with the following attributes: “(1) is a formal entity⁵, (2) has [three or more] [sovereign]⁶ states as members, and (3) possesses a permanent secretariat or other indication of institutionalization such as headquarters and/or permanent staff. The first component of this definition simply posits that IGOs must be formed by an internationally recognized treaty. The second and third elements of the definition exist to help distinguish IGOs from other forms of international institutions. IGOs are differentiated from nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) based on the fact that the latter organizations’ memberships are composed of individual persons, interest groups or businesses. The existence of a secretariat or permanent bureaucracy helps distinguish IGOs from ad hoc conferences... (Pevehouse, Nordstrom, and Warnke, 2005:9-10).”

Defining IGOs

⁴ To distinguish from emanations, these organizations are later described as traditional IGOs in that they are created by treaties between states (1996:596).

⁵ Pevehouse and colleagues exclude emanations—those not created by a treaty between states—unless the emanation gains independence from the parent organization.

⁶ Pevehouse, Nordstrom, and Warnke, 2003 (codebook, p. 2)

The empirical criteria noted above for identifying the existence of an IGO share critical characteristics related to the institutionalization of enduring multilateral relationships: routinized interactions by members that are states, explicit methods of decision-making within the organizations, enduring bureaucratic/secretariat structures, and evidence of organizational independence from other IGOs. These approaches seek to distinguish between IGOs versus other types of cooperative arrangements, such as ad-hoc agreements, ongoing collaborative meetings between states that are not institutionalized (e.g., G7 meetings, or committees composed of states without an organizational structure), sub-units of other IGOs, or institutions controlled not by states but by other IGOs, or ones dominated by non-state members (NGOs).

While these authors provide essentially empirical measures, the indicators themselves hint at a broader conceptual view of what is an IGO. That broader conceptual view is our starting point. We concur with Martin and Simmons' (1998) warning in their comprehensive evaluation of IGO literature that "one failing of the current research program, however, has been its intense focus on proving that institutions matter, without sufficient attention to constructing well-delineated causal mechanisms or explaining variation in institutional effects." Since that evaluation, there has been increasing attention being paid to the institutional design considerations and their effects on members and on international politics. For instance, Koremenos, Lipson and Snidal (2001) argue that institutional design is a rational process occurring between states and that dimensional variance occurs in membership rules, scope of issues covered, centralization of tasks, legalization and flexibility and that these dimensional variances produce institutions with varying effects.

The renewed interest in institutions and institutional design has generated some theoretical debate about exactly what institutions are, both in political science and international relations. Crawford and Ostrom (1995) note that this renewed interest is likely to lead to

clarification of core concepts and they argue that in constructing models we must be careful to specify the mechanisms at work because such considerations should impact the selection of data: “[w]here one draws the boundaries of an institution depends on the theoretical question of interest...” (1995:582).

Mindful of such considerations we approach the core concept within the IGO literature by framing our definitions and assumptions around the specified causal mechanisms and the theoretical question of interests driving our research program. In order to be able to capture and test the causal relationships, we must first be able to distinguish what qualifies as an IGO. Variation inherent in the population of IGOs requires that we make explicit the dimensional mechanisms that correspond to the causal relationships under scrutiny. No two IGOs are exactly alike; some level of abstraction is necessary in order to make claims about knowledge accumulation.

In order to mediate this problem, we propose a two-step process with which to identify an appropriate concept and make the proper dimensionally-related inclusions/exclusions. First, we determine if the theory of interest operates through institutional mechanisms that are shared by the entire universe of organizations as described by the core concept. Second, we need to determine if the theory of interest identifies any dimensionally-specific mechanisms that are shared by an identifiable subset; if there are such mechanisms implied then the theorist must construct a systemic concept that possesses the necessary field utility to identify the qualified population of observations.⁷

⁷ Field utility (Gerring, 1999), is achieved through the redefinition or clarification of a broader concept so that there is near perfect alignment between the definition and the identity of the population described by the concept. Were there to be perfect field utility then each actual object would have its own concept named to describe it and such an ideal would cease to be useful in a practical sense for analytical purposes. A concept with high field utility is one that is easily distinguished from the broader concept, does not rob that broader concept of all meaning and is narrowly tailored as the relevant theory allows but is expansive enough to include the entire dimensionally sufficient population.

In following the systematic concept-construction as described supra, our theory leads us to a dimensionally-based population with readily available and measurable operational characteristics. Thus, we define formal intergovernmental organizations (FIGOs) as *entities created with sufficient organizational structure and autonomy to provide formal, ongoing, multilateral processes of decision making between states, along with the capacity to execute the collective will of their members (states)*. This definition highlights both the process of interactions within IGOs and the possibility of collective outcomes from them, even though collective outcomes are more contested among realist conceptions of international politics. Our definition suggests both a process component and an outcome component to the existence of a FIGO.⁸ Furthermore, formal, ongoing processes of interaction within an organization and collective action require ongoing administration and organization.

Thus, we concur with Abbott and Snidal that the two primary functions of formal organizations are a stable organizational structure and some amount of autonomy in a defined sphere (Abbott and Snidal, 1998:5). Stability of organizational structure (in terms of routine interactions by states along with an administrative apparatus to ensure both institutionalized interactions and stability of organization) and autonomy are critical as well for institutional conceptions of power (Barnett and Duval, 2005), both for assessing global governance and hegemony.

Given this conceptual approach, we classify an IGO as a FIGO if it evidences attributes that 1) institutionalize state decision-making and oversight in governance, 2) provide stability in

⁸ While the collective will part of an IGO is not its only value (being a routinized forum where state leaders can interact on a regular basis may, in and of itself provide unique benefits for cooperation between states, e.g., see Bearce and Omori, 2005), it is an important one. It allows for organizational outcomes as an institutional entity that may not be viable at the level of individual members that constitute the organizational membership.

management through bureaucratic organization,⁹ and 3) demonstrate autonomy in organizational operation and in the execution of the collective will of the membership. All of the operational definitions above seem to address some of the specific conditions under which these three criteria can be empirically observed. It should be noted however that each of these criteria represent a continuum, and suggest a *threshold*, below which institutionalization may not be in evidence, and therefore for us, does not merit the identification of a unit as a FIGO. For instance, it is a rare IGO (perhaps not even the European Union) that exhibits fully autonomous characteristics—involulnerable to member pressure—in the execution of the collective will of the organization. Requiring absolute autonomy for IGOs in a decentralized international system would, at that end of the continuum, leave virtually no empirical cases of such formal organizations. At the same time, an IGO that relies completely on its members to voluntarily carry out the collective decisions made by the organization would represent the other end of the autonomy continuum, and it would be more realistic to view a formal structure of this type as more of a “discussion forum” rather than a viable, formal IGO. Somewhere between these two extremes exists some threshold, above which an organization qualifies as a FIGO.¹⁰

Where is that threshold? In order to identify appropriate thresholds, we return to the idea that formal organizations need to be sufficiently institutionalized to allow for collective decision making and oversight of their activities by the membership (states); have sufficient bureaucratic organization to make collective decisions efficient; and sufficient autonomy to be able to both maintain the organization and carry out tasks delegated to it by the membership. All three of the

⁹ The literature tends to use the term “centralization”; we prefer bureaucratic organization since centralization connotes the extent of hierarchical organization in administration, a characteristic we do not assess.

¹⁰ We are also cognizant of the tension between networks of organizations and their increasing interdependence, versus different degrees of organizational autonomy. See Jonsson (1986) regarding networks and interdependence; an excellent example of research focusing on the issue of IGO independence is provided by Haftel and Thompson (2006). We will need to pursue further both the nature of networks of IGOs and develop more refined measures of variation in independence once we have established appropriate minimal thresholds for identifying FIGOs.

previous efforts we noted above provide a range of criteria with which to address such institutionalization. However, they vary in terms of making clear the explicit threshold below which an IGO loses one or more of its three qualifying characteristics. We now turn to the task of identifying such thresholds.

Thresholds

Membership, decision-making, and oversight: First, we concur that the threshold for membership is one that consists of an IGO containing three or more members, consistent with the multilateral idea associated with IGOs. While it is plausible that an organization containing two members can be of theoretical interest, it falls within the area of bilateral rather than multilateral cooperation between states and virtually all of the literature in the area focuses on multilateral dynamics of cooperation and decision-making between states.

Second, we require that the membership be overwhelmingly composed of states and governed by them without a veto by non-state members. By “veto” we refer to one of two types of controls over state decisions: one is where the decisions of the membership are subject to the approval of another organization, as is the case with some organizations in Latin America that have to report to, and have their agenda accepted by the OAS. The second case would be where non-state members of an organization (e.g., the EU) are granted a veto in decision-making, or when non-state members have voting privileges and the decisional rules require unanimity. We recognize that some forms of cooperative arrangements have increasingly sought to integrate into their deliberations non-state actors, including other IGOs and NGOs, and we have conceptualized FIGOs as mechanisms of cooperation between states first and foremost. We are reluctant to exclude institutions that may contain non-state actors, and so we require that decision-making and oversight must reside overwhelmingly among states.

Third, we require that state membership is operationalized as representation by individuals or groups acting on behalf of the political system of member states, either as individuals who are directly part of the central governmental machinery of a state, or are temporarily (albeit primarily) acting in that capacity. If membership is reserved for “countries”, but the individuals representing these units are not expected to act in the formal capacity of representing the preferences of their policy makers, then the state membership threshold is not reached. This would be the case if an organization exists where membership is designated for states, but each state appoints an expert citizen who is acting in his/her expertise rather than in the role of the government’s representative. We believe that this qualification is important: much of the research on the potential effects of IGOs on their members rests on the notion that states (and their representatives) have routinized opportunities to interact with each other in the formal setting of organizations and such interactions may have important consequences, in terms of potential conflict reduction, minimization of uncertainty, greater understanding of others’ policy positions, and accessibility to better information regarding intentions of policy makers (e.g., see Bearce and Omori, 2005; Abbott and Snidal, 1998). Few, if any of these effects are likely when countries designate individuals that are not linked to the state’s foreign policy apparatus.

Fourth, we require that collective decision-making and oversight be routinized: the membership meets on a periodic basis to make decisions and to oversee the operation of the organization and there are clear procedures governing the timing of meetings and the procedures for decision making. The procedural requirements are typically set out in the charters/constitutions/treaties establishing these organizations and are easy to uncover. There is, however, much variation in the frequency with which organizational plenums are held, and a threshold value establishing a minimum is somewhat arbitrary. Ideally, meetings would occur on an annual basis.

In their pioneering study, Wallace and Singer (1970) required such meetings to take place at least once a decade. Latter efforts seem to have relied on the UIA definition of inactivity, which is the lack of reported meetings for approximately four years.¹¹ We reluctantly accept the four-year threshold for regular meetings, although this doesn't appear to be much of a problem: most viable organizations appear to hold annual meetings of their members.

Bureaucratic organization and autonomy: While conceptually distinct criteria, in practice, the empirical correlates of collective decision making,¹² bureaucratic organization, and autonomy within an organization may be difficult to separate. This is especially so in regard to organizational capability and autonomy. Viable organizational administration requires professional staffing on a permanent basis; we anticipate the same for the execution of collective decisions, even if such staffing is only for the coordination of the efforts of member states, or, for purposes of reporting on the efforts of members. Furthermore, permanent, professional staffing is not feasible without a permanent source of funding.

Autonomy requires that both staffing and funding be relatively immune from control by either a single member state or outside forces (i.e., another IGO). Staffing that is not controlled by the members of the organization and may not report primarily to the organization (e.g., the Andean Parliament in its early years was staffed by the Colombian government's foreign ministry) does not meet the staffing autonomy threshold. Likewise, if the primary funding for administration is provided by another IGO (e.g., the UN, the World Bank) or overwhelmingly by one state—as is the case with some organizations—then it fails to meet the autonomous resources threshold.

¹¹ UIA classifies organizations as H or U if they are “inactive”. Contacts with UIA indicate that an organization is so classified when there is no detectable activity for “several” years or that “repeated efforts to trace a body through other bodies in its field of activity” yields no information after three or four years (UIA, 1998, Appendix 1:1473). However, a perusal of H organizations indicates that when there has been no annual meeting for more than four years, the IGO appears to earn an H classification. UIA may reclassify the organization, however, if it detects activity after a four year hiatus.

¹² Note that conditions 4 and 5 in Figure 1 are required equally for both collective decision making and bureaucratic organization.

Thus, we require evidence of the following thresholds for an IGO to have sufficient bureaucratic organization and autonomy to be classified as a FIGO. First, an IGO must demonstrate the existence of a *permanent headquarters and non-symbolic, professional staffing, independent* of other IGOs and/or one single state. Typically, the issue of a *permanent headquarters* is relatively unambiguous. Such headquarters may move periodically, but is usually required within the charter of an IGO, and specified as its address. By *non-symbolic staffing*, we are referring to an actual group of people who administer the organization. There are some organizations that indicate a staff of one or two individuals, which we assume to be either symbolic of an administration, or of a minor, clerical function, and does not represent an administration needed to carry out the functioning of a complex organization. By *professional staffing* we are referring to people who administer to the needs of the organization as their livelihood, and are therefore paid to do so, as opposed to being volunteers (a few organizations report a staff of volunteers). By *independence of staffing*, we are referring to an administration that is paid by, reports only to, and holds as its permanent assignment, the IGO in question. We do not consider an organization to have independent staffing if it is administered by the staff of another organization, or the administrative apparatus of one member state, or if the administration shifts annually from one state to another as the presidency of the organization shifts from one state to the next (a condition that violates both autonomy and permanence). We have found all these conditions with a number of organizations previously classified as IGOs.

Finally, we require that a majority of the funding for the ongoing operations of the IGO be *non-symbolic, systematically available, and independent* of any one state or another IGO. Extensive budgetary data are difficult to obtain for many IGOs, and especially so on an annual basis. Therefore we settle for a relatively low set of thresholds. By *non-symbolic*, we require that

the funding that is available is minimally sufficient to support staffing beyond one or two individuals. Funding that is *systematically available* requires provisions in the charter/constitution of the organization for a routine, recurring method of funding. Finally, *independence* of funding requires that a majority of the organization's budget is independent of any one member or other IGO(s).

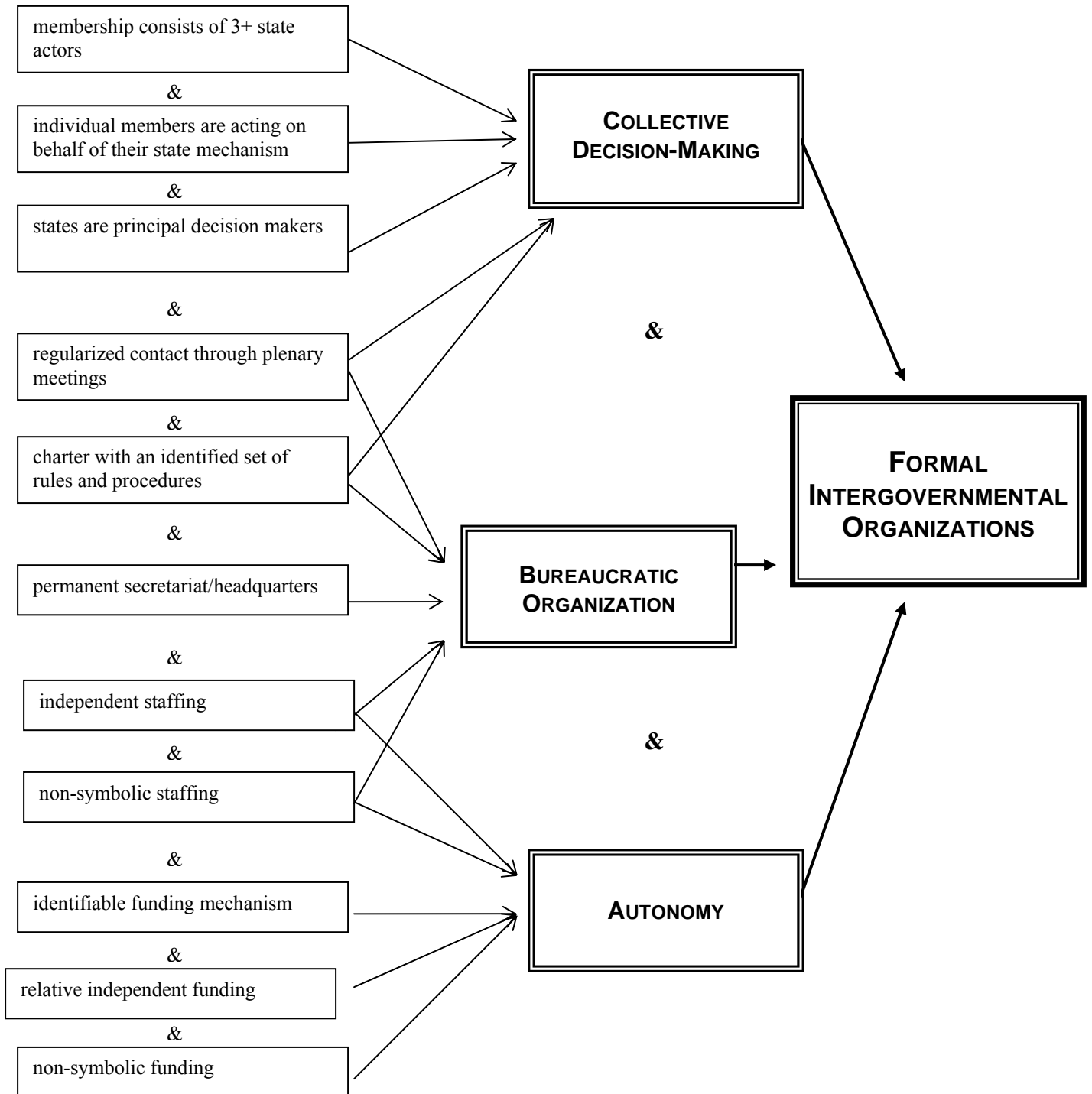
The systemized concept of FIGO provides clear boundaries for the observance of phenomena and includes only those organizations that are theoretically relevant for the questions of interest. Moreover, because the FIGO concept clearly defines the three dimensions around which it is built, it is applicable to any and all questions of interest that internally consist of the same three dimensions. As a carefully constructed systemized concept, FIGO is both narrowly tailored to the dimensionally relevant attributes and is broad enough to facilitate any question of interest similarly theoretically situated. The links between our conceptual approach and empirical thresholds are demonstrated in Figure 1.

A Note on Traditional IGOs versus Emanations

Previous efforts at a systematic enumeration of the population of IGOs make a distinction between “traditional IGOs” and “emanations”. The former are IGOs created by states through treaties or similar agreements. Emanations, however, are typically organizations created by other IGOs. Wallace and Singer (1970) along with Pevehouse and his colleagues (2005) do not count emanations as part of the IGO population, although once emanations become “independent” organizations, they are integrated into the COW IGO database. Shanks and colleagues (1996) enumerate emanations as well as traditional organizations and aggregate them in their analysis, yielding a substantially larger population of intergovernmental organizations than the other efforts.

Emanations are problematic for a number of reasons, not the least of which is that, unlike traditional IGOs, they are not formed by states, yet, in many cases when IGOs create them, states

FIGURE 1: FIGO THRESHOLD CRITERIA FOR IDENTIFYING FORMAL INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS



may automatically become members. Thus, membership in emanations can involve a different process of commitment by state members (and including perhaps an absence of signaling of intentions to cooperate) than traditional organizations. Furthermore, most emanations fail to meet the threshold requirements we note above, with regard to decision-making and oversight responsibilities of states, bureaucratic organization, and especially organizational independence. In fact, some emanations are not much more than sub-units or organs of other organizations.

At the same time, conceptually—and as long as our threshold conditions are met—there are no viable reasons for excluding some IGOs from the general population of FIGOs solely because they were not created by states. Pevehouse and colleagues concur as well, noting that once emanations reach “independence”, they are included in their database. We do not specifically distinguish between traditional organizations and emanations in terms of the method that created them. Instead, we rely on the criteria we enumerated above to determine FIGO classification. The practical effect is similar to Pevehouse and colleague’s data collection: the vast majority of organizations classified as emanations by Shanks and colleagues are excluded from the analysis. Emanations are counted when they meet our threshold criteria; they, along with “traditional organizations” also disappear when one or more of our criteria are violated.

Operational Criteria for Measuring the Existence of FIGOs

We have identified eleven threshold values that we utilize as operational criteria to identify an entity as a FIGO. Table 1 compares these criteria to other research enumerating the population of IGOs. While there are a number of differences between our empirical criteria and those of other efforts (including the UIA as the primary source of the data), the most consistent pattern of differences relate to the nature of staffing and funding within IGOs.

Table 1. Comparison of Threshold Requirements for FIGO Classification versus other Collections Enumerating IGOs.

Criterion	FIGO Data	Wallace/Singer	Jacobson	COW IGO data	UIA Yearbook
<i>Membership:</i> Number of states	Three or more	Two	Three generally ¹³	Three	Three for A-D orgs.
Mix	Predominantly by states; no veto on collective decision by non-state members	assumed	UIA criteria	Primarily States	Unclear for A-D orgs.; no for others
Representation	Representing central government or its subunits	No	UIA criteria	States or their appointments	No
<i>Rules of Governance</i>	Specified in charter	Same	Same	Same	Same
<i>Meetings</i>	Routinized and meeting at regular intervals and at least every four years	Every ten years	UIA criteria	variable ¹⁴	Recently four Years for H/U classification ¹⁵
<i>HQ/Secretariat</i>	Permanent	Same	Same	Same	Same
Staffing	Independent of any IGO or any single state	Can be provided by another IGO but not be identical to that IGO's staffing	UIA criteria	No	No
Staffing	Non-symbolic (more than two); paid by IGO	No	No	No	No
Budget					
Funding mechanism	Routinely identified; Regularly available	No ¹⁶	No	No	No
Amount	Sufficient to cover minimal staffing and operation	No	No	No	No
Source	Majority funding not controlled by another IGO or one state.	No	No	No	No
Sources of Information	Varied, including UIA; COW/IGO and Jacobson databases; direct contact with IGOs and their websites; news reports and original documents	UIA Yearbook; other sources ¹⁷	UIA Yearbook	Primarily UIA Yearbook	Primarily self-reporting by organizations

¹³ Shanks, Jacobson, and Kaplan include UIA type G organizations that have bilateral membership (1996:597).

¹⁴ Every ten years is likely to be the threshold for prior to 1965; since then, then, and especially for organizations "alive" since 1965, it is checked annually. We assume that this process reflects the UIA effort which now scrutinizes frequently and uses a threshold around four years of inactivity (correspondence with UIA staff).

¹⁵ UIA, 2000:1463-64; Beckfield, 2003:405.

¹⁶ Although regular funding may be used to assess the existence of staffing if information on staffing is not clear.

We create the FIGO database for three points in time: 1975, 1989, and 2004.¹⁸ These years are of theoretical interest to us for ascertaining changes to the web of organizations in the post-Cold War environment (2004), changes that require comparison with the two time periods that represent some mid-point during the Cold War (1975) and one that is directly at the end of the Cold War (1989). Note that these three points in time represent relatively equidistant intervals, with the 2004 offering a fifteen year period in the development of post-Cold institutional formation, and also offers us the most recent time point at which there is reliable information on IGOs. The time frame between 1975 and 1989 allows some comparison of birth and death rates of FIGOs during the Cold War and constitutes a baseline of comparison with the birth and death rates of institutions after the Cold War's end.

While the fifteen year time spans appear to be somewhat arbitrary, they correspond to the theoretical queries driving the construction of the database. Recall that we are interested in determining how, if at all, major powers seek to create new organizational structures following system transformation. The fifteen year period following the end of World War II provided a clear snapshot of how the post-war order would appear. By 1960, both the bipolar dimension and the growing North-South dimension of international relations were in evidence. Within that fifteen year period, the web of intergovernmental organizations increased by nearly eighty percent. Even the fifteen year period following the end of World War I—despite the failure of President Wilson

¹⁷ Including "...UN sources; the many national listings; the scholarly compilations; and monographs; and the records of many of the organizations themselves (Wallace and Singer, 1970:249)."

¹⁸ We are not the only ones who have sought to differentiate types of IGOs. Recently, a systematic effort has been made (Boehmer, Gartzke, and Nordstrom. 2004; Gartzke, Nordstrom, Boehmer, and Hewitt, 2005) to differentiate IGOs within the COW IGO database, based on level of IGO institutionalization. However, two of the three categories ("minimalist" and "structured") still appear to include a significant number of organizations that fail to meet one or more of our threshold criteria for inclusion.

to create the new world order he articulated—was accompanied by a fifteen percent increase in the number of IGOs.¹⁹

The fifteen year span in the post-Cold War era allows sufficient time to gauge potential changes after the end of the East-West conflict, and corresponds to the latest available data on IGOs. Nor is it the case that the fifteen years following the end of East-West hostilities resulted in a tranquil and stable set of international relations that would have required little tinkering with the old order. The U.S. alone was involved with major hostilities in the Persian Gulf War, in the former Yugoslavia, in Somalia, at home (9/11), in Afghanistan, and in a second war with Iraq.

Note as well that—unlike the COW IGO data—the time intervals make it impossible to use our database for analyses based on annual observations. In part, this is because our theoretical questions do not require annual observations. Equally important, however, is our belief (based on a close inspection of the data available on IGOs and state membership) that annual counts of state membership in these organizations may be somewhat unreliable and can violate the notion of independence of observation. Except for very high profile organizations (such as the UN, NATO, EU, etc.), joining an organization may not be sufficiently salient to capture attention—compared to MIDS or crises for instance—and there is no official chronicle to record such events on an annual basis. The closest source for an official chronicle is the UIA's *Yearbook of International Organizations*, which typically depends on organizations providing the information and UIA officials indicate a considerable lag between state joining and the organization informing UIA. Alternatively, organizations provide a web page and regularly update their membership on it, but this is both a relatively recent phenomenon and also not available for a significant minority of organizations. Thus, while we lose some information using a longer time frame than annual observations, we reduce significantly—although not eliminate completely—distortions in the

¹⁹ These calculations are made by the authors, using the COW IGO database.

pattern of state membership in IGOs. Below, we examine further some of the possible problems involved with this issue in comparison to another database.

Our compilation of FIGOs, similar to the other efforts, starts with the UIA *Yearbook of International Organizations*. We use both the on-line version and supplement it with the hardbound yearbooks as needed. In addition, we check our compilation against both the Jacobson database, *International Governmental Organizations: Membership and Characteristics, 1981 and 1992* (ICPSR 6737), and the Pevehouse and Nordstrom update of the COW IGO database: *Correlates of War 2 International Governmental Organizations Data Set, Version 2.1*. We supplement these sources with additional sources of information when insufficient data are available: reading the website of IGOs; corresponding with the headquarters of IGOs (or individuals on executive committees when there was no response from the secretariat of the organization); reading the treaties and/or charters of the organization; querying *Europa World Plus* on-line edition; and searching through news sources and scholarly materials on regions²⁰ for additional information about the organization.

We include in the database organizations meeting all of our threshold criteria. Two sets of files are generated. One set contains information on FIGOs. The second set contains state membership data for each FIGO. Information on FIGOs is coded for a variety of organizational characteristics, including primary organizational purpose or mandate, whether or not the organization is a functional one, organizational birth year (and death where applicable), and the geopolitical scope of the organization (whether or not the FIGO is global, interregional, regional, or sub-regional).

²⁰ Including Buzan and Waeber, 2004; Grant and Soderbaum, 2003; Katzenstein, 2005, Pempel 2005, Solengen, 1998, 2005.

Regarding the geopolitical organizational scope, we classify all FIGOs as belonging to one of four types. *Global intergovernmental organizations* (GIGOs) are open to all states in the global system without geographic restrictions, or are restricted only by their focus on an activity or purpose irrelevant to some states (e.g., all states can become members that import or export wine). *Inter-regional governmental organizations* (IRGOs) are restricted in membership to states geographically, culturally or ethnically (e.g. Latin states, Francophone states, Arab states), or politically (e.g., former colonies), across two or more (but not all) regions. *Regional governmental organizations* (RGOs) are open to all members of a single region. *Sub-regional intergovernmental organizations* (SRGOs) are restricted by geography, or other criteria (e.g., African states with large Muslim populations) to members within a region. Each type yields two variations. The first is inclusive, and available to all states; the second is restricted to a sub-population of states. For example, a global organization focused on all wine producer and wine consumer states would be a GIGO sub-category, excluding all Muslim states. An organization of Middle East Arab states would be a sub-category of RGOs, excluding states such as Iran, that are Middle Eastern, but not Arab.²¹

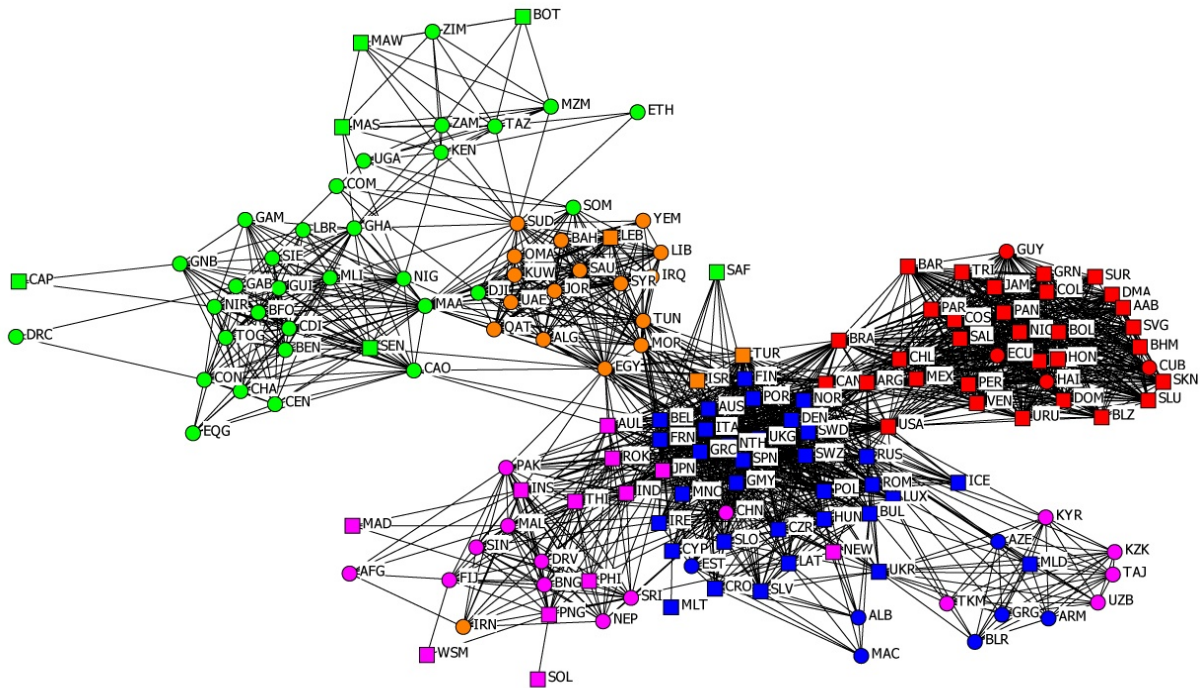
There is an enormous amount of controversy over how to identify “regions” in international relations (e.g., see Lemke, 2002; Buzan and Waeber, 2004). We make no claim to resolving this controversy. However, for analytic purposes, we have created here a generic classification scheme that is based on a combination of geography, and broad political affiliation. Accordingly, our regions consist of: Europe, Asia, Middle East (including states with dominant Arab or Islamic populations directly adjoining the Middle East, such as Saharan Africa, Afghanistan, and Turkey); Africa (excluding North African states classified in the Middle East), Latin America (including

²¹ The two types (restricted and unrestricted) are not analyzed separately (for example, we aggregate both restricted and unrestricted GIGOs below); they are initially created to determine whether or not states have the “opportunity” to join them).

Central America), and the Caribbean (see Appendix A). Organizations exclusive to North America (two) and Oceania (two) are for accounting purposes coded as “other” region. Israel is excluded from the Middle East; Turkey is included in the Middle East, but not in Europe. The data files are sufficiently flexible so that other researchers can reclassify regions using other criteria or could be used to identify regions based on commonality of FIGO membership.

We did however conduct a network analysis of organizations, using mapping techniques for each of the three time periods in order to ascertain whether or not the a-priori placement of these states corresponded to regional organizational networks. With a few exceptions (e.g., Israel and Turkey both appear closer to Europe than our classification suggests) the mappings reveal clusters very similar to our classifications.

Figure 2. Network Mapping of Regional Clusters, 2004.



The second set of files contains data on state membership in each FIGO for each time period. The data on state membership are aggregated so that they yield two types of measures for

each state. One is a traditional frequency count (NUMBER), which can be further disaggregated into frequency of membership in global (GIGOS), inter-regional (IRGOs), regional (RGOs), and sub-regional organizations (SRGOs). Unlike other efforts, however, we have created as well an “opportunity” code, which specifies whether or not a state is able to join an organization. For example, a Latin American state may not join a variety of African IGOs; if there are three times the number of IGOs in Africa than Latin America, a simple frequency count of FIGO membership does not provide a good indication of willingness to join the range of FIGOs that are alive in the international system. Thus, we create a second measure for each state where the numerator is the number of organizations joined and the denominator is the number of FIGOs it is able to join (WILLING). Researchers may wish to use the frequency measure when analyzing the impact of membership on states. Alternatively, the WILLING measure may be more useful for assessing why states join IGOs.²²

Comparing FIGO with COW IGO

In order to gauge the effects of our threshold criteria on the population of FIGOs, we compare our effort with the COW IGO database. We do so for a number of reasons. Most important, the Pevehouse/Nordstrom effort is the current benchmark for IGO data collection. The database stems from a careful process of data collection (including later verification to determine if any of the organizations in 2000 had “died” that year but there was insufficient information to determine death during the data collection procedure), meeting scientific standards for validity and reliability. A second reason is its familiarity: it is being widely utilized (e.g., see some of the research reported under References) in quantitative analyses for assessing the effects of IGO

²² We disaggregate the WILLING measure as well by type of organization so that alternative WILLING measures are created for total organizational involvement, and as well for GIGOs, IRGOs, RGOs, and SRGOs.

membership on states. Finally, their data concludes with the year 2000, representing the latest data point of available systematic information to date on the population of IGOs.

Strictly speaking, the two datasets are not comparable since we sample three points in time and our last time period (2004) is beyond the reach of the COW IGO database (their last time point is 2000) Therefore, we compare the two databases by making the following adjustments. First, for a comparison of the number of organizations in the two series, we update COW IGO to the year 2004 (using the COW IGO empirical criteria), allowing us to make comparisons at three points in time. Second, in order to compare membership by states, we eliminate from our database all FIGOs formed after the year 2000, allowing for comparisons of state membership with COWIGO up to the year 2000.

We do not expect the two populations of IGOs to be identical, recalling Wallace and Singer's (1970) and Jacobson's (1986) warning that populations will differ, depending on IGO definition. Nor do we imply any criticism of the COW IGO effort. As we had noted earlier, our definitions and threshold values for inclusion are based on a conceptual approach related to the theoretical questions driving our study, which are different from the concerns that led to the creation of the COW IGO database.

The purpose of the comparison is to ascertain whether or not there are significant differences in IGO populations and state memberships when our thresholds are used to identify FIGOs. If there are none, then it would be possible to simply update COW IGO to 2004; if there are significant differences, then we will need to utilize our database to seek answers to the research questions we are pursuing.

Table 2. UPDATED COW IGOs Not Meeting FIGO Threshold Requirements.

Criteria	Number of COW IGOs Not Meeting Criterion in 2004
Three or more states and predominantly states as members	8
Member states meet on a regular basis and oversee operations of IGO/overall supervision is not by another IGO	21 ²³
Staffing is permanent/non-symbolic/ and independent of other IGOs or any single state	49
Funding is routinized/non-symbolic/and independent of any other IGO or any single state	42
Absolutely no evidence appears to be available to indicate staffing and/or funding; there is no web page or response from the organization	8

The COW IGO database contains 340 IGOs classified as “live” for the year 2004. Of these, 30.9 percent (N=105) fail to meet one or more of our criteria for inclusion. Table 2 indicates the variety of threshold levels not being met. Clearly, the majority of the exclusions occur as a result of issues related to autonomy and/or bureaucratic capabilities of these organizations.

The first category indicates that an IGO must contain at least three states, and that the membership consists predominantly of states as members. Eight organizations appear to violate these criteria. Examples include the International Coral Reef Initiative, which includes a mix of states and non-state members; Africare’s membership is composed primarily of non-state actors; and the Mideast and Mediterranean Tourism Association, which appears to be a public-private partnership of state and non-state actors.

The second category requires that member states (individuals acting as representatives of their states) meet on a regular basis (at least every four years) to oversee the operations of the

²³ Eight of these organizations have been declared dead or inactive by either UIA or by our criterion of inactivity/absence of meetings at least every four years.

organization and to provide overall supervision (as opposed to final oversight by another IGO). Twenty one IGOs appear to be in violation of these criteria, including nine that do not seem to be functioning in the year 2004. Examples include CAB International which has a membership appointed by states but are business people or scientists acting in their individual capacities; the South and West African Postal Union which doesn't appear to have met since 1993; the North Pacific Fur Seal Commission which appears to have been disbanded in 1988; and the Nordic Development Fund which is supervised by the Nordic Council of Ministers.

Forty nine IGOs appear to violate the third set of criteria relating to staffing, requiring that staffing be permanent, non-symbolic, professional/paid, and independent of other IGOs or any single state. Some of the IGOs in violation include: the Asian Pacific Fisheries Commission, whose staffing is provided by the FAO; the Group of 24, operated under the staffing of the EU Commission; Union for the Protection of New Variety of Plants, staffed by the WIPO; or the Southern African Customs Union, whose secretariat is exclusively from Namibia.

Forty two organizations fail to meet some aspect of criteria related to funding: here we expect funding to be routinized, non-symbolic, and independent of any other IGO or a single state. Examples of violators include the Inter-American Children's Institute, funded by the OAS; the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, funded by the UN; InfoSAMAK, which is funded by the FAO; and the International Union for the Protection of Industrial Property, funded by WIPO.

Finally, eight organizations yielded absolutely no information regarding either staffing or funding despite extensive searches in numerous sources, and including attempted contacts with the organizations. Examples include: the South Investment, Trade, and Technical Data Exchange

Center; the Mediterranean Water Network; and Conferencia de Autoridades Cinematograficas de Iberoamerica.

In aggregate terms, the excluded organizations exhibit the following characteristics:²⁴

- **Founding Decade:** two thirds of the organizations excluded were founded during the 1980s and 1990s;
- **Primary Mandate:** the overwhelming number of organizations removed had either an economic mandate (40.25%) or a “social” (social/cultural/ecological) mandate (45.5%). While the FIGO organizations (as do the COW IGO organizations) tend to have economic mandates, the removal of such a high percentage of “social” organizations suggests the possibility that organizational formation in these latter areas is different than for other issues, and especially so for newer organizations;
- **Geopolitical scope:** 75% of IGOs eliminated are regional organizations; more than half of those are sub-regional in scope;
- **Regional scope:** the largest number of regional organizations eliminated is from Europe (and likely due to the increasing linkages to the European community, reducing autonomy).

Can we note significant differences as a result of these exclusions? The FIGO database contains 265 “live” organizations for the year 2004.²⁵ Comparing the two sets of data yields substantial differences regarding both the population of IGOs and state membership in them.

First, the FIGO population for the year 2004 is substantially smaller than the COW IGO population: the web of intergovernmental organizations, as we have defined them, is

²⁴ We removed from the 86 organizations those that we found to be clearly “dead” by 2000, reducing the N to 77.

²⁵ There is a discrepancy between the FIGO database and COW IGO once the non-FIGOs are removed from the data. This is because we uncovered a number of organizations (FIGOs) that are either not noted in COW IGO or they may have had their names (COW IGO does not use the UIA codes and we had to refer to their organizations by their names) incorrectly noted in the database. Thus, we added some thirty organizations not included in COW IGO, some of which were created after 2000.

approximately twenty two percent smaller than the COW web. This relative difference in size between the two populations appears to hold across the three time periods.

Second, depending on the database we use, we find significant differences in net rates of growth in FIGO and IGO populations. Using the FIGO database, we find that the population of FIGOs between 1975 and 1989 showing very robust growth; however, between the end of the Cold War and 2004, the net growth of FIGOs is arrested and slightly reversed. Using the COW IGO database demonstrates similarly robust growth in the 1975-1989 period as well; however, between 1990 and 2004 net growth continues, albeit at a more modest pace around six percent. The cumulative effect of these differences demonstrates a net growth of FIGOs over the last thirty years that is more modest (by about twenty eight percent less) than COW IGO growth, with the two databases suggesting very different descriptions regarding the growth in the web of intergovernmental organizations in international relations.²⁶

Third, and not surprisingly, the frequency of state memberships differs among the two databases: U.S. membership in the FIGO web is roughly twenty percent smaller than in COW IGO (77 versus 92); China's is roughly eighteen percent smaller (62 versus 73); for the three major states of the EU (combined) including the UK, Germany, and France, it is thirteen percent smaller (118 versus 133). As these differences note, the effects of differential IGO selection on membership frequency is not uniform across states, and appears even more so when considering that Russian membership is nearly identical across the two sets of data (79 versus 80), and only minimally different for Japan (75 versus 81). These differences confirm our expectations that a

²⁶ Our findings appear to parallel work on the creation of alliance treaties over time. For example, Leeds and Anac (2006) and Powers and Goertz (2006), indicate that while most alliances are typically bilateral in nature, the proportion of bilateral alliances since 1989, compared to multilateral ones, far exceeds the norm, indicating a diminution of formal multilateral agreements (and probably IGOs) between states. Similarly, Leeds and Anac (2006) report a substantial decrease (compared to the Cold War) in alliance agreements requiring a permanent bureaucratic structure after 1989. Clearly, alliance organizations are only one type of IGO and the reductions in multilateral alliance treaties do not address the "death" of certain organizations. However, they provide some supporting evidence of the apparent post-Cold War changes to the constellation of IGOs noted in our database.

stricter definition of IGOs, requiring more of states, would alter the nature of state membership in the web of intergovernmental organizations.

Do these differences matter between the two databases? If not, then updating COW IGO to 2004 would seem a less arduous task than creating a new database and especially one that provides only three sets of observations over time. One of the substantial payoffs of using COW IGO is that it provides annual observations of state membership over a substantially large period of time. We opted not to create a database that has annual observations, partly since our theoretical questions do not require them, but also because we believe that annually based observations of state membership in intergovernmental organizations pose formidable problems concerning the validity of the data. While state membership is relatively accessible for organizations operating currently, pinpointing annually valid changes in membership is vexing and unreliable detective work. It is not difficult to find the membership base of a *currently* operating organization in the *UIA Yearbook* and/or on the organization's own website (most have them). Trying to ascertain, however, whether or not a state joined a particular IGO in 1975 or 1979 is far more problematic, and especially for organizations that no longer exist. *UIA* investigators inform us that they have been forced to rely to a substantial degree on self-reporting by IGOs, and often what appears as annual fluctuations may in fact contain a substantial lag time between joining (or, for the relatively rarer cases of "unjoining") and the reporting of the added membership.

This issue may become problematic for research that is based on annual observations of state membership in IGOs. Typically, not much annual fluctuation would be expected over changes in membership, but the absence of change may be exaggerated when counting years for which there may be little or no reporting. It is quite possible that the apparent stability in membership over short periods of time actually masks an absence of reliable data on changes in

membership, and the data point in year X is being counted as a separate observation in year Y, even though it may have changed by year Y but has gone undetected.

Table 3. COWIGO Correlation matrix (five year intervals), for frequency of state membership, 1975-2000.

	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000
1975	1					
1980	.980	1				
1985	.955	.984	1			
1990	.930	.963	.984	1		
1995	.914	.940	.958	.972	1	
2000	.882	.912	.933	.948	.982	1

Table 3 notes the correlations, at five-year intervals, in the frequency of state membership in all IGOs in the COW IGO database between 1975 and 2000. As the table indicates, there is virtually no change across five-year intervals, and the correlations only dip below .9 at the 25th year.

Table 4. Correlation matrix (five year intervals) for Polity IV democracy scores, 1975-2000.

	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000
1975	1					
1980	.866	1				
1985	.879	.884	1			
1990	.749	.710	.836	1		
1995	.590	.547	.651	.803	1	
2000	.547	.582	.651	.770	.877	1

We compared this trend to another variable that is unlikely to change quickly over time: changes in levels of democracy, measured using the Polity IV dataset (Marshall and Jaggers, 2002), and report the results in Table 4. This dataset, when compared to COW IGO membership

data, demonstrates dramatically more variation across five-year intervals. The correlation of levels of democracy at five-year time slices never exceeds a .9 level, compared to a correlation above a .95 level across *every* five-year interval in the COW IGO matrix. Of additional interest is the average, year-to-year correlations within these datasets (not shown). For the 1975-2000 time frame, on average, membership in IGOs is correlated with the previous year at a level of .9966, while democracy scores are correlated with their previous scores at a lower level .9684.²⁷ While it is plausible that polity characteristics change quicker than membership in intergovernmental organizations, we think it just as likely that inadequate reporting of changes by organizations over shorter time periods leads to duplicate counting of the same organizational membership data when the unit of observation is a short time period.

Given our theoretical concerns, we believe that these differences between the two datasets matter, both at the macro and at the micro levels of analysis. For example, a comparative analysis that utilizes both the FIGO and the unfiltered COW IGO data reveals some important differences and emphasizes the salience of the FIGO measures (Table 5).²⁸ We find that there are significant differences between the FIGO measure, which factors in a state's opportunity to join organizations, and a simple count of COW IGO memberships (Rodgers and Volgy Forthcoming, 2008). A simple count of organizational membership for Latin America and African states indicates a primary prediction based on sufficient economic capabilities. The FIGO WILLING measure, as the

²⁷ While the difference between these two levels of year-to-year correlation may seem trivial, when extended over multiple years, the cumulative impact is quite substantial. For example, over a 25 year period, IGO membership, with each year having a .9966 correlation with the previous year, we would expect the level of correlation between the final year and the initial year to be .92. In contrast, with only a slightly lower year-to-year correlation, the expected correlation between the initial year and the final year of for democracy scores is significantly lower, at .45. These expected results are similar to the actual correlations presented in tables 4 and 5. To save space, the full correlation matrices for the 1975-2000 period are not presented here.

²⁸ Although we utilized a standard OLS analysis in order to maintain consistency with the most current studies in this area (See Mansfield and Pevehouse 2006), the theoretical nature of the dependent variables does not lend itself to this approach. However, a Tobit analysis which is appropriate for the FIGO WILLING measure confirms the OLS results with virtually no differentiation in any of the predicted values.

dependent variable reveals important regional differences and uncovers the impact of domestic institutions on membership in regional organizations.

Table 5. Comparative Analysis of FIGO and COW IGO Data for Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America, 2000

Variables	FIGO Data	Cow IGO Data
Regime Type	-.016** (.006)	-.338 (.414)
Democratization	.048 (.044)	2.189 (2.792)
Openness	-.001 (.001)	-.0877 (.052)
Wealth	-6.74*e-6 (2.33*10-5)	-.001 (.001)
Economic Capabilities	.038* (.024)	4.144* (1.506)
Region	.424*** (.081)	6.342 (5.155)
Constant	-.658 (.526)	-24.512 (33.569)
R2	.50	.31
N	56	56

Entries are ordinary least squares estimates, with standard errors in parentheses. *** $p < .01$; ** $p < .05$; * $p < .10$

The FIGO measures are uniquely situated to capture important dimensional characteristics such as typology of organization and willingness to join. We found that regime type was significantly related to participation in regional organizations within the two regions and more importantly, we found that the relationship is negatively correlated with membership (these findings will be addressed further in Rodgers and Volgy, forthcoming, 2008). The simple

count measure fails to capture the differences between typology of organization, regional differences and assigns the bulk of the causal explanatory power to the capabilities measure.

Having demonstrated the salience of using opportunity to join FIGOs in analyses of state membership in intergovernmental organizations, we now turn to the impact of FIGOs on international political processes, such as the initiation of militarized interstate disputes. To do so, we replicate the study of Russett, Oneal, and Davis (1998), adding a second model which models the impact of FIGOs on interstate conflict, while controlling for the impact of the more inclusive IGO measure, which theoretically represents both FIGOs and non-FIGOs. One caveat should be noted. The FIGO data only extends back to 1975. Accordingly, we restrict the temporal window of the Russett, Oneal, and Davis analysis to starting in 1975, and include only those observations where full data for both their measure and our FIGO measure is available. This permits testing the hypothesis that the FIGO variable is an improvement over the more inclusive IGO measure included in their study. As we use their replication data²⁹, we refer readers to their original article for a discussion of coding procedures. In the second model the FIGO variable is a count of the number of FIGOs in which the dyad shares co-membership. Table 6 presents the results of this analysis.

Comparing the two models presented in Table 6 suggests that the impact of intergovernmental organizations on the likelihood of interstate might be underestimated when using an all-inclusive measure of IGOs. In the second model, the FIGO variable supplants the more inclusive IGO variable, having a negative and significant influence on the likelihood of conflict initiation. Moreover, the IGO effects of the IGO variable originally included in the Russett, Oneal, and Davis (1998) analysis reverses signs, and is found to significantly increase

²⁹ Replication data were attained from Bruce Russett's website, and can be downloaded at <http://pantheon.yale.edu/~brusset/IO1998.zip>.

the likelihood of interstate disputes. We posit that the reversal in directionality of the more inclusive IGO variable may be indicative of the aggregation of two distinct populations of organizations, where FIGOs are reducing the likelihood of interstate dispute, while non-FIGOs might actually be increasing it. Finally, a likelihood ratio test allows us to examine whether

Table 6: The Impact of IGOs and FIGOs on Interstate Disputes, 1975-1985.

	Russett, Oneal & Davis (1998)	Replication, with FIGO variable
Joint IGO membership	-.006** (.002)	.010** (.004)
Joint FIGO membership—	—	-.033** (.007)
DemocracyL	-.005 (.006)	-.005 (.006)
DemocracyH	.015** (.004)	.016** (.005)
DependenceL	-23.204** (7.061)	-21.494** (6.955)
Trend in dependence	-3.773 (2.006)	-3.101 (2.013)
Three-year economic growth	-.028** (.006)	-.025** (.006)
Capabilities ratio	-.001** (.0003)	-.001** (.0004)
Allies	-.118 (.068)	-.044 (.070)
Contiguity	1.090** (.073)	1.122** (.174)
Constant	-2.001 (.109)	-1.796** (.117)
Log likelihood	-1113.8	-1,103.3
N	8,067	8,067

Estimates parameters are probit coefficients.

**p < .05; * p < .01

inclusion of the FIGO variable marks a significant improvement over the Russett, Oneal, and Davis model. Results of this test produces a χ^2 statistic of 21.04 (1 df), suggesting that the model including the FIGO variable is a significant improvement over a model not including it ($p < .0000$).

Conclusion

We conceptualized a formal intergovernmental organization as constituting three dimensions: 1) institutionalization of state decision-making and oversight in governance, 2) bureaucratic organization resulting in some stability of management, and 3) evidence of autonomy in organizational operation and in the execution of the collective will of the membership. Based on these dimensions, we identified eleven threshold criteria with which we could identify an organization as being a FIGO. Comparing the resulting database with the COW IGO database, we found, as expected, significant differences in the size of the IGO population, changes in the growth of IGOs over time, and differences in state membership in the constellation of IGOs in international affairs. We found as well that differentiating between IGOs and FIGOs in empirical models seeking to account for both conflict and state membership in organizations yielded significant effects.

It is important to note that this effort focuses on only one part of the identification process regarding FIGOs: whether or not they meet minimal threshold criteria. There are obviously a series of critical attributes associated with FIGOs—once they have surpassed threshold requirements—that also need to be addressed. Clearly, surpassing these thresholds does not make the resulting components of the FIGOs population identical. At the micro level, FIGOs likely differ on a variety of characteristics, ranging from the issues they address and the functions they perform to the nature of their institutional designs, with significant consequences for having an impact on their members and on international politics (e.g., see Boehmer, Gartzke and Nordstrom, 2004). At the macro

level, groupings of FIGO sub-populations varying across institutional characteristics and the degree of interconnectedness between institutions as networks, or webs of structural relationships, are likely to have important consequences for members and non-members alike (e.g., see Gartzke, Nordstrom, Boehmer, and Hewitt, 2005). Our further efforts involving the impact of these organizations will seek to take into account such factors.

We would be remiss as well if we failed to note that data on both IGOs and FIGOs are both more “squishy” and “dynamic” than they appear on the surface. By “squishy”, we mean that the disparate sources needed to trace their characteristics, activities and membership make changes difficult to pinpoint. For example, while we are able to ascertain procedural requirements for organizational funding and can trace some amount of funding being spent, we are loath to estimate the exact size of FIGO budgets and the extent to which those budgets are resupplied annually. This is not a problem for some organizations, but it is probably so for a majority of them. Likewise, data on state membership (as we had noted above): while relatively accessible for organizations operating currently, *when* such membership changed over time poses more formidable problems in pinpointing the exact year of the change.

There is also the issue of “dynamism:” organizations may acquire additional attributes (or lose some) over time, either lifting them across the minimum threshold to qualify as a FIGO, or drop them below the threshold. We found both types of cases. Detecting the precise time when such changes occur is difficult to assess through self-reporting, and especially in the case of lost attributes.³⁰ Just as important, institutional design characteristics may change over time³¹ and some of the new organizational procedures may not be reported for several years, creating a significant

³⁰ The *UIA Yearbook* indicates that organizations often “overstate” their importance.

³¹ In fact Haftel and Thompson (2006) demonstrate a strong relationship between an RTA’s longevity and its institutional characteristics (consistent with IGO independence), suggesting that enduring institutions change their design features over time.

time lag between real change and what is identified in the database. Again, research based on annual observations may be more susceptible to this problem.

Both the squishy and the dynamic problem associated with data-gathering on IGOs lead us to the suggestion that researchers working in this field may gain more valid observations through aggregating observations over periods larger than annually. This is the strategy we adopt by sampling three time frames—fifteen years apart—with the hope that we are able to catch the errors we would likely miss utilizing annual observations.

APPENDIX A: States and Regional Classifications

ASIA

Afghanistan
 Bangladesh
 Bhutan
 Brunei Daru
 Cambodia
 China
 India
 Indonesia
 Japan
 Kazakhstan
 Kyrgyzstan
 Laos
 Malaysia
 Maldives
 Mongolia
 Myanmar/Burma
 Nepal
 North Korea
 Pakistan
 Philippines
 Singapore
 South Korea
 Sri Lanka
 Taiwan
 Tajikistan
 Thailand
 Turkmenistan
 Uzbekistan
 Viet Nam

OCEANIA

Australia
 Fiji
 Kiribati
 Marshall Islands
 Micronesia
 Nauru
 New Zealand
 Palau
 Papua New Guinea
 Samoa/Western
 Samoa
 Solomon Islands
 Tonga
 Tuvalu
 Vanuatu

EUROPE

Albania
 Andorra
 Armenia
 Austria
 Azerbaijan
 Belgium
 Bosnia and
 Bulgaria
 Byelorussia/Belarus
 Croatia
 Cyprus
 Czechoslovakia/CZR
 Denmark
 Estonia
 Finland
 France
 Georgia
 Germany
 Greece
 Hungary
 Iceland
 Ireland
 Italy
 Latvia
 Liechtenstein
 Lithuania
 Luxembourg
 Malta
 Monaco
 Netherlands
 Norway
 Poland
 Portugal
 Rep. Moldova
 Romania
 Russia/USSR
 Russian Fed
 San Marino
 Serbia and
 Montenegro
 Slovakia
 Slovenia
 Spain
 Sweden
 Switzerland
 The FYR Macedonia
 Ukraine
 United Kingdom

LATIN AMERICA

Argentina
 Belize
 Bolivia
 Brazil
 Chile
 Colombia
 Costa Rica
 Ecuador
 El Salvador
 Guatemala
 Honduras
 Mexico
 Nicaragua
 Panama
 Paraguay
 Peru
 Uruguay
 Venezuela

CENTRAL AMERICA*

Belize
 Costa Rica
 El Salvador
 Guatemala
 Honduras
 Nicaragua
 Panama

CARIBBEAN

Antigua and Barbuda
 Bahamas
 Barbados
 Cuba
 Dominica
 Dominican Republic
 Grenada
 Guyana
 Haiti
 Jamaica
 St. Christoph
 St. Kitts
 St. Lucia
 St. Vincent
 Suriname
 Trinidad and Tobago

MIDDLE EAST

Algeria
 Bahrain
 Egypt
 Iran
 Iraq
 Jordan
 Kuwait
 Lebanon
 Libya
 Morocco
 Oman
 Qatar
 Saudi Arabia
 Sudan
 Syria
 Tunisia
 Turkey
 United Arab
 Emirates
 Yemen

SUB-SAHARAN

AFRICA

Angola
 Benin
 Botswana
 Burkina Faso (Upp)
 Burundi
 Cameroon
 Cape Verde
 Central Afr
 Chad
 Comoros
 Congo (Brazz)
 Djibouti
 Equatorial Guinea
 Eritrea
 Ethiopia
 Gabon
 Gambia
 Ghana
 Guinea
 Guinea Bissau
 Ivory Coast
 Kenya
 Lesotho
 Liberia
 Madagascar
 Malawi
 Mali
 Mauritania
 Mauritius
 Mozambique
 Namibia
 Niger
 Nigeria
 Rwanda
 Sao Tome and
 Principe
 Senegal
 Seychelles
 Sierra Leone
 Somalia
 South Africa
 Swaziland
 Tanganyika
 Tanzania
 Togo
 Uganda
 Zaire (D.R. Congo)
 Zambia
 Zanzibar
 Zimbabwe

* also part of L.A

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