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The Increasing Representativeness of International Organizations' Secretariats: Evidence from the United Nations System, 1997–2015

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Although international organizations (IOs) and their secretariats play important roles in international politics, we know surprisingly little about their staffing composition and the factors that shape it. What accounts for the national composition of the secretariats of IOs? We theorize that the national composition of international secretariats is shaped by three factors: the desire by powerful states for institutional control, a commonly shared interest in a secretariat's functional effectiveness, and, increasingly, a need for secretariats to be seen as legitimate by being representative of the global population. Building on recent constructivist literature, we argue that IOs face increasing normative pressure to be representative in their staffing patterns. Using panel regression, we assess our argument with a new dataset covering states' representation in the secretariats of thirty-five United Nations system bodies from 1997 to 2015. The results indicate that while functional effectiveness plays a significant and stable role, international secretariats have become increasingly representative of the global population. Moreover, this has come primarily at the expense of the over-representation of powerful states. This shift from power to representation is particularly strong in large IOs with high political and societal visibility. When it comes to IO secretariats, representativeness (increasingly) matters.

Si bien las organizaciones internacionales (OI) y sus secretarías desempeñan un papel importante en la política internacional, sabemos increíblemente poco acerca de cómo se compone su personal y los factores que lo configuran. ¿Cómo se explica la composición nacional de las secretarías de las OI? Planteamos que la composición nacional de las secretarías internacionales está determinada por tres factores: el deseo de control de los estados poderosos; un interés común en la eficacia funcional de una secretaría; y, cada vez más, la necesidad de que las secretarías se consideren legítimas por ser representativas de la población mundial. Basándonos en la literatura constructivista reciente, sostenemos que las OI enfrentan una presión normativa cada vez mayor para ser representativas en sus patrones de contratación de personal. Utilizando el modelo de regresión de panel, evaluamos nuestro argumento con un nuevo conjunto de datos que abarca la representación de los estados en las secretarías de 35 órganos del sistema de las Naciones Unidas entre 1997 y 2015. Los resultados indican que, si bien la eficacia funcional juega un papel importante y estable, las secretarías internacionales se han vuelto cada vez más representativas de la población mundial. Además, esto se ha producido principalmente a expensas de la sobrerrepresentación de los estados poderosos. Este cambio del poder a la representación es particularmente fuerte en las OI grandes con alta visibilidad política y social. Cuando se trata de secretarías de OI, la representatividad importa (cada vez más).

Bien que les organisations internationales et leurs secrétariats jouent des rôles importants dans les politiques internationales, nous ne savons étonnamment que peu de choses sur le personnel qui les compose et sur les facteurs qui les façonnent. Quels sont les facteurs pris en compte pour la composition nationale des secrétariats des organisations internationales ? Nous émettons la théorie que la composition nationale des secrétariats internationaux est façonnée par trois facteurs : le désir de contrôle des États puissants, un intérêt commun partagé dans l'efficacité fonctionnelle du secrétariat, et de plus en plus, un besoin que les secrétariats soient perçus comme légitimes en étant représentatifs de la population mondiale. Nous nous appuyons sur la littérature constructiviste récente pour soutenir que les organisations internationales sont confrontées à une pression normative croissante les poussant à être représentatives dans leurs schémas de dotation en personnel. Nous employons une régression de panel pour évaluer notre argument par rapport à un nouveau jeu de données couvrant la représentation des États dans les secrétariats de 35 organes du système des Nations Unies de 1997 à 2015. Nos résultats indiquent que bien que l'efficacité fonctionnelle joue un rôle stable considérable, les secrétariats internationaux sont de plus en plus devenus représentatifs de la population mondiale. De plus, cela s'est principalement fait aux dépens de la sur-représentation des États puissants. Ce passage de la puissance à la représentation est particulièrement marqué dans les grandes organisations internationales ayant une visibilité politique et sociétale considérable. Pour les secrétariats des organisations internationales, la représentativité gagne (de plus en plus) en importance.

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Introduction

> During the Cold war, the UN was seen as … these occidental guys, everyone white and with a tie, et cetera. Now there is diversification of the face of the UN … or the face that the UN has to have … Or is ideal to have, to be really representing its members.[1]

Like many formal institutions, international organizations (IOs) appear to be under pressure to garner legitimacy as an important organizational resource (Bexell 2014; Tallberg and Zürn 2019), and increasingly to do so by reflecting normative criteria associated with representative governance (Grigorescu 2015; Rapkin, Strand, and Trevathan 2016; Stephen 2018; Dingwerth, Schmidtke, and Weise 2020). While there has been considerable discussion and debate about the extent to which IOs can be "democratic" and "representative" in principle (Bodansky 1999; Dahl 1999; Buchanan and Keohane 2006; Koenig-Archibugi 2011), attention is turning to the investigation of how demands for democratic forms of legitimation have actually impacted the behavior and characteristics of IOs in practice (Grigorescu 2007, 2015; Tallberg et al. 2014; Rocabert et al. 2019; Dingwerth, Schmidtke, and Weise 2020). In this article, we extend this research agenda by theorizing and mapping the changing role of power, functional effectiveness, and representative legitimacy in the national composition of IO staffs (see also Christensen and Yesilkagit 2019; Christensen 2019).

To date, studies of the composition of international secretariats see secretariats either in (realist) power-driven terms or in (liberal institutionalist) functionalist terms. From the power-driven perspective, states engage in a zero-sum struggle for influence over IO staffs by acquiring positions for their own nationals (Stone 2013; Novosad and Werker 2019). From the functionalist perspective, IO staffing is driven more by the technocratic and functional requirements needed to fulfill an IO's tasks effectively (Parizek 2017; Eckhard and Steinebach 2018). In this study, we show that this only covers part of the picture. Increasingly, international secretariats also seek to uphold their organizational legitimacy by representing the global community they are supposed to serve.

Building on insights from public administration and management studies (Meier 1975, 2018; Suchman 1995; Chiu and Sharfman 2011) and the literature on the politicization of IOs (Zürn 2014; Ecker-Ehrhardt 2018; Rauh and Zürn 2020; Dingwerth, Schmidtke, and Weise 2020), we propose that IOs are increasingly sensitive to the demands of their normative environments. As representativeness gains in strength as a standard for political legitimacy in the eyes both of states and broader societal audiences, IOs respond by becoming more representative in their staffing patterns. Moreover, this comes primarily at the expense of the over-representation of powerful states, which has become less legitimate over time. Because exposure to external audiences acts as a catalyst for normative pressure, we also expect representation to be particularly pronounced in IOs of high public visibility, which face stronger political and societal scrutiny.

To assess our argument, we draw on interviews with Geneva-based diplomatic staff, representing UN member states, as well as senior IO officials,[2] and test the observable implications using a new dataset covering the staffing of thirty-five United Nations system bodies, essentially the entire UN system, over the years 1997–2015. The bodies covered range from the United Nations Secretariat proper and many well-known organizations such as UNICEF, the World Health Organization (WHO), and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), to smaller bodies such as the Universal Postal Union and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).

There are three key results, each of which is in line with our reasoning. First, the predictions based on all three factors—member states' material power, IOs' functional requirements, and representative legitimacy—find support in our data. Second, however, IOs have also grown increasingly representative of the global population over time, and this increasing representativeness has mostly come at the expense of the over-representation of powerful states. We do not observe sizable changes with regard to the continuing prominence of functional demands on staffing. Third, this trend is strongest among IOs with high public visibility. In sum, our results indicate that IO staffing decreasingly fits a "control by powerful states" perspective, and increasingly fits a "representative legitimacy" perspective.

This study makes four key contributions to the literature. Firstly, it contributes to findings that IOs have increasingly made efforts to conform to democracy-related norms, for example, by adopting policies of information transparency (Grigorescu 2007), providing access to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) (Tallberg et al. 2014), or establishing parliamentary bodies (Rocabert et al. 2019). Our results are also consistent with the finding that IOs and states seeking IO reform increasingly deploy democratic rhetoric to legitimize their aims (Stephen 2015; Dingwerth, Schmidtke, and Weise 2020). Secondly, it contributes to literature on the growing efforts of IOs to self-legitimate in general (Grigorescu 2010; Ecker-Ehrhardt 2018, 2020; Stephen 2018; Tallberg and Zürn 2019). Thirdly, it advances literature on international secretariats by demonstrating that it is not only functionality (Parizek 2017) and national capabilities (Novosad and Werker 2019) that shape the national composition of IO secretariats, but representativeness as well (Christensen 2019). Fourth, to our knowledge, this is the first systematic, long-term account of staffing patterns across a large number of IOs.[3]

Theory: Three Forces Shaping the Composition of International Secretariats

It is often observed that IOs play an increasingly important role in international politics (Murphy 1994; Abbott and Snidal 1998; Barnett and Finnemore 2004; Hooghe et al. 2017; Zürn 2018). However, despite an earlier foundational literature (Cox 1969; Haas 1964, 97–103), the secretariats of IOs[4] have remained peripheral in International Relations (Xu and Weller 2008; Ege and Bauer 2013, 135).

One reason that international secretariats are worth studying is because they have steadily grown and proliferated. By one estimate, the total number of international civil

The data underlying this article are available on the ISQ Dataverse, at https://dataverse.harvard.edu/dataverse/isq.

[1] Authors' interview with a representative of a middle-income country from the Americas (#6), emphasis added.

[2] A full anonymized list of the interviews is available in figure A1 in the online appendix.

[3] Existing quantitative studies—those by Novosad and Werker (2019), Parizek (2017), Thorvaldsdottir (2016), Eckhard and Steinebach (2018), and Badache (2019)—cover either a single IO over time or a larger number of IOs in a crosssectional design.

[4] Terms such as international secretariats, international bureaucracies, or international administrations are used interchangeably in the literature.

servants active in 2011 was between 150,000 and 200,000 (Schermers and Blokker 2011, 355). Today, the UN bodies have close to 34,000 professional staff members and another more than 53,000 general services staff members. Between 2012 and 2015, these staff members spent approximately four billion US dollars on air travel alone (Afifi 2017, iv). When we talk about the growth of IOs, we are also talking about the growth of a global bureaucracy (Knill and Bauer 2016; Heldt and Schmidtke 2017).

More importantly, secretariats can also be important in political outcomes. They do this by formulating and disseminating international rules and norms (Barnett and Finnemore 2004), influencing policies (Eckhard and Ege 2016), shaping international negotiations (Xu and Weller 2008), and monitoring and influencing compliance rates (Biermann and Siebenhüner 2009). Conversely, the *absence* of effective secretariats may represent a major impediment to IO performance (Elsig 2010).

While secretariats are important, states are not represented evenly within them. In what follows, we develop a theoretical account for this variation. We conceptualize IO secretariats as reflecting a balance between a triad of pressures for (1) control by powerful states, (2) functional effectiveness, and (3) representative legitimacy.

Control by Powerful States

In the contemporary study of IOs, the role of international secretariats is most frequently addressed using the principal-agent (PA) framework. In this perspective, the secretariats of IOs are agents created by principals, primary among which are the most powerful member states (Hawkins et al. 2006). Principals wish to control the agent and prevent agency slack. While for some realist scholars IOs are generally seen as epiphenomenal (Waltz 2000, 18–27), others focus on how states maximize their control over IOs (Stone 2013, 125; Dijkstra 2015). Due to their greater resources and bargaining strength, powerful states are able to pack secretariats with their own nationals to ensure informal, indirect control over the output of the organization (Nielson and Tierney 2003; Stone 2011, chapter 4; Urpelainen 2012; cf. Johnson 2014; Thorvaldsdottir 2016; Manulak 2017). In this vein, a recent study by Novosad and Werker treats state representation in IO secretariats as "a zero-sum dimension of power, the power to control international institutions" (2019, 2).

This realist-inspired, power-oriented explanation of IO staffing is in line with much of our interview evidence. Diplomatic representatives at UN organizations in Geneva reported several reasons for which states seek to be strongly represented on IO secretariats. At the very least, it facilitates access to information.[5] However, it also provides additional informal lines of communication between state representatives and IO staff,[6] serves as a source of influence over IO policies,[7] enhances influence on funding decisions,[8] and more broadly increases a state's role in shaping the overall administrative culture.[9]

Of course, on paper, international civil servants are bound to serve their organization and not to take instructions from member states. To take a prominent example, Article 100 of the UN Charter requires staff to be impartial and not to "seek or receive instructions from any government or from any other authority external to the Organization." They are also expected to undergo socialization processes through which they replace their national loyalties with loyalties to the mission of the organization (Murdoch et al. 2019). Yet, clearly, national governments do not believe that international civil servants will be as impartial as one might hope, and staffing is still subject to hard political bargaining that favors large, wealthy states. Until 1962, the United Nations calculated "desirable ranges" of representation for member states on the UN Secretariat solely on the basis of members' financial contributions (Ziring, Riggs, and Plano 2005, 141). Even today, economic contributions count for more than 50 percent of the weight in the formula for these ranges (United Nations Joint Inspection Unit 2012).[10] IOs outside of the UN proper are also required to recruit staff from states that provide the most funds to the organization (International Monetary Fund 2003, 16). Almost universally, these financial contributions are based on formulas where the size of a country's economy plays a decisive role.[11] This directly links staffing with members' material resources.

The observable implication of this line of reasoning is that the national composition of international secretariats should primarily reflect the desire for control of these bodies by the economically most powerful member states (Dijkstra 2015; Manulak 2017; Novosad and Werker 2019). Any changes over time will reflect changes in the power positions of states. This leads to our first hypothesis.

H1: *IOs' staffing patterns are likely to reflect the distribution of economic power across countries.*

Functional Effectiveness

While control by powerful states constitutes our default hypothesis, control also comes with costs (Abbott et al. 2019). Stacking international secretariats with the nationals of powerful states could easily erode both secretariats' functional effectiveness and their organizational legitimacy (Johnson 2011). While interrelated, we discuss functionality and legitimacy separately due to their differing theoretical associations and observable implications.

Liberal institutionalism views IO secretariats less as devices for powerful states to dominate others than as functional tools for states to overcome collective action problems. Professional secretariats are established to perform tasks that can be more efficiently achieved by an independent and centralized body (Abbott and Snidal 1998). For IOs to survive and attract resources, they need first and foremost to deliver on these tasks (e.g., Gutner and Thompson 2010). As professional bureaucracies, IO secretariats are supposed to recruit staff according to impartially applied rules that reward merit and performance.

In the UN context, Article 101 of the Charter stipulates: "The paramount consideration in the employment of the staff and in the determination of the conditions of service shall be the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence, and integrity." In interviews, diplomatic staff also report that general competence and educational qualifications are critical to hiring decisions.[12] This suggests that IO staffing should reflect, at least in

[5] In total twelve interviewees mentioned this phenomenon: interviews, #2–12, 16.

[6] Interviews #2 and 7.

[7] Interviews #3, 7, and 13.

[8] Interviews #6, 7, 13, and 16. In addition, on the individual level private benefits and nepotism appear to play an important role in motivating individuals to seek jobs in the IO secretariats (interviews #3, 4, 7, 9, 10).

[9] Interviews #2, 11, 12, and 13.

[10] Only around 25–30 percent of the international professional staff positions are subject to these geographical rules, however (see e.g., document A/71/360, table 2a, with the number of positions under the geographical formula rules).

[11] See figure A5 and table A6 in the online appendix.

[12] Interviews #1, 6, 9, 12.

part, an impartial search for the most qualified candidates. Unfortunately, we cannot measure the supply of the most qualified candidates directly.[13] However, meritocratic staffing patterns should favor countries with larger pools of personnel considered qualified for the job (Barnett and Finnemore 1999; Laiz and Schlichte 2016; Steffek 2016; Eckhard and Steinebach 2018). Changes over time should reflect changes to the supply of qualified candidates.

H2a: *IOs' staffing patterns are likely to reflect the distribution of generally competent, highly educated applicants across countries.*

At the same time, a focus on functional effectiveness should also lead IO secretariats to recruit staff with knowledge pertinent to their work. Many IOs carry out work related to issues such as global health, access to food, and economic development, which involve field operations overwhelmingly in less-developed countries. The success of IOs' fieldwork is widely seen as requiring local expertise and understanding of the conditions in the affected countries (Parizek 2017; Honig 2019; Eckhard 2020). Consequently, the suitability of candidates may be shaped not only by general qualifications, but also by further epistemic factors such as *local knowledge* of, or *soft information* about, countries where IOs are active (Eckhard and Parizek 2020).[14] A number of interviewees highlighted this as an important factor in IO staffing.[15] If recruitment reflects local knowledge of the places where IOs are operating, we should expect staff also to be acquired from countries that host their operational activities.

H2b: *IOs' staffing patterns are likely to reflect the distribution of local operational activity conducted by IOs across countries.*

Representative Legitimacy

In contrast to approaches that focus on powerful states or institutional efficiency, sociological and constructivist approaches emphasize the need for IO secretariats to maintain organizational legitimacy. Legitimacy refers to the degree to which institutions' features and behavior are seen as desirable, correct, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions (Franck 1990, 24; Hurd 1999, 381; Reus-Smit 2007, 159; Tallberg and Zürn 2019, section 2). From a *strategic legitimation* perspective (Suchman 1995), state representatives and IO managers have a common interest in maintaining organizational legitimacy in the eyes of third parties in order to preserve their ability to confer legitimacy on policy outcomes (Claude 1966; Hurd 1999). From a *sociological institutionalist* perspective, IOs can themselves be understood as emanations of their cultural environments, in which case legitimation is an end in itself (Suchman 1995, 576; see also Dimaggio and Powell 1983; Scott 1987).

The legitimacy of IOs is traditionally seen as deriving from the "rational-legal authority" that they embody by virtue of their impartial legal and technocratic procedures (Barnett and Finnemore 1999, 707). If this were the end of the story, IO secretariats would derive their legitimacy precisely from the functional criteria discussed above. Yet while rational-legal authority has traditionally been central for bureaucracies of all types, there is increasing evidence of new norms of diversity, inclusiveness, and representativeness in generating organizational legitimacy (Kelly and Dobbin 1998; Pless and Maak 2004; Shore et al. 2009). In particular, organizational sociologists and public administration scholars have examined the rising prominence of the notion of "representative bureaucracy" (Meier 1975, 2018; Meier and Wrinkle 1999) under which the composition of administrative bodies ought to reflect features of the underlying population (Meier 1975, 527–28; cf. Rapkin, Strand, and Trevathan 2016).

In the international context of IOs, a primary notion of representativeness is linked to staff nationality.[16] Article 101 of the UN Charter stipulates that "[d]ue regard shall be paid to the importance of recruiting the staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible" and a number of our interviewees also reported a strong and increasing need for the UN organs to be seen as representative with regard to staff nationalities and regions of origin.[17] Indeed, there is a growing body of evidence that IOs' legitimacy is increasingly assessed according to democratically derived criteria such as representativeness (Bodansky 1999; Dellmuth and Tallberg 2015; Grigorescu 2015; Rapkin, Strand, and Trevathan 2016; Stephen 2018; Dingwerth, Schmidtke, and Weise 2020; Dellmuth and Schlipphak 2020). According to this literature, changes in IO staffing may be linked to the rise of representation norms in their normative environment to which they need to respond. As summarized by Michael Zürn, "Instrumental questions about problem-solving and effectiveness have become infused with procedural issues and normative aspects such as legitimacy, fairness, and equality" (2014, 59).

In the context of IOs, there are two dimensions to national representativeness: representation of states based on the sovereign equality principle and representation of individuals based on the human equality principle (United Nations Joint Inspection Unit 2012, 11). While especially the larger UN bodies do seek to ensure that all state members are at least somewhat represented,[18] in light of the radical variation in states' populations, it is primarily the latter notion of representativeness that is salient in relation to the staffing of IO secretariats. It corresponds to the ideal in which a priori a citizen from any country has the same chance as others of becoming a member of the staff.

We posit two mechanisms linking these normative developments to organizational outcomes. The first is the strategic leveraging of representativeness norms by under-represented states. As they seek greater inclusion for their nationals on international secretariats, states increase the normative (or at least rhetorical) pressure on IOs to become more representative (Hurd 2005; Krebs and Jackson 2007; Grigorescu 2015). Second, a growing body of literature indicates that, over time, IOs have been increasingly moved to legitimate themselves in light of norms related to democracy

[13] To the best of our knowledge, no IO from our sample discloses data on the qualifications of the candidates that could potentially be used.

[14] To be sure, yet another factor with regard to IO functional effectiveness may be whether IO staff understand the interests and perspectives of the key IO member states. If the most powerful states in particular see the IO staff as being aware of their interests, the ability of the IO to implement its mandate is likely to be higher. However, this factor overlaps heavily—both conceptually and empirically—with the realist-inspired focus on powerful states' control over IOs as expressed in H1. Thus, we only include the two unique factors embodied in
H2a and H2b in our discussion of functional effectiveness demands.

[15] Interviews #7, 8, 11, and 21. Interviewee #7 summarized this point rather clearly: "you need to understand the country you serve in."

[16] Although we do not study it here, these representation and diversity requirements are often also linked to new expectations concerning gender equality (Clayton, O'Brien, and Piscopo 2018). Our interviewees have repeatedly tied gender balance closely together with national representation issues in IOs as two faces of a broader trend in diversification and representation (Interviews #1, 6, 7, 16, 17, 21).

[17] Interviews #1, 11, 12. This includes Interviewee #6, who provided the quote at the beginning of this article.

[18] Interview #15. For UN Secretariat, see, e.g., report A/71/360, table 19.

and representation (Grigorescu 2007; Tallberg et al. 2014; Dellmuth and Tallberg 2015Rocabert et al. 2019; Dingwerth, Schmidtke, and Weise 2020). Grossly unrepresentative secretariats will leave themselves open to challenges both from dissatisfied states and the broader public. Consequently, IO managers respond to these pressures from the changing normative environment in which they operate.

H3: *IOs' staffing patterns are likely to reflect the distribution of population across states. The representativeness of secretariats, with regard to the distribution of population, will increase over time in response to the strengthening of the representation norm.*

In principle, there can be a tension between representativeness (H3) and functional effectiveness (H2). Yet, it is the overrepresentation of powerful states (H1) that appears particularly normatively problematic from a representative legitimacy perspective. For this reason, we expect that pressures for representation are likely to come primarily at the expense of the predominance of powerful states rather than of the need for institutions to be functional and effective.

Finally, the literature on the "politicization" of international institutions leads us to expect that the trend toward representativeness will be particularly pronounced in IOs that are highly publicly visible and are thus at risk of becoming publicly contested (Zürn, Binder, and Ecker-Ehrhardt 2012; Ecker-Ehrhardt 2018; Stephen and Zürn 2019; Dingwerth, Schmidtke, and Weise 2020). In this line of reasoning, media visibility and general public awareness of an institution is an integral conceptual and empirical aspect of politicization (Zürn, Binder, and Ecker-Ehrhardt 2012; de Wilde, Leupold, and Schmidtke 2016). Politicization through mechanisms such as media coverage and protest actions is thought to make IOs more sensitive to legitimacy concerns. Highly visible IOs are typically also those with larger budgets, staffs, and broader political significance. It will be on these IOs that the pressures from under-represented states, as well as broader public, will be particularly strong. In line with this logic, we expect that the public visibility of IOs serves as a scope condition for the trend toward increasing representativeness.[19]

Descriptive Analysis of the Staffing of UN System Bodies, 1997–2015

To test our propositions, we study the staff composition of United Nations bodies. The biggest is the United Nations Secretariat with more than 11,400 professional staff members. The next biggest are the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) with around 3,600 and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) with around 2,500 professional staff members.

Our selection is driven by the availability of a uniquely comprehensive data source for thirty-five UN system bodies over a period of nineteen years at a level of detail necessary for the systematic testing of our hypotheses. The data come from the United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) Personnel Statistics reports for the years 1997–2015.[20] This amounts to almost 60,000 semi-manually collected data points capturing the number of staff members, measured at country-year-IO level.

The UN system, as defined by the CEB, includes all bodies generally known to be parts of the UN family, but it also formally includes the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank Group (both formally UN specialized agencies), and the World Trade Organization (WTO).[21] These three bodies are not covered in our data source. However, we were able to include some partial data on the IMF and the WTO in our descriptive analysis.[22] While of course the UN system does not reflect the entire universe of global IOs, our dataset covers many of the most salient ones.

For each country-year-IO, our data distinguish between *professional* and *general services* staff. For clarity, our core interest is country representation on *international professional staff* only, i.e., staff rotating across duty stations across all regions of the world. This is the staff that may be subject to geographical distribution rules and constitutes the "secretariat," "administration," or "bureaucracy" as understood in the theoretical literature.[23] In contrast, *general services staff* refers to the locally hired workforce, such as administrative staff, translators, technicians, and general support. These will not be included in our measure of the states' representation on the UN bodies' staff, as their numbers directly correspond to the location of the bodies' operational activities.[24] For the same reason, we also exclude from the definition of representation the relatively small numbers of so-called *national professional staff*.

The CEB Personnel Statistics reports face two limitations. First, the reports do not code for staff seniority. To address this, we identified and collected additional partial data on graded positions in two of the largest IOs in our dataset, the UN Secretariat (data available since 2006) and the WHO (since 1999). As we show in figure A3 and table A4 in the online appendix, the simple unweighted count of professional staff we use in our core analysis is strongly correlated with grade- or seniority-weighted positions ($r > 0.95$***). The second limitation of the CEB Personnel Statistics reports is that they do not differentiate between permanent and fixed-term contracts. The professional staff category that we map is defined as including *international*, not *national* professional staff, and only staff appointed for one year or more. It also excludes all persons "employed under special contractual arrangements" (e.g., CEB/2015/HLCM/HR/19, p. vii, a). Consequently, we also checked for the possibility of systematic differences in the distribution of permanent versus fixed-term contracts. It could be reasoned that powerful states keep a disproportionate share of permanent positions, leaving only fixed-term contracts for less powerful members.[25] To check this, we collected additional partial data on staff composition by contract types for the UN Secretariat. As we show in figure A4 and table A5 in the online appendix, the available evidence suggests that the trends in staffing we observe are uniform across contract types.

Our data yield several interesting descriptive observations. First, we observe a prominent trend toward increased numbers of

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[19] The logic of this argument is analogous to the effect of public visibility on company behavior: studies of large companies have linked organizational visibility to varying levels of corporate social performance (Chiu and Sharfman 2011; Dowling and Pfeffer 1975).

[20] A report is also available for 1996, but we exclude it as a precaution because it appears erroneously to reproduce the data for 1998. When the year 1996 is included, our results are virtually identical.

[21] For a definition of the UN system, see http://www.unsystem.org/content/un-system (accessed December 15, 2018).

[22] Despite our best efforts, we were unable to identify a source of data on the staffing patterns of the World Bank.

[23] However, research on the general services staff and also national professional staff has also recently emerged (Eckhard and Fernández i Marín 2018).

[24] In 2015, there were almost 900 individual cities and towns in which the various UN bodies have local field offices worldwide. Later, we will use data on general services staff working in local field offices to assess hypothesis H2b.

[25] We are grateful to an anonymous reviewer for highlighting the potential relevance of contract types for our analysis and results.

professional staff overall (see Vaubel, Dreher, and Soylu 2007). Between 1997 and 2015, the number of

professional staff working in UN bodies rose from almost 18,000 to approximately 33,500. We also observe an increase in general services staff, from around 33,400 in the mid-1990s to around 53,300 in the mid-2010s.

Second, states differ enormously with regard to their representation in international secretariats, both in absolute terms and in relation to their populations. For example, between 1997 and 2015, the United States accounted on average for around 2,400 positions at the UN, while China accounted for only 420 (about the same as Belgium). Representation was also highly unequal in per capita terms. Denmark and the Netherlands had exceptionally high per capita representation with around sixty staff members per million citizens, but countries as diverse as Australia, the Republic of the Congo, Italy, and Senegal also had very high representation with around twenty staff members per million citizens. By contrast, Russia, Egypt, and Ethiopia achieved only a fraction of this. Figure A2 in the online appendix gives a full visual description of these differences; table A3 in the online appendix gives the data for 2015.

Third, the data reveal not only an ongoing predominance of citizens from highly developed countries, but also important patterns of change. Between 1997 and 2015, the share of UN bodies' staff coming from Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries fell from 56 percent to 51 percent. In fact, OECD members accounted for nine of the ten biggest losers of relative representation in the professional staff in the UN system. However, by far the biggest loser was Russia, losing around 40 percent of its staff share (see also Parizek and Ananyeva, 2019). Moreover, while a perspective oriented toward state power might expect that the major gainers would be the rising powers, the major winners appear to be low-income countries such as Kenya, Uganda, and the Democratic Republic of Congo, while several other developed countries (such as Spain and Italy) have also done well. Perhaps most surprisingly, between 1997 and 2015 China did not increase its share of staff at the UN at all (see Parizek and Stephen 2020). Figure 1 visualizes the overall trend. The full line in the left-hand chart depicts the share of OECD citizens on the staff of all UN system bodies, while the dotted and dashed lines show the trends within UN bodies with high and low public visibility, respectively (we explain our measure of visibility below). Although the decline of OECD representation is clear amongst bodies with high visibility, in the less visible bodies, no such trend occurs. The right-hand chart shows the share of OECD staff at the IMF (full line) and WTO (dashed line), indicating similar trends even in these IOs that rely on staff with a high level of technical expertise (such as legal or economic analysis).[26] While in the mid-1990s the staff of these two bodies was strongly dominated by the economically most advanced countries, over the last twenty years, we witness a sizable downward shift.

Empirical Examination: Accounting for Changes in Secretariat Staffing Patterns

To assess our model of IO staffing, we turn to a series of OLS and panel regression models. The dependent variable in the models is defined as the sum (logged) of professional staff from each individual country, across all bodies in a given year. There are two reasons for the aggregation from the level of individual country-year-IO observations. First, the key variation we seek to model is that of countries' representation across the UN system as a whole. This reflects our focus on system-wide trends, in particular the prominence of representation as an important component of IOs' legitimation, rather than IO-specific trends and features. Second, many of the bodies in our dataset have very small secretariats in which no sense of proportionality to countries' characteristics could be achieved if they were analyzed separately.[27]

Operationalization of Staffing Predictors and Controls

According to hypothesis H1, states' representation will be determined primarily by their economic power. We measure this conventionally using countries' *Gross National Income* (GNI) (data are from World Bank 2017). This measure is also strongly correlated with an important source of power in the context of international secretariats: regular and voluntary budget contributions. We show this in figure A5 and table A6 in the online appendix.

According to the first functional effectiveness hypothesis H2a, staff will be recruited based on qualification, and in proportion to the supply of competent candidates. In light of the aggregate level of our analysis, we approximate this with the supply of university-educated candidates, as captured in tertiary education enrolment statistics, that is, with the share of a state's population with university education.[28] Because all of our models include population size of countries (our core variable of interest), we use enrollment rates, rather than the total number of enrolled individuals. Failing to do so would induce salient multicollinearity problems and would lead to a conflation of the reasoning behind H2 and H3.[29]

The second functional effectiveness hypothesis (H2b) expects professional staffing to reflect the distribution of local operational activity performed by the IO bodies across states. We measure IOs' local activity as the number of their *general services* staff working in individual countries.[30] The data for this variable come from a separate section of the UN CEB reports.[31] This variable has been found to be strongly associated with staffing patterns in an earlier, cross-sectional study (Parizek 2017).

Our third hypothesis reflects our theoretical argument about the normative pressures to make IO secretariats more representative of the global population. The observable implication in terms of staffing outcomes is that representation will increasingly be based on the size of *member states' populations* (data are from World Bank 2017).

To assess the intuition that public visibility acts as a scope condition of the representative legitimacy hypothesis, we estimate the level of attention an organization receives

[26] We are unable to include these institutions in our explanatory analysis due to a lack of fully comparable data, in terms of temporal coverage and the level of data detail. The data for the WTO come from the WTO Diversity reports, published yearly from 2009 and in five-year intervals before 2009 (e.g., WTO document WT/BFA/W/387). For the IMF, the data have been extracted from the Diversity Annual Reports, published yearly from 2000 (with a gap in 2005 and 2006).

[27] Almost three quarters (72 percent) have secretariats of fewer than 500 staff and 42 percent have fewer than 200. Some have fewer than 50.

[28] The data we use are from the World Bank (2017). We have been unable to identify a variable that would capture IO-suitable talents supply across all countries and over a nineteen-year period.

[29] Across our period, countries differ substantially with regard to the pool of university-educated population. This is also reflected in IOs' problems in hiring of staff from developing and transition countries (International Monetary Fund 2003, 31).

[30] The variable for local IO activity in states captures the size of the locally hired general services staff, such as drivers and secretaries. In contrast, our dependent variable deals with the professional staff that is hired globally and assigned to duty stations across the world.

[31] Table 18 in each of the reports referred to earlier (e.g., CEB/2015/HLCM/HR/19).

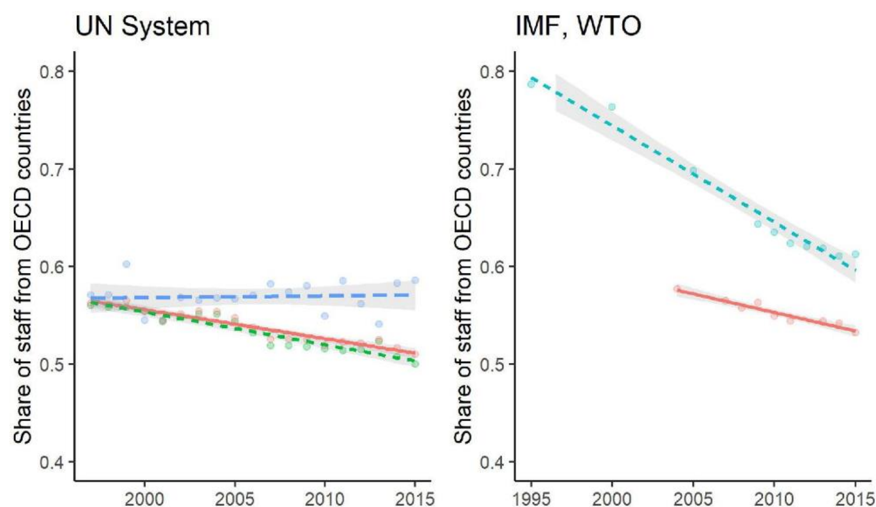

Figure 1. The development of the share of OECD citizens on the UN system, IMF, and WTO staff distribution

Note: The left-hand chart shows the share of OECD countries' citizens (1997 OECD members) on the UN professional staff: for all UN bodies combined (downward sloping full line), and separately for highly visible bodies (downward sloping dotted line) and lowly visible bodies (flat dashed line). The right-hand chart gives the share of OECD countries on the professional staff of the IMF (full line) and the WTO (dashed line).

in global media in any given year. We measure this with the number of hits that a particular organization's name (full official name in English) receives in three different sources.[32] The first source is the global media database Factiva, covering newspapers, magazines, blogs, and podcasts from around 30,000 sources from 200 countries.[33] We use data from this source in our core models. Second, in robustness tests, we substitute Factiva hits with that of a simple count of Google search hits and, in addition, with a multilingual measure of visibility based on data extracted from the GDELT database (GDELT 2019). GDELT monitors online media across all countries of the world, translating content to English automatically. Finally, in supplementary tests, we also consider measures of broader political visibility of the bodies, as reflected in the total size of their staff and budgets, staff size expansion, and prominence of IO on-the-ground activities. As we show in detail in figure A7 in the online appendix, all these measures are correlated with our Factiva-based media visibility measure. To check whether the public visibility of the IOs can serve as a scope condition, we divide the bodies in the UN system into two equally sized groups according to whether they are above or below the median of IO visibility scores in a given year. Table A2 in the online appendix provides the visibility scores for all IOs in the dataset.

In the analysis, we also control for three possibly influential factors that lie outside of our theoretical framework. One is political regime. Democratic regimes have been shown to have more positive attitudes toward IOs than other regime types (Boehmer and Nordstrom 2008), and this tendency may be projected also into their citizens' inclination to apply for, and be hired for, jobs in the institutions' secretariats (see also Novosad and Werker 2019). We operationalize regime type using the polity score of the Polity IV dataset (Polity IV Project 2017). Second, our interview evidence indicates that English language competency is highly relevant in recruitment for almost all professional IO positions.[34] Thus, we also include in our analysis a dummy variable for countries where English is an official language. Third, we control for a country's institutional power within the UN by introducing a dummy variable for the five permanent members of the UN Security Council.

Method

Our choice of a modeling technique is driven by the predominance of cross-state variation, rather than variation over time, in our core explanatory variables. (For example, countries differ by a factor of 100,000 with regard to their economic and population sizes.) Consequently, the most obvious modeling technique is a simple OLS regression run on country-level, counting with variable values averaged across the given period. With nineteen years of data and an expectation of a change in the staffing patterns, we will run the OLS models separately for two periods—one for the first nine years (1997–2005) and one for the second decade (2006–2015).

To fully explore the time dimension of staffing patterns and to make proper use of our panel data, we also run a series of panel regression models. As we are primarily interested in modeling cross-state variation, we opt for a random effects design rather than fixed effects approach. The reason is that a fixed effects approach effectively erases most of the meaningful variation in our data. However, as it turns out, the "between-component" of the variation in our data is so prominent (accounting for between 80 and 90 percent of variation) that a standard random effects design approximates a fixed effects specification anyway.[35] This

[32] The two exceptions to this procedure were UNESCO and UNICEF, for which the official full names are not generally used. For the UN Secretariat, "United Nations" was used as the search term.

[33] The description of the source is available at https://www.proquest.com/products-services/factiva.html (Accessed December 20, 2018).

[34] E.g., Interviews #1, 2, 6, 11.

[35] This is due to the very high lambda (λ) coefficient of partial demeaning in the random effects equation (Wooldridge 2006, 490). For example, in the main

means that a standard random effect approach would also, like the fixed effects design, imply that most of the variation we seek to model would be lost.

To compensate for this, we adopt a modified "within-between" random effects design developed by Bell and Jones (2015), based on the older Mundlak's formulation (1978). In recent years, this approach has received increasing application in political science and international relations (e.g., Ward and Dorussen 2016; Grossman and Lewis 2014). This enables us to retain information about developments over time even when there are principal persistent differences across states in key variables of interest, such as country size or material resources (Bell and Jones 2015, 149). The elegance of this approach lies in its explicitly modeling both the "between-component" and the "within-component" of variation in the panel data. This is achieved by running a random effects model in which each predictor is included in the equation in two variants. The first variant is the country mean, across the entire period, as is familiar from cross-sectional (or "between") models. These variables will, in fact, be the same as those used in the regular cross-sectional OLS models. The second variant uses the demeaned values, that is, the individual yearly deviations from country means, as in a fixed effects model. The country means are then used to estimate explicitly the between-effect (variation across countries, as in an OLS model), while the demeaned scores provide the estimate of the within effects (variation within countries, over time) (Bell and Jones 2015). In the robustness tests reported in the online appendix, we also provide results from regular pooled models as well as from a series of further cross-sectional OLS regressions. No matter the specific modeling technique chosen, our results are substantively very similar.

Findings

In table 1, we present seven regression models. In each model, we report standardized beta coefficients, so it is possible to compare directly the relative sizes of the effects of the individual predictors. We start by presenting four OLS regression models that map the staffing patterns of all UN bodies for the two periods covered in our data (1997–2005 in Models 1 and 3, and 2006–2015 in Models 2 and 4). While methodologically simple, this suffices to highlight our findings in a first cut. Afterward, in Models 5–7, we will incorporate the temporal dimension into the analysis explicitly and use the within-between random effects panel regression described above to test our hypotheses.[36] In Models 6 and 7, we also provide separate estimates for more visible and less visible IOs, identifying a scope condition where some of our core results apply only to larger, more visible bodies.

The models show strong support for each of our hypotheses. To start with, Models 1 and 2 only include our four key predictors of *GNI* (H1), *Population* (H3), *University enrolment* (H2a), and *Local IO activity* (H2b). Because the OLS regression works with country averages, always for the respective period 1997–2005 or 2006–2015, the variables are labeled "between" (for cross-section, "between" variation), to ensure notational consistency with the later panel regression models.

Model 1 shows results for the period 1997–2005. It shows very strong effects of economic size and local operational activity on staffing, while it does not show a significant effect for population size or university enrolment. Model 2 is based on averages for the period 2006–2015. Here, the situation changes. Local operational activity retains its effect on staffing. But in contrast to the earlier period, population size becomes a significant independent predictor of staffing pattern while economic size (*GNI*) ceases to show any significant effect. University enrollment also shows a positive effect on staffing, though the size of the standardized coefficient is much smaller than that of population. Both models account for between 60 and 65 percent of the variation in staff representation. These results indicate that while in the period shortly after the end of the Cold War, economic power was a key predictor of a nation's representation in IO secretariats, over time, its effect has weakened. In contrast, the relevance of states' population size for their representation on UN bodies' staff has grown significantly.

Models 3 and 4 replicate the cross-sectional analysis for the two periods, but include the key control variables of political regime, Security Council permanent membership, and English as an official language. All these covariates show the expected effects on staffing. With their inclusion, population size also shows a positive effect on staff representation in the first period, though the coefficient size is much smaller than in the second period. In the second decade, population size is by far the strongest predictor, while GNI ceases to show a significant association with staffing. As in the previous models, local operational activity of IOs remains an important predictor of staffing throughout both periods. University enrollment scores show a clear association with how well represented a state is in UN administrations in the second period. Due to missing data for some of the controls, somewhat fewer countries are included in these models. These models account for close to 70 percent of the variation in staffing.

In Models 5, 6, and 7, we turn to a full panel regression, using the within-between random effects estimation described above. This means that each of the four predictors is represented in the equation both by its cross-sectional ("between") and its demeaned (overtime, "within") component. We also integrate the temporal dimension into the analysis, as our expectation is that the effects of power and population change over time. We do so by interacting the key predictors of interest—*GNI* and *Population* sizes—with a time variable (Year count, *Yrc*). If significant, these interaction effects would show the expected declining relevance of material power (*GNI (log) (between) × Yrc*) and a corresponding increasing relevance of representative legitimation needs (*Population (log) (between) × Yrc*).

First, our main Model 5 shows the results for staff across all UN system bodies combined. The results support our theorizing. All of the predictors (in their cross-country, "between" variants) show the expected overall effects on staffing: countries have more nationals on the professional staff of IOs when they have greater economic resources, when they have larger populations, when they have a more educated population, and when they host more of the IOs' operational activities. From H1 and H3, the stronger predictor of staffing is countries' population size, showing almost twice the size of the effect than economic size (GNI). From the two variables associated with H2, operational activity has a markedly stronger effect than tertiary education

Model 5 in table 1, the lambda (λ) coefficient is equal to 0.84, closely approximating the fixed effects formulation (where λ=1).

[36] The models show heteroskedastic (Breusch–Pagan test) serially correlated (Breusch–Godfrey test) errors, and in table 1, we thus report robust standard errors clustered by country. The Dickey–Fuller test shows the data series are stationary.

Table 1. OLS and panel regression ("within-between" random effects) results

	Staff number (log) (standardized); OLS				*Staff number (log) (standardized); panel regression*		
	1997–2005 *(1)*	*2006–2015* *(2)*	*1997–2005* *(3)*	*2006–2015* *(4)*	*All IOs* *(5)*	*Lowly visible IOs* *(6)*	*Highly visible IOs* *(7)*
GNI (log) (within)					0.057* (0.027)	−0.009 (0.025)	0.054* (0.026)
GNI (log) (between)	**0.351** (0.128)**	**0.159 (0.139)**	**0.214* (0.106)**	**0.058 (0.125)**	**0.240* (0.107)**	**0.432*** (0.096)**	**0.176^{+} (0.100)**
Population (log) (within)					−0.082*** (0.021)	−0.039 (0.032)	−0.065*** (0.018)
Population (log) (between)	**0.139 (0.126)**	**0.371*** (0.108)**	**0.312*** (0.089)**	**0.449*** (0.111)**	**0.390*** (0.106)**	**0.120 (0.104)**	**0.394*** (0.097)**
University enrollment (within)					−0.026^{+} (0.014)	−0.002 (0.014)	−0.025^{+} (0.013)
University enrollment (between)	**0.133 (0.084)**	**0.192* (0.092)**	**0.129 (0.077)**	**0.178* (0.083)**	**0.203** (0.073)**	**0.115^{+} (0.063)**	**0.194** (0.069)**
Local IO activity (log) (within)					0.028^{+} (0.014)	0.049*** (0.012)	0.032* (0.015)
Local IO activity (log) (between)	**0.388*** (0.110)**	**0.320*** (0.096)**	**0.324*** (0.082)**	**0.307** (0.098)**	**0.351*** (0.074)**	**0.441*** (0.058)**	**0.293*** (0.078)**
Polity (within)					0.006 (0.004)	0.003 (0.004)	0.005 (0.004)
Polity (between)			0.027*** (0.007)	0.036*** (0.007)	0.036*** (0.007)	0.028*** (0.007)	0.031*** (0.007)
UNSC permanent seat			0.307^{+} (0.160)	0.433** (0.165)	0.442* (0.172)	0.248 (0.182)	0.428** (0.158)
English official language			0.351*** (0.080)	0.341*** (0.090)	0.395*** (0.091)	0.262** (0.087)	0.382*** (0.082)
Year count (Yrc)					0.037*** (0.005)	0.029*** (0.007)	0.031*** (0.004)
GNI (log) (between)* Yrc					**−0.014*** (0.003)**	**−0.005 (0.005)**	**−0.012*** (0.003)**
Population (log) (between)* Yrc					**0.010** (0.004)**	**0.002 (0.006)**	**0.009** (0.003)**
Constant	0.034 (0.046)	0.038 (0.042)	−0.146* (0.060)	−0.197** (0.064)	−0.666*** (0.076)	−1.047*** (0.093)	−0.272** (0.086)
Observations	175	174	148	147	2,667	2,375	2,666
R^2	0.624	0.653	0.686	0.671	0.506	0.332	0.482
Adjusted R^2	0.616	0.645	0.670	0.655	0.503	0.328	0.479

Notes: $^{+}p < .1$, $^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$, $^{***}p < .001$; robust standard errors (Models 1–4) and country-clustered robust standard errors (Models 5–7) in brackets.
Bold lines in the table highlight variables corresponding to hypotheses H1-H3.

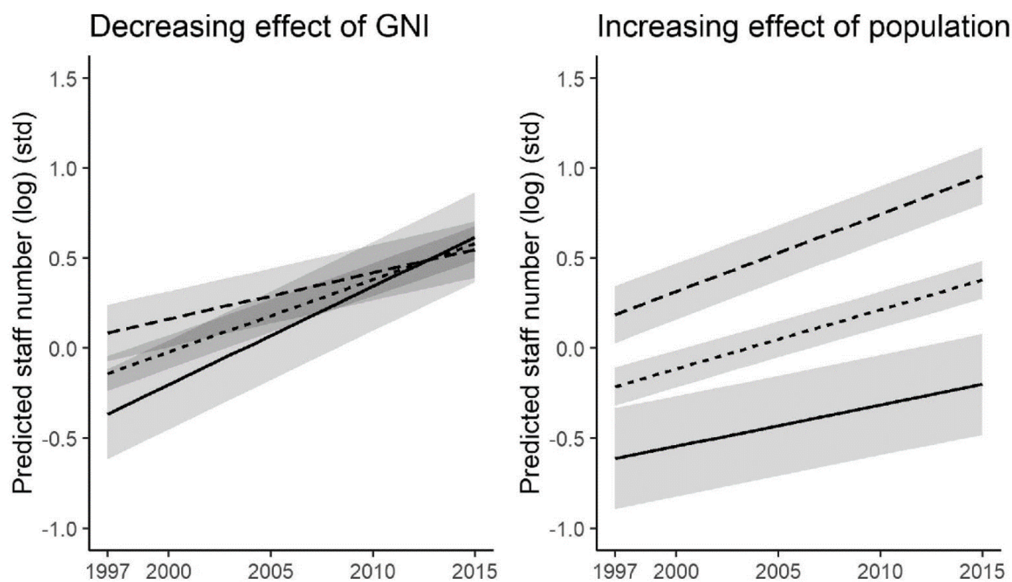

Figure 2. The diminishing effects of economic power (GNI) and the rising effect of population size on staffing over time (extracted from Model 5 in table 1)

Note: Graphs are based on results extracted from Model 5. Lines show standardized prediction of staff numbers depending on the size of countries' GNI (left) and population (right): for countries with size one standard deviation below the variable mean (full line), at the variable mean (dotted line) and one standard deviation above the variable mean (dashed line).

enrollment.[37] The dynamic components of the estimation—the "within" effects—show that economic growth is positively associated with representation on staff (*GNI (log) (within)*), while population growth is associated negatively, other things equal (*Population (log) (within)*).

The results confirm the intuitions from Models 1–4 regarding the changing prominence of Population and GNI as predictors of staffing over time. Both the interaction terms *GNI (log) (between) × Yrc* and *Population (log) (between) × Yrc* show significant effects in the expected direction. The negative sign on the former shows that the effect of economic size has been decreasing over time. The positive sign on the latter highlights that as time progressed, population size has been rising in prominence as a predictor of staffing patterns.

The substantive significance of these differences is visualized in figure 2, showing the marginal effects of these interaction terms from Model 5. The left-hand chart shows the predicted standardized values of staff numbers as given by country economic size, over time. The central dotted line shows predicted staff numbers (standardized) for countries with average GNI size (log). The bottom full line shows the same for countries one standard deviation below the average; the top dashed line shows the same for countries one standard deviation above the average. For each size, we see a rise in the predicted number of staff over time, corresponding to the rise in the overall sizes of international secretariats. However, the importance of GNI as a predictor of staffing diminishes. In the mid-1990s, a county's GNI has a sizable effect on its presence on IO staff—as indicated by the gaps between the three lines. Over time, however, the differences diminish and, by the end of the period covered, the effect of GNI disappears.

[37] The results show overall (unconditional) effects only for variables University enrollment and Local IO activity. For GNI and Population, interacted with the Yrc variable, the estimates show effects for Yrc equal to 0, i.e., in 1997 (Brambor, Clark, and Golder 2006, 71–72).

This is a stark contrast to the Population variable as depicted in the right-hand chart. Again, the central dotted line gives the predicted number of staff for a country with average population size (log). The bottom full line shows the same for a country one standard deviation below the average and the top dashed line for a country one standard deviation above the average. There are sizable differences in predictions of staffing for these countries across the period. But more than this: the differences grow stronger in the period from the mid-1990s to the mid-2010s. While population has always played a role in a state's representation on IO staff, its significance has been rising over the past two decades.

Finally, we indicated that we expect these changes to be more pronounced in IOs with high public visibility compared to IOs under the radar of public and political scrutiny. We test this expectation with the comparison of results in Models 6 and 7. Model 6 shows results for low-visibility bodies—those below the yearly median scores of visibility in media worldwide. Model 7 shows results for high-visibility IOs, which are also, by and large, those with sizable budgets and staffs. As expected, Model 7 for highly visible IOs shows a change over time, as both the interaction terms show a significant effect. Economic power grows less relevant for staffing patterns over time, while the impact of country population increases. This corresponds closely to the results in Model 5, for all IOs combined. In contrast, in low-visibility IOs in Model 6, no such change over time is visible. Furthermore, population size plays no role for staffing, while countries' economic size is by far the strongest predictor. These results provide further support for our theorizing, and they are also in line with the descriptive evidence presented earlier in figure 1. Public visibility of IOs appears to serve as an important scope condition for representative legitimacy to play a role in staffing patterns. All the other substantive results reported earlier remain unchanged. The control variables also show the expected effects. In both low- and high-visibility IOs, countries enjoy more

representation when they are more democratic (*Polity (between)*) and when *English* is their official language. In highly visible IOs, furthermore, holding a permanent seat in the UN Security Council, as a manifestation of formal institutional power, is associated with significantly higher representation on staff[38]

In the online appendix to this article, we present further descriptive findings and the results of a series of additional tests. These pertain primarily to three areas: measurement validity, broader conceptualizations of the observed differences across IOs, and the specific choice of a modeling technique and the general robustness of our results.[39] All of these additional and robustness tests provide convincing support to our main findings.

Implications and Conclusion

In this article, we sought to map and account for the patterns of staffing of United Nations bodies' secretariats over time. First, we uncovered a novel fact about the growing representativeness of IO secretariats. Second, our analysis has shown that the changing national composition of IO secretariats cannot be explained simply as an epiphenomenon of great power influence or as an outcome of requirements for functional effectiveness. Both control by powerful states and functional effectiveness play a role. However, as these traditional concerns are joined by new representative legitimacy demands, IO secretariats have grown increasingly representative of the global population, even when controlling for shifts in the global power distribution, changing supplies of qualified candidates, and the changing location of IOs' operational activities. Third, we find that public visibility plays a role as a scope condition for secretariats to become more representative. IOs that are under the radar of political and societal scrutiny are more likely to favor the selection of staff from economically powerful countries, while the secretariats of highly visible IOs increasingly represent the global population.

These findings make a broader contribution to our understanding of the forces shaping global governance. First, our findings are in line with the sociological and constructivist insight that IOs can usefully be studied as organizations that "respond not only to other actors pursuing material interests in the environment but also to normative and cultural forces that shape how organizations see the world and conceptualize their own missions" (Barnett and Finnemore 1999, 703). This became clear in our interviews of diplomats and IO professionals and is further corroborated by our quantitative evidence. Not only can "normative pressure" (Grigorescu 2015) result in increased efforts of self-legitimation via public communications (Ecker-Ehrhardt 2018; Dingwerth, Schmidtke, and Weise 2020), it has also resulted in practical adaptations within IO secretariats.

Second, our findings provide further evidence for the claim that the legitimation of IOs is increasingly linked to democracy-inspired norms such as representativeness, equality, inclusion, and diversity. This is consistent with other recent studies showing how IOs increasingly adopt policies of transparency (Grigorescu 2007), provide access to NGOs (Tallberg et al. 2014), and establish parliamentary bodies (Rocabert et al. 2019), as well as with other studies showing how states and IOs increasingly use democratic rhetoric to legitimate their demands (Stephen 2015; Dingwerth, Schmidtke, and Weise 2020). The need for UN-affiliated bodies to become more globally representative can be linked to other trends in our period such as democratic proliferation and a decline in the countervailing norm of great power management (Grigorescu 2015, 51–75; Stephen 2018). The perception of flagrant departures from democratic practices results in normative pressure to conform to them more closely.

Third, this study contributes to literature that suggests that normative pressures matter, but not to the same extent all the time (Grigorescu 2007, 2015; Tallberg et al. 2014). In particular, our finding that public visibility acts as a scope condition for increased representativeness of IO secretariats is in tune with literature suggesting a link between public awareness and criticism directed at IOs (politicization) and IO self-legitimation (Zürn, Binder, and Ecker-Ehrhardt 2012; Ecker-Ehrhardt 2018). In fact, this is consistent with studies from adjacent fields that show, for example, that visibility to stakeholders is a major driver for large companies to engage in the self-legitimating practice of corporate social performance (Chiu and Sharfman 2011). Power, efficiency, and representation are all at play in the staffing of international secretariats. Yet, the balance between these factors may also be shaped by the public visibility of the organization to which a secretariat is attached.

Finally, our study points to an interesting tension in the "great power politics" of IO secretariats. This was already suggested by the surprising observation that China, despite its status as the key rising power in our period of study, has not been able to increase its share of staff in the UN bureaucracy. Russia, in spite of its role in the Security Council, has seen its representation collapse. At the same time, the United States, while still strongly represented in UN staff, has seen its share decline over time. In our analysis, none of these sides is winning the game of representation on IO staff (Novosad and Werker 2019; Parizek and Stephen 2020). Instead, we witness a surprising shift away from control by powerful states and toward broader representation.

Supplementary Information

Supplementary information is available at the *International Studies Quarterly* data archive.

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[38] Note that this factor does not drive the insignificance of GNI as a predictor of staffing. This is best visible in the comparison of Models 3 and 4, where Model 3 does not include the UN SC permanent membership as a predictor but the effect of economic power on staffing is also absent.

[39] As for measurement validity, we provide tests incorporating seniority- or grade-weighted staff counts, based on data for the UN Secretariat and the WHO (figure A3 in the online appendix). We also use Google hits and multilingual GDELT instead of Factiva as the measure of IO visibility (figure A6, tables A7 and A11 in the online appendix). To probe our conceptualization of the observed differences across IOs, we use a broader notion of visibility connected with the IOs' size, reflecting their operational activities, budget size, and staff size expansion (table A12 in the online appendix). Finally, we tested the robustness of our results under different analytical techniques. We replace the "within-between" panel regression with a regular pooled OLS model (table A8 in the online appendix) (for the limitations of this approach, see Wooldridge (2006, 13)). We also provide a series of further cross-sectional OLS analyses (table A10 in the online appendix). We also run tests substituting the number of staff members from each country with their percent share as the dependent variable (table A9 in the online appendix) and tests excluding possibly influential observations (India and China with extremely large populations, the United States with extremely large GNI; table A11 in the online appendix).

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