IO Survival Politics: International Organisations amid the Crisis of Multilateralism

Leonard A Schuette

University of Maastricht and University of Oxford

Prepared for ECPR General Conference, Innsbruck, August 2022

Abstract: International organisations (IOs) have never been more authoritative and potentially agential while simultaneously faced more intense threats to their continued existence. Amid these dialectic conditions, this article identifies a novel type of behaviour: IO Survival Politics. IO Survival Politics occurs when senior institutional actors perceive the organisation to be in existential crisis and, in response, employ extraordinary strategies to ensure the organisation's continued existence. Survival Politics thus differs both in degree and kind from the ways in which secretariats exercise influence during conditions of normal policymaking. Two case studies illustrate the concept: 1) the European Commission's response to Brexit and 2) NATO's response to President Tbuzanrump's withdrawal threats. Relying on 87 interviews with senior officials and multiple methods, the article shows that IO Survival Politics occurs across a range of diverse IOs in face of diverse threats and can be a crucial factor in determining the fate of IOs in crisis. By conceptualising IO Survival Politics, the article intends to open new avenues for research and advance scholarly understanding of IOs and the crisis of multilateralism.

Introduction

Multilateralism is in crisis (Lake, Martin, and Risse 2021). The rare convergence of states on liberal generalised principles such as open trade, cooperative security, and universal human rights in the post-Cold War era is no longer and rules-based cooperation as such is in jeopardy as the international environment becomes ever more competitive (Eilstrup-Sangiovanni and Hofmann 2020; Ikenberry 2020; Ruggie 1992). As stalwarts and embodiments of multilateral cooperation, a variety of international organisations (IOs) – including the EU, NATO, WTO, or UN – suffer from contestation both by established and emerging powers. Membership withdrawals, systematic violations of key norms and rules, purposive blocking of the functioning of institutions, and funding cuts have become an omnipresent feature of international politics. In turn, transactional bilateralism and informal cooperation outside of established multilateral institutions has proliferated (e.g. Meissner 2018; Roger 2020; Vabulas and Snidal 2013; Westerwinter et al. 2021). The contemporary crisis of multilateralism may mark an inflection point in global governance, at which the post-Cold War trend toward greater multilateralisation of world politics is halted and even reversed.

At the same as they face unprecedented threats to their continued existence, however, IOs have never been more powerful as measured by their autonomy from states, binding powers, and policy competences. Amid the 'bureaucratisation of world politics' (Barnett and Finnemore 2004), recent works show that IOs have assumed significant authority beyond the immediate control of states (Hooghe et al. 2017; Zuern, Tokhi, and Binder 2021). Indeed, a burgeoning research agenda on institutional actors in IOs demonstrates that they both develop independent preferences and increasingly influence the policy-making cycle beyond the immediate control of the member states (Bauer and Ege 2016; Biermann and Siebenhuehner 2009; Chorev 2012; Eckhardt et al. 2021; Ege 2020; Jinnah 2012; Johnston 2014; Knill et al. 2019). Reinforcing this agential turn in the IO literature are recent accounts that focus on the influence on individuals in world politics (Copelovitch and Rickard 2021; Drezner 2020; Hall and Woods 2018; Jervis 2013; Kaarbo 2017; Merand 2021; Saunders 2022; White 2022). For some, it is precisely this rise in political authority of IOs which underlies their contestation (e.g. Zuern 2018).

The scholarly debate on how IOs behave under these dialectic conditions is still in its infancy. While there is a vibrant research agenda in the discipline of public administration on national institutions in crisis (e.g. Boin et al. 2020) or EU studies (e.g. Jones et al. 2021), international relations scholars have only recently started studying systematically how IOs behave in crisis. Large-n studies point to the role of IO secretariats (Debre and Dijkstra 2021a) and the quality of its bureaucracy (Gray 2018) to explain the outcomes of crises of IOs, but they cannot probe their causal arguments. Another strand zooms in on one sub-category of contestation by exploring the legitimation practices of IOs in response to legitimacy crises (Dingwerth et al 2020; Gronau and Schmidtke 2016; Lenz et al. 2021; Tallberg and Zuern 2019). Others show that IOs can exploit external crises to make authority leaps, which is not the same, however, as responding to a crisis of the IO itself (Kreuder-Sonnen 2019; White 2019). Zaccaria (2022), Hirschmann (2021), and Heinkelmann-Wild and Jankauskas (2022) offer the first insights on concrete IO responses to contestation.

This article therefore sets out to advance this debate by demonstrating the existence of a distinct type of IO behaviour, which is conceived as *IO Survival Politics*. It is defined as the extraordinary political behaviour, both in degree and kind, by institutional actors to ensure the immediate survival of the international organisation in existential crisis. The article shows that

IO Survival Politics is distinct from both the behaviour usually associated with secretariats by the bureaucratic politics perspective and legitimation practices. It identifies two contemporary cases of IO Survival Politics by the EU and NATO. The two IOs vary significantly in their authority, institutional design, functions, size, and resources, while the respective existential crises also differ in terms of their source and nature. Across the cases, distinctly intense extraordinary forms of behaviour abound; officials used innovative institutional designs of negotiation teams, engaged in previously unthinkable forms of overt and political agenda-setting, and circumvented crucial stakeholders. Senior officials exhibited greater agency than even acknowledged in the bureaucratic politics literature. Indeed, the influence of officials was arguably history-making.

As such, the article demonstrates that IO Survival Politics is a coherent behaviour by a variety of IOs faced with diverse existential threats rather than an aberration. It follows that the primary objective of this article is to pursue concept formation – the 'captur[ing] in abstract terms [of] the common features of the class of the empirical phenomenon' (Perri 6 and Bellamy 2013: 130) – by defining Survival Politics and discussing its ontological underpinnings, empirical manifestations, logical differences to other types of IO behaviour, and relationship to other theoretical perspectives (Gerring 1999; Goertz 2020; Margulis 2021). As a result, the conceptualization of Survival Politics aims to both make an independent contribution to the literature on IO and function as the basis for future empirical work and theory development.

The article is structured as follows. The first section conceptualises IO Survival Politics by outlining the scope conditions and actors, situating it in the wider literature, developing an analytical framework, and discussing survival strategies. The second section discusses the research design. The third section illustrates the empirical plausibility of the concept in two cases.

IO Survival Politics

Conceptualising IO Survival Politics

IOs seek to ensure their survival. What appears a truism is in fact a contentious ontological claim. That states seek survival in a hostile world is among the most prominent and enduring premises in international relations theory (Fazal 2008; Howes 2003; Waltz 1979). However, this defining characteristic does not tend to be conferred upon IOs, which most scholars consider epiphenomena, functional instruments, or arenas for state bargaining. While more constrained than other units in the system, IOs are, however, potentially political actors (Louis and Martens 2021). Some IOs have powerful resources, political levers of influence, and external supporters with stakes in the IO's continued existence. They are composed of individuals who likely identify with the mission of the IO and whose career prospects may be dependent on the organisation's survival (von Billerbeck 2020). There is therefore no a priori reason why the logic of survival does not apply to IOs. IO Survival Politics then occurs when in face of existential crises, institutional actors engage in distinct forms of extraordinary behaviour to help the organisation survive.

The scope condition for IO Survival Politics is that IOs need to come under acute existential crisis. Crises consists of threats to an entity that compel a response under time pressure and uncertainty (see Boin et al. 2016; Lipscy 2020). Existential crises, in turn, to put IOs at risk of no longer being able to effectively carry out some of their core functions, which could variably result in the dissolution of the IOs or their decline into a zombie-state, in which the IO continues

to operate on paper but without operational significance (Eilstrup-Sangiovanni 2020; Gray 2018). Yet, even existential crises may vary in the degree of uncertainty or time pressure (Hofmann and Kreuder-Sonnen 2022; Seabrooke and Tsingou 2019). Some crises, such as an environmental disaster, may be acute and demand an instantaneous response. Others, such as global warming, may be creeping as its most serious consequences will materialise in the later future (Boin et al. 2020). For the logic of IO Survival Politics to apply, crises need to be acute because time pressure and the concomitant uncertainty are critical for institutional actors to push the boundaries of previously acceptable behaviour.

Generally, only the most severe types of crises meet the scope conditions of existential crisis, including the looming spectres of withdrawal of key member states (see von Borzyskowski and Vabulas 2019); cuts to the resources of the IO to the extent that it struggles to fulfill core tasks (Heldt and Schmidtke 2017; Hirschmann 2021); blocking key appointments to render an IO inoperable (Hopewell 2021); repeated and unsanctioned violations of the IO's foundational norms (Koschut 2016); substantial repatriation of delegated powers (Hooghe et al. 2017); or the empowerment of competing institutions at the cost of the incumbent (Debre and Dijkstra 2021b). The existential nature of crises, however, is not predetermined by their properties but subject to the interpretations and discursive framing of key actors (e.g. Buzan et al. 1998). It is therefore the empirical task of the researcher to individually demonstrate the perceived existential nature of each case.

It is in the context of existential crises that IO may engage in Survival Politics. Crises contexts not only tend to enhance the role of key decision-makers as uncertainty and time pressure often privilege informal agency over institutional procedures (Lipscy 2020). They should also alter the underlying behavioural logics of IOs because functional ambitions to provide effective problem-solving or extend the IO's authority should be subjugated to the safeguarding of the IO (see Knill et al. 2019: 87). Indeed, when their survival is at stake, institutional actors are likely to resort to exceptional behaviour outside the normal bounds of behaviour because following the normal playbook is likely be insufficient (see Buzan et al. 1998). They will probably intensify the strategies with which institutional actors exert influence during normal times. But senior officials may also go above and beyond the strategies used under conditions of normal policymaking and likely to act with particular assertion and employ unprecedented measures as the short-term logic of survival overshadows long-term concerns over reputation or backlashes from member states (see Kreuder-Sonnen 2019; Schmitt 1922). That is, the difference between the crisis and normal policymaking contexts is likely both in degree and kind. In doing so, institutional actors engage in politics, whereby they work against structural, institutional, or legal constraints to reassert agency and create space for consequential choices (Mérand 2021: 7ff.).

The agents in this model are the institutional actors of the respective IO. The second scope condition for IO Survival Politics is that the respective IOs is endowed with a meaningful secretariat to provide sufficient policy-grade personnel (as opposed to administrative staff or translators) to analyse the crisis and devise a response. Otherwise, the secretariat would be little more than an administrative body without agential qualities. IOs tend to consist of executive governing bodies of member state representatives, such as the UN Security Council or the European Council, assemblies of parliamentary representatives, and the bureaucracy who owe primary loyalty to the IO (Jankauskas 2022; Rittberger et al. 2019). The institutional actors in question in this dissertation are those members of the bureaucracy who hold influential positions within the IO and are thus most likely to shape its behaviour. These include the secretary general (or executive head), deputy secretary general, and directors of units. IO

Survival Politics presupposes entrepreneurial behaviour by senior officials as it requires them to push boundaries of previously acceptable behaviour (see Petridou and Mintrom 2021).

Analytical framework

The necessary condition for IO Survival Politics is that institutional actors develop survival instincts. That is, they need to initially perceive that the IO is in existential crisis and subsequently develop preferences for survival. What counts as existential crisis is not objectively predetermined but subject to interpretation of those institutional actors who can most likely shape the IO's responses (i.e. secretary-generals, deputy secretary-generals, or other senior officials like unit directors or members of the secretary-general's private office). During normal conditions of policymaking, institutional actors are no monolith (Bauer and Ege 2016). They tend to have heterogeneous backgrounds and pursue a variety of institutional and personal preferences (Barnett and Finnemore 2004; Ege 2020). But when their 'organizational security' (Barnett and Coleman 2005) is at stake, the desire to survive, or 'positional orientation' (Knill et al. 2019), should override alternative preferences. Existential crises should therefore prompt 'administrative cohesion' (Bauer and Ege 2016). While parsimonious, the premise of survival instincts is the necessary starting point for the analytical framework depicted below.
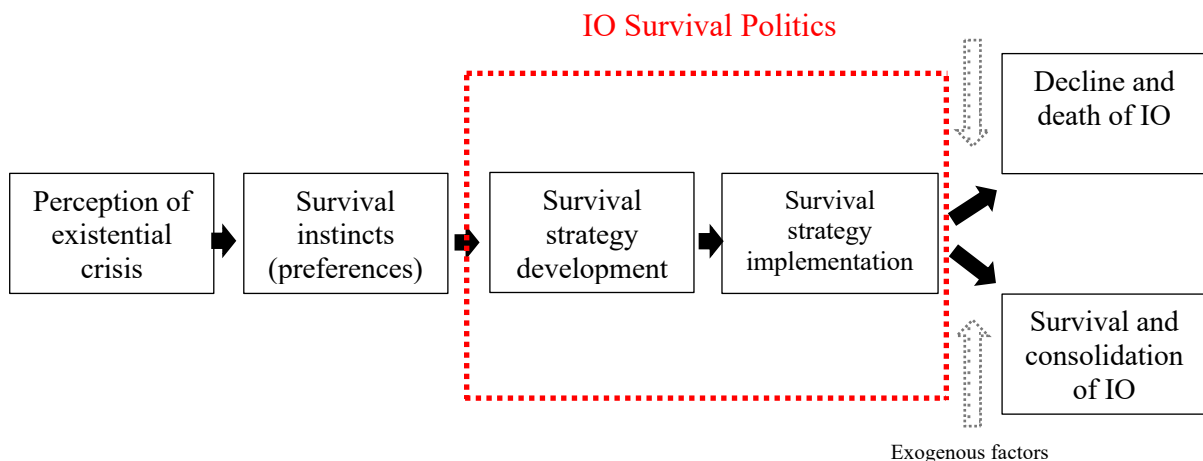

Figure 1: Analytical framework

IO Survival Politics consists of two distinct analytical stages. First, senior officials intellectually develop a survival strategy. Based on the classic triad, a survival strategy should identify the levers of influence institutional actors possess (means); indicate how these levers should be pulled (ways); and specify the objective (ends) (see Lykke 1989; also Chorev 2012). Variations in the types of existential threats and institutional characteristics should give rise to different types of survival strategies. The nature of the threat should determine the ends of the respective strategy. For instance, when an existing member state voices criticism, demands institutional reforms, and threatens to exit, the end of the IO's survival strategy is to avert withdrawal without in the process alienating other member states. In turn, when a member state leaves the IO, the natural ends of a survival strategy should be to prevent both the withdrawal from unleashing a domino effect of further exits and the departing state from sabotaging the IO from the outside. The means and ways for each strategy then depend on the levers of influence available to institutional actors.

While survival strategies will rarely appear as formalized master plans, to amount to a survival strategy there need to be clear indications that officials' responses were not of an ad-hoc nature but followed a discernible plan (see Silove 2018). Interviews with closely involved officials serve as key method to ascertain whether institutional actors followed such rationale. Developing a survival strategy requires a secretariat of sufficient size, cohesion, and differentiation from the member states to offer the intellectual firepower to analyse the crisis and devise a response (Bauer and Ege 2016; Debre and Dijkstra 2021a). It also needs the leadership of senior officials, who must recognize the gravity of the crisis, diffuse that sense throughout the bureaucracy, and provide thought leadership (Boin et al. 2016; Hall and Woods 2018). As a result, only IOs with basic institutional capacity, not very small IOs or informal institutions like the G7/20, can be expected to engage in Survival Politics, which would explain the large-n findings that institutionalisation (Eilstrup-Sangiovanni 2020) or the size of the secretariat (Debre and Dijkstra 2021a) correlate positively with survival.

The second stage of IO Survival Politics entails the implementation of the survival strategy. That is, institutional actors use their varying levers of influence to achieve their objective of survival. Formal and informal agenda-setting powers, for instance, allow senior officials to raise public awareness, frame issues favourably, and shape internal proceedings (Baumgartner and Jones 1991; Tallberg 2010). They may also utilize their networks to build coalitions with external actors to overcome opposition from certain member states or affect the calculus of initially intransigent states (Abbott et al. 2015; Dijkstra 2017); broker compromises among other actors that favours their preferences (Beach 2004); or use bureaucratic tools to shield the organisation from dissatisfied member states (Beach and Smeets 2019). To amount to IO Survival Politics, these tactics need to be implemented with greater intensity and through distinct and extraordinary ways compared to conditions of normal policymaking.

The repertoire of available levers is IO- and context-dependent. Relevant institutional properties include delegated authority (Hooghe et al. 2017), administrative resources (Xu and Weller 2008), autonomy from member states (Gray 2018), or communicative capacities (Ecker-Erhardt 2018). Like the development of survival strategies, their implementation equally requires adept leadership by key officials to mobilise the institutional capacity, activate existing networks, and tailor responses to the specific circumstances (Knill et al. 2019). Unlike the first stage of Survival Politics, however, the implementation of survival strategy is not solely in the hands of institutional actors, which is signified by the grey arrows in the visual representation. IOs are rarely the most powerful actors and face significant legal and institutional constraints as well as structurally dominating member states (Hall and Woods 2018; Moravcsik 1999). There is ample literature on the influence powerful states directly exert in IOs (e.g. Stone 2011; Tokhi and Zuern 2022) and that institutional actors anticipate the preferences of the key member states and act accordingly (Clark and Dolan 2021). It should therefore not be expected that institutional actors in intergovernmental organisations would and could overtly contradict core interests of veto players or even hegemons (Schuette 2021a). When preference constellations are diffuse, however, institutional actors face opportunities to use their available responses to act on their perceptions. As such, the degree of preference centrality among veto players – that is, how salient an issue and how clearly defined a government's preference is – delineates the opportunities for agency of institutional actors.

Thus, the institutional actors' influence on survival is observable at these two reference points – the development and implementation of survival strategies – relying on the counterfactual logic that if institutional actors had been absent, the outcome of the existential crisis would have differed. Any claims of mono-causality are of course misguided; even the most

extraordinary political behaviour and cunning survival strategy may not protect IOs in some overdetermined situations. But the greater the degree of development and implementation of astute survival strategies, the greater the likelihood of IO survival and consolidation. Should survival strategies fail, in turn, existential crises are likely to precipitate decline or even death whereby (key) states withdraw memberships or repatriate authority, key norms lose their prescriptive power, or the IO can no longer ensure the provision of crucial public goods (see Pevehouse 2004; Debre and Dijkstra 2021b; Schuette 2022b).

Situating IO Survival Politics: bureaucratic politics, legitimation, and emergency politics

Scholarly accounts of the *causes* of the crisis of multilateralism, or the liberal international order, abound (e.g. Ikenberry 2020; Lake, Martin, and Risse 2021; Zuern 2018). But strikingly little attention is paid to the *consequences* for and *responses* by IOs themselves. This reflects persistent trends in IR theory of emphasising institutional stickiness and continued neglect of the insights on IO agency. As a result, the prevailing meta theories largely privilege structural explanations of IO survival and decline and death (e.g. Abbott et al. 2016; Boerzel and Risse 2021; Copelovitch and Pevehouse 2019; Eilstrup-Sangiovanni 2021; Kaarbo 2017). Nonetheless, three recent research agendas bear relevance for IO Survival Politics.

The literature on bureaucratic politics under normal circumstances identifies several strategies through which institutional actors can exert cognitive, prescriptive, and executive influence, which maps onto the three stages of the policy-making cycle (e.g. Biermann and Siebenhuehner 2009; Nay 2012; Widerberg and van Laerhoven 2014). For Ege and co-authors '[t]he question, then, is not *if* IPAs [international public administrations] influence policy-making but rather *how, to what degree, and when* this influence occurs' (2020: 555). Most prominently, IOs 'structure knowledge' (Barnett and Finnemore 1999: 710) by using their expertise and standing as arbiter to classify information and confer meaning. This allows them to potentially set the agenda, define the problem and frame the discourse in a way favourable to the IO during the policy initiation process. Subsequently at the policy drafting stage, IOs can use both the power of the pen to draft proposals and procedural strategies to influence legislative proceedings (Beach and Smeets 2019). IOs can also make common cause with select groups of actors (Dijkstra 2017). And during the implementation phase, institutional actors often possess discretion when evaluating, monitoring, and enforcing policy (Ege et al. 2020).

Like bureaucratic politics, Survival Politics also emphasises the ways in which institutional actors wield influence in and over IOs. Both approaches thus share the same ontological foundation. But there are three reasons to assume that IO Survival Politics nonetheless logically differs in degree and kind from bureaucratic politics. First, institutional actors are likely to be more cohesive during existential crises than normal policymaking because preferences for a single outcome – survival – will be unified and strong. Under normal circumstances, institutional actors tend to pursue a variety of sometimes conflicting personal, normative, and functional preferences and often succumb to intra-institutional rivalries and turf wars (Ege 2020). Second, institutional actors will likely have a shorter time horizon during existential crisis. During normal policymaking contexts, institutional actors need to be concerned about their reputation as supposed effective and neutral technocratic actors without divergent institutional preferences to maintain the goodwill among member states, which imposes behavioural limitations (Maertens and Louis 2021; Steffek 2021). But with survival at stake, medium- and long-term reputational concerns should give way to the overriding objective of survival and thus remove obstacles to bold behaviour. And third, the nature of existential crises implies greater uncertainty among crucial actors about preferences and strategies and,

potentially, the relaxation of some structural constraints, which should allow institutional actors greater room for manoeuvre (Capoccia and Kelemen 2007; Cortell and Peterson 2021).

It is for these three reasons that institutional actors may engage in extraordinary political behaviour that differs from bureaucratic politics in degree and kind. That is, they may behave more assertively in pursuing the same strategies as under normal policymaking. But institutional actors may also countenance unprecedented forms of behaviour to ensure survival. Such expressions of IO Survival Politics could include shedding the mantle of technocracy and acting openly political by directly engaging in distributional or ideational debates or questioning what previously were considered policy axioms. It could also entail no longer shying away from confronting recalcitrant member states, sharpening public communications toward challenger actors, or breaking with existing procedural and institutional norms of appropriate behaviour to play a more proactive role. Compared to the state-centric view of IOs as toothless administrative bodies and the bureaucratic politics claim of discernible but limited influence, IO Survival Politics thus attributes the greatest degree of potential agency to institutional actors.

The buoying literature on legitimation constitutes another important focal point in the field of IOs in crisis. Recent studies find that IOs increasingly resort to discursive and behavioural legitimation practices to change stakeholder's legitimacy perceptions and thus help IOs weather crises (e.g. Gronau and Schmidtke 2016; Lenz and Viola 2017; Schuette 2022; Tallberg and Zuern 2019). Legitimation tends to be a long-term, deliberative endeavour which aims at addressing structural legitimacy deficits of IOs. In contradistinction, IO Survival Politics deals with acute existential threats and thus involves a short-term logic. Survival strategies aim not at reforming structural flaws of the organisation but at buying the IO sufficient time to undertake fundamental reforms. In other words, in existential crises, IO Survival Politics precedes legitimation.

IO emergency politics is another cognate concept (Kreuder-Sonnen 2019; Kreuder-Sonnen and White 2021). The authors contend that in severe crises, IOs can behave assertively to make authority leaps. Like IO Survival Politics, emergency politics relies on the logic of exceptionalism as the critical bedrock against which extraordinary IO behaviour is possible. Yet, the respective ends of such behaviour diverge. Where emergency politics is intended to empower the respective IO and extend its authority vis-à-vis other actors, IO Survival Politics is a mode of behaviour to survive existential crises. In sum, IO Survival Politics is related to but substantively differs from existing vantages on bureaucratic politics, legitimation, and emergency politics.

Research design

The ambition to form a new concept suggests selecting diverse cases to show that IO Survival Politics is not idiosyncratic but appears in a variety of contexts (Rohlfing 2012). This article therefore probes the plausibility of the concept in a comparative analysis of two cases: 1) the European Commission's handling of the Brexit negotiations and 2) NATO's management of the Trump Presidency. This case selection follows four logics. First, the EU and NATO substantially differ in their core institutional features that the literature identifies as key explanations of behaviour, including institutional design, functions, size, and resources (e.g. Koremenos et al. 2001). According to the International Authority Database (Zuern, Tokhi, and Binder 2021: 436), the EU is the most authoritative IO in the world (with a IAD score of 0.70), while NATO ranks in the lowest quarter (0.20). The same pattern can be observed in the

delegation database by Hooghe et al. (2017: 150ff.). The EU has the highest delegation score (0.652) among the 74 IOs in the set, while NATO is squarely in the bottom half on delegation (0.135) (and among the lowest on pooling). The EU is also a general-purpose organisation, where NATO is principally a collective defence organisation. The EU employs 43 000 staff compared to NATO's 7500, and the EU's budget of around EUR 150 billion (calculated on an annual basis) dwarfs NATO's 2022 budget of EUR 2.5 billion.

IO	Institutional features	Case
EU	Purpose: General Authority: high Staff: high Resources: high	Brexit: external threat (de facto)
NATO	Purpose: task-specific Authority: medium-low Staff: medium-high Resources: medium	Trump Presidency: internal threat

Table 2: Case selection

Second, the two selected crises also vary in their nature. Where the EU case represents a de facto external threat from a departed member state, the NATO case is an internal threat from an existing member state. Both cases were unequivocally perceived as existential by involved officials. Third, the cases fall within the broad realm of foreign and security policy, which tends to be considered particularly sensitive. States fiercely protect their control over vital policy decisions and institutional actors should generally have less leeway to act independently (Dijkstra 2016). Indeed, the two cases were of particular political salience. It follows that the cases should be hard ones for IO Survival Politics. And fourth, there were also practical concerns due to the need to conduct dozens of interviews with officials. Both IOs have their headquarters in Brussels and the author possessed some pre-existing contacts in these organisations, which increased the confidence that sufficient officials would be willing to act as interviewees.

The ambition to understand the behaviour of institutional actors requires close insights into the perceptions of senior officials and IO decision-making processes at moments of great peril. But senior officials do not tend to publicly disclose their strategies in coping with existential crises and the recency of the cases meant that archival research was unsuitable. To understand the micro-mechanisms of IO Survival Politics specifically and IO behaviour in crises generally, this article therefore relies on a novel dataset containing 87 elite interviews with those key officials present in crucial meetings (see Mosley 2013). Selected through purposive sampling given the small number of directly involved officials in decision-making in crises, interviewees included former secretary-generals, deputy secretary-generals, chef de cabinets, members of the US National Security Council, ambassadors to the respective IOs, and other high-ranking officials in IOs and governments from a variety of national backgrounds, all of whom were intimately involved in the episodes in questions. Interviewees were asked, among others, to describe their perceptions of the crisis, whether conscious strategies were formulated in response, and how the responses were implemented. The interviews were semi-structured to equally allow for comparability and remain sufficiently flexible to pursue emerging leads. They lasted between 45 minutes and 90 minutes and were held in person in Brussels and, due to the pandemic, often virtually. Due to the inevitable biases, the evidence generated through the

interviews was additionally triangulated with a wealth of other information. Speeches and press conferences by senior officials, public communications by IOs, and legal documents served to buttress the findings. Where appropriate and available, secondary literature, media reports, and memoirs also complemented other sources.

IO Survival Politics by the EU and NATO

This section zooms in on the behaviour of EU and NATO officials in existential crises. Both case studies analyse the perceptions among institutional actors of the crisis, trace the development of the survival strategy and its subsequent implementation, and evaluate the impact of the officials' behaviour on the crisis outcome.

The European Commission in the Brexit negotiations

When the UK electorate narrowly voted to leave the EU in 2016, the EU had already been suffering from Euro, Schengen, and rule of law crises, which had caused severe divisions among the member states. Against this backdrop, Brexit threatened to become the final straw that would lead to the unravelling of the EU (van Middelaar 2019: 120). Then European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker (2017) exemplarily dreaded that the 'Brits will manage without big effort to divide the remaining 27 member-states'. Indeed, among national and EU officials alike, there was a distinct fear at the onset of the negotiations that the UK would successfully divide-and-conquer the member states (Interviews #1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5). As a result, key institutional actors in the Commission developed survival instincts. Juncker, Secretary-General Selmays, and recently appointed head of the Task Force 50 Michel Barnier were all aware that Brexit posed a peril to the very survival of the Union. It threatened not only to unleash a chain reaction by setting a precedent for other states to leave, but also the integrity of the single market should the UK be allowed to opt-into parts of it, and the pacification of the island of Ireland underwritten by the EU. While the Commission tends to pursue distinct policy and bureaucratic interests, in the case of the Brexti negotiations maintaining cohesion became not only a means to a better negotiation outcome but an end itself to preserve the Union (Interviews 1.1, 1.4, 1.9). In other words, forging unity among the EU27 became the survival strategy of key EU officials (Schuette 2021a).

To do so, the Task Force 50 engaged in both extraordinarily intense forms of its usual ways of exerting influence (*degree*) as well as distinctly different types of behaviour (*kind*). The immense technical complexity of the withdrawal negotiations produced a strong demand for the Commission's traditional expertise and drafting skills. In response, the Task Force 50 utilised its deep subject knowledge and drafting skills to gain negotiation advantages over the UK, pave the way of the negotiation, and generate trust among member-states. Once the TF50 was set-up in the autumn of 2016, it engaged in a massive exercise of reviewing the *acquis communautaire* – the entire body of EU law – to map the implications of the variants of Brexit for different EU policy fields (Laffan 2019: 9). Its early demonstration that it had a comprehensive grasp of the Brexit technicalities and its extensive consultations with central stakeholders proved critical in persuading those member states sceptical of the Commission leadership, such as Poland, or with significant stakes in the negotiations, such as Ireland, to rally behind the Task Force 50 (Interview 1.6).

The Task Force's deep expertise across several affected policy dossiers served not only as a source of a permanent dominance over its UK counterparts, but also allowed it to shape the tracks along which the negotiations would proceed. Indeed, the Task Force 50 was quick off

the starting blocks to gain an early mover advantage over the UK. Over the course of the first three months of negotiations alone, it published 14 position papers on withdrawal issues ranging from the financial settlement to data protection (European Commission, 2020). From the start, the negotiations thus took place on the EU's terms (Interview 1.3). The Irish border issue soon emerged as the politically thorniest and technically most challenging issue. In response, the TF50 in close collaboration with Irish officials drew on its expertise to arrive at a creative solution: the backstop. To prevent a customs border on the island of Ireland, it devised a common regulatory area between the EU and Northern Ireland (thereby moving the border into the Irish Sea). Despite outcries in the UK, negotiators agreed on a joint report on 8 December 2017 with the backstop as its centrepiece. In a similar vein, the Task Force 50 also used its expertise and drafting skills to shape the contours of the final withdrawal agreement in October 2018. In mid-January 2018, the Task Force 50 set out to translate the political agreement into a legal text and draft the first version of the Withdrawal Agreement. Before the draft was circulated, the Task Force 50 received, answered, and in part incorporated into the draft 700 questions from member-states over the course of a few days ensuring a widespread sense of collective ownership (Interview 1.1; Laffan 2019: 9). This pace and level of consultation not only further increased member states' trust in the TF50 (Interview 1.8). The timely publication also again allowed the TF50 to lay out the tracks as the ensuing negotiations would be based on the EU's document.

But the EU officials also engaged in extraordinary forms of political leadership. In the aftermath of the unexpected decision by the UK electorate, few member states had adequately prepared for it and were uncertain about their interests (Interview 1.8). There was a vacuum and the Task Force 50 filled it by providing the direction for the negotiations. In January 2017, Barnier and his senior staff presented the idea to divide the negotiations into two distinct phases: the first phase would address withdrawal matters, while the second phase would focus on future relations (Interview 1.1, 1.7, 1.8). Only if 'sufficient progress' on withdrawal matters had been reached would the negotiations proceed to the next phase. Described by one national official as a 'stroke of genius' on part of the Commission (interview 1.8), this example of agenda-structuring would allow the EU to control the process: only once the UK had settled its bills and found a solution to avoid a hard border in Ireland would talks about a future trade deal commence (Rogers 2019). Due to the asymmetrical interdependence as the UK needed a trade deal much more than the EU, the phasing of negotiations deprived the UK of much of its leverage (Schimmelfennig 2018). Phasing the negotiations was no legal necessity but an astute political choice devised by EU officials that significantly strengthened the EU's hand.

In addition, the Task Force 50 forged extraordinary close inter-institutional cooperation through unprecedented degree of transparency and consultation. The Barnier Method consisted of Barnier himself engaging in shuttle diplomacy, visiting every capital at least twice (Interview 1.5); engaging the member states bilaterally on an informal level, with the Task Force 50 hosting more than 150 meetings with national delegations and regular pre- and debriefs before and after negotiation rounds (Interview 1.1); and cooperating closely with the Council and European Parliament through regular meetings and providing extensive access to information. Several national officials emphasised the unprecedented transparency of the Commission's conduct in stark contrast to previous trade negotiations (Interviews 1.3, 1.6, 1.7).

This episode thus exemplifies IO Survival Politics. The Commission engaged in extraordinary behaviour, both in degree and kind, to shape the agenda of the withdrawal negotiations in the EU's favour and forge unity among the member states. In doing so, officials contributed significantly to the successful negotiation outcome. While the EU had preferred a closer future

relationship than the one transpired, it protected the integrity of the single market, safeguarded the rights of EU citizens in the UK, avoided a hard border in Ireland, and demonstrated the difficulties of leaving the union.

NATO and the Trump Presidency

Donald Trump had distinguished himself from virtually all US Presidents since the Second World War in his active hostility toward the alliance during the presidential campaign. Threatening to upend 70-yearlong US grand strategy towards Europe at a whim, he demanded that allies must 'pay up, including for past deficiencies, or they have to get out. And if that breaks up NATO, it breaks up NATO' (Barigazzi 2016). He also questioned the underlying logic of unconditional support for allies when positing that he would only defend Baltic allies against Russian aggression if they had 'fulfilled their obligations to us' (Fischer 2016). Beyond burden-sharing, Trump also wanted to re-establish cordial relations with Russia. He repeatedly expressed his admiration for Putin, calling him a 'strong leader, a powerful leader' (Russia Matters 2018). He also lobbied to reintegrate Russia in the G7, denied Russian interference in the 2016 US election, implicitly acknowledged Russia's annexation of Crimea, and cast doubts about whether his administration would uphold the sanction regime. Moreover, his foreign policy team and trusted circle was replete with Russophiles with close connections to Moscow (including Paul Mannafort, Carter Page, and Newt Gingrich). Trump's benevolence toward Russia thus risked reversing NATO's defence and deterrence posture toward Russia and would have undermined the very *raison d'être* of the alliance. When in office, he repeatedly toyed with the idea of withdrawing from NATO and was on the verge of publicly doing so at the 2018 NATO summit. The Trump Presidency thus posed a veritable threat to the very survival of NATO and was perceived as such by senior officials (Interview 2.2, 2.5, 2.8, 2.9).

But NATO officials faced a dilemma (Schuette 2021b). On the one hand, given the indispensability of the US for NATO, Trump's threats generated massive pressures to adapt to his demands and thus avert potentially fatal sanctioning or withdrawal. On the other hand, his demands, in particular on Russia, created strong pressures to resist because Trump's threatened core features of the Alliance. In response, NATO officials around Secretary-General Stoltenberg developed a cunning survival strategy. They set out to strategically navigate the dilemma by overtly signalling sufficient adaptation on burden-sharing, which was not considered harmful to the alliance, to placate the US President while subtly protecting NATO's Russia policy from Trump's demands.

To do publicly side with Trump, pressure allies into spending more on defence, and subsequently selling even modest increases as dramatic successes to please Trump, Secretary General Stoltenberg and senior NATO officials engaged in extraordinary behaviour. Stoltenberg used his prominent position to publicly pressure allies to increase defence spending and credit the US President for allegedly achieving greater burden-sharing (Interview 2.1). He went out of his way to flatter the US President, exemplarily thanking him for 'his leadership […] on the issue of defence spending [which] has really helped to make a difference' (Okun 2018). In 2019, the Secretary General intensified his tailored communicative efforts aimed at Trump and repeatedly referred to what emerged as NATO's new mantra on burden-sharing: the 'extra 100 billion' (Re 2019) of allied defence spending thanks to Trump's pressure. Stoltenberg (2019) reiterated to Trump that 'your leadership on defence spending is having a real impact'. To drive home his message, Stoltenberg even appeared on Trump's favourite and unapologetically partisan broadcaster, Fox News. This was unprecedented for a NATO

secretary-general. Thus, Stoltenberg played to Trump's narcissism by strategically flattering him and purporting that he had prevailed over the opposition from other member states.

NATO officials also used their procedural powers to shape what proved to be the most perilous moment for NATO during the Trump presidency – the NATO summit in July 2018. Trump's America-First rhetoric had been particularly pronounced during that summer and in June he had refused to sign the G7 statement. Trump was also due to fly to Helsinki for a controversial bilateral meeting with President Putin right after the NATO summit and there was a distinct fear among officials that Trump could decide at short notice to skip the NATO summit (Snodgrass 2019: 272). While Trump did attend, the summit came to the verge of collapse when he hijacked a working meeting originally aimed at fostering relations with Ukraine and Georgia to threaten fellow allied leaders that the US would 'go its own way' should his burden-sharing demands not be met (Emmot et al. 2018). The US delegation had 'no idea what was happening' (Interview 2.11). Sensing the impending danger, Stoltenberg used his procedural power as chair of the North Atlantic Council and decided to turn the working meeting into an impromptu crisis meeting on burden-sharing. This was a highly unusual, strategic decision by the Secretary General as NATO summits tend to be ritualistic and formulaic. Calling this meeting proved critical in appeasing Trump; it played to the narcistic propensities of the US President by allowing him to take centre stage, vent his frustration, and pressure Europeans to make concessions, letting him walk away with a sense of victory (Interviews 2.3, 2.7, 2.11).

To resist Trump's demands on Russia, NATO officials used previously unimaginable strategies of circumventing the White House to build coalitions with other actors and shielding NATO's Russia policy from Trump. Relying on his personal network as much as on his deputy's, the Secretary General worked through the traditional transatlantic establishment in the Pentagon, State Department, and Congress to coordinate policies and maintain US domestic support for the alliance (Interview 2.17). Defence Secretary Mattis became NATO officials' main point of contact and together they kept important policy initiatives, such as NATO's Readiness Initiative, beneath Trump's radar (Interviews 2.3, 2.5, 2.12, 2.13). Indeed, Stoltenberg always prioritized burden-sharing over Russia policy in his public communications with Trump (Interviews 2.10, 2.11; Schuette 2021b).

To further shield NATO's Russia policy from Trump, officials tried to Trump-proof summits where Russia was a key discussion point. In the run-up to the 2018 summit, NATO officials together with US diplomats successfully pressured ambassadors to agree upon a declaration prior to the summit to avoid last-minute interferences from Trump (Interviews 2.2, 2.6, 2.7). Stoltenberg also postponed Trump's first visit to NATO headquarters in the hope that Trump's would have been taught the value of the alliance by the 'adults in the room' (Interviews 2.1, 2.4). And he downgraded NATO's 70th anniversary summit in April 2019 to a foreign ministerial meeting, which was attended by Secretary of State Pompeo instead (Interviews 2.3, 2.4).

In sum, NATO officials used extraordinary strategies in pursuit of survival including publicly flattering the US President, and setting the agenda by appearing on Fox News, actively circumventing the White House, and shielding proceedings from Trump. Indeed, NATO's Survival Politics proved to be central factor in helping the alliance survive. Had officials behaved in normal ways, it is likely that Trump had not changed his position on burden-sharing, insisted on diluting NATO's Russia policy, and above all publicly announced the US withdrawal at the 2018 summit (Schuette 2021b).

Concluding discussion

This article has identified a distinct logic of IO Survival Politics born out of dialectic conditions that are specific to the 21st century: the intense and widespread threats to a range of organisations and the increases in delegated powers and intrusiveness of IOs. Paraphrasing Waltz, IOs seek to ensure their survival, and do so by resorting to extraordinary degrees and kinds of behaviours. The empirical cases demonstrate that, indeed, IO Survival Politics occurs in a variety of IOs facing a variety of threats. EU and NATO actors engaged in different types of extraordinary political behaviour that were distinct in both degree and kind compared to bureaucratic political behaviour under conditions of normal policymaking. From setting the political agenda, playing the US President, to using assertive public rhetoric, institutional actors went beyond what was hitherto accepted behaviour. The two cases showcase the extraordinary agency, even in high-stakes realms of foreign and security policy, institutional actors can exercise. These core findings, which buttress agential perspectives on international relations, thereby challenge the prevailing view in the literature that structural forces largely determine the fate of IOs in crises (e.g. Abbott et al. 2016; Boerzel and Risse 2021; Copelovitch and Pevehouse 2019; Eilstrup-Sangiovanni 2021).

The case studies not only illustrate the empirical manifestations of IO Survival Politics and different general types of survival strategies but also begin to shed light onto underlying factors that render successful Survival Politics more or less likely. Indicators for success include of both the degree of extraordinary behaviour by institutional actors and the causal impact of IO Survival Politics on the outcome of the respective crisis. While cases were not selected in a structured comparative manner to isolate variables, they nonetheless yield wider insights that should be applicable in contexts beyond the chosen cases.

The Commission's handling of the Brexit negotiations and NATO's Trump management represent almost ideal types of IO Survival Politics given both the degree of extraordinary behaviour by senior officials and the causal impact on the outcome of the respective crises. Two differences across the cases stand out. First, the nature of the threat differed. Where Brexit involved a de facto, though not de jure, external threat to the Union, which required institutional actors to forge a common front among member states against the outsider, the challenge to NATO originated within the Alliance. Second, the two IOs vary significantly in terms of their formal powers, which tends to be the principal explanation of IO behaviour in the institutionalist literature (e.g. Koremenos et al. 2001). While the Commission under President Juncker generally enjoyed substantial delegated powers and the Task Force 50 had key negotiation competences, NATO is in formal terms a much weaker institutions, with the secretary-general's powers limited to some agenda-setting functions. Neither the type of threat nor significant formal powers thus appear to be necessary factors for IO Survival Politics.

In turn, the two case studies share three characteristics. First, instead of formal powers, the informal leadership, or the entrepreneurial style (Knill et al. 2019), by Stoltenberg and the leadership couple of Barnier and Juncker proved essential. Both astutely exploited and pushed their room for manoeuvres by acting in unscripted ways rather than merely using their formal powers. In addition to the discernible importance of informal leadership, a second commonality of the two cases is that crises were acutely and coherently across the institutions perceived as existential. Unlike in the other cases, where it took time for officials to acknowledge the existential nature of the crisis, officials instantly switched into survival mode. The tangibility of crises appears to have shortened the time horizons of officials, which encouraged prioritisation of survival above all else, and created uncertainty among member states, which

provided greater leeway to Stoltenberg, Barnier, and Juncker. Third, and as a corollary, the constellation of member state preferences was diffuse and permissive, though not predetermined. While many member states needed persuasion, none categorically opposed the leadership by Commission or NATO officials. This also allowed for institutional actors to build coalitions with external actors.

By introducing IO Survival Politics, the article opens ample room for further research. First, there is scope to analyse more cases to buttress the findings and refine the scholarly understanding of the dynamics of IO Survival Politics. In particular, future works should go beyond western regional IOs to include both global IOs – the UN and its agencies appear the most intuitive choice – and regional IOs from the Global South, such as the African Union. While Western regional IOs tend to be more authoritative, IOs elsewhere also suffer from threats (e.g. Agostinis and Nolte 2021). And as this article shows, formal powers are no prerequisite for IO Survival Politics. There are no inherent reasons why other IOs may not engage in IO Survival Politics, especially since the cases analysed in this article represent be hard cases (e.g. Gwatiwa 2022). If NATO actors can engage in Survival Politics, officials from other IOs should too. Second, to move toward a testable theory of successful IO Survival Politics, further research should select cases in a structured comparative manner to examine the influence of the underlying factors noted above and potentially identify additional explanations. Third, future research should also address types of threats that could not be included in the analysis. For instance, amid growing regime complexity, threats to incumbent IOs increasingly emanate from other IOs (e.g. Morse and Keohane 2014; Schuette 2022) or informal institutions or ad-hoc coalitions (Karlsrud and Reykers 2020; Roger 2021; Vabulas and Snidal 2013; Westerwinter et al. 2021). Fourth, the concept and analytical framework could be applied to other institutions, not just IOs. The logic and manifestations of IO Survival Politics could also be discernible when national agencies, for example, come under existential threat.

In addition to these scholarly contributions, the findings also bear important political and normative consequences. The article allows for a better understanding of hugely salient processes of the crisis of multilateralism. Appreciating that individual agents carry much responsibility for helping key IOs like NATO and the EU survive recent crises should caution policymakers against any sense of complacency. These episodes were contingent and could have ended differently, which would have likely had drastic consequences for the shape of the European order. Indeed, the cases show that institutional actors can only provide temporary relief but not permanent remedy for the malaise of the multilateral order. By helping IOs survive, they provided the context within which democratically accountable policymakers and civil society actors could set out to address the roots of the crisis and recast the multilateral order. Without substantial reform, however, the multilateral order will continue to be in a state of peril.

Interviews

1.1 EU official, 26 November 2019
1.2 National official, 3 December 2019
1.3 National official, 13 December 2019
1.4 EU official, 18 December 2019
1.5 National official, 18 December 2019
1.6 National official, 18 December 2019
1.7 National official, 13 January 2020

1.8 National official, 6 March 2020
1.9 EU official, 16 April 2020

2.1 NATO official, 28 May 2020
2.2 NATO official, 4 June 2020
2.3 National official, 4 June 2020
2.4 NATO officials, 4 June 2020
2.5 Former NATO official, 8 June 2020
2.6 Former NATO official, 15 June 2020
2.7 National official, 17 June 2020
2.8. National official, 9 July 2020
2.9. National official, 13 July 2020
2.10 Former national official, 26 October 2020
2.11 National official, 8 Feb. 2021
2.12 Former national official, 9 March 2021
2.13 National official, 12 March 2021

Bibliography

Abbott K, Genschel P, Snidal D, and Zangl B (eds) (2015) *International Organizations as Orchestrators*. Cambridge University Press.

Abbott K, Green J, and Keohane R (2016) Organizational ecology and institutional change in global governance. *International Organization* 70(2): 247–277.

Agostinis G and Nolte D (2021) Resilience to crisis and resistance to change: a comparative analysis of the determinants of crisis outcomes in Latin American regional organisations. *International Relations*, online first.

Barnett M and Coleman L (2005) Designing police: Interpol and the study of change in international organizations. *International Studies Quarterly* 49(4): 593-619.

Barnett M and Finnemore M (2004) *Rules for the World: International Organizations in Global Politics*. Cornell University Press.

Bauer M and Ege J (2016) Bureaucratic autonomy of international organizations' secretariats. *Journal of European Public Policy* 23(7): 1019-1037.

Beach D and S Smeets (2019) The Unseen Hands – Collaborative Instrumental Leadership by Institutions in the British Re-negotiation Case. *European Journal of Political Research* 59(2): 444–64.

Biermann F and Siebenhüner B (eds) (2009) *Managers of Global Change: The Influence of International Environmental Bureaucracies*. MIT Press.

Boerzel T and Zuern M (2021) Contestations of the Liberal International Order: From Liberal Multilateralism to Postnational Liberalism. *International Organization* 75(2): 282-305.

Boin A, Ekengren M, and Rhinard M (2020) Hiding in Plain Sight: Conceptualizing the Creeping Crisis. *Risks, Hazards & Crises in Public Policy* 11(2): 116-138.

Boin A, Stern E, and Sundelius B (2016). *The politics of crisis management: Public leadership under pressure*. Cambridge University Press.

Buzan B, Wæver O, and de Wilde J (1998) *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*. Lynne Rienner.

Cappocia G and Kelemen R (2007) The Study of Critical Junctures: Theory, Narrative, and Counterfactuals in Historical Institutionalism. *World Politics* 59(3): 41-369.

Chorev N (2012) *The World Health Organization between North and South*. Cornell University Press.

Clark R and Dolan L (2021) Pleasing the Principal: U.S. Influence in World Bank Policymaking. *American Journal of Political Science* 5(1):36–51.

Copelovitch M and Pevehouse JCW (2019) International organizations in a new era of populist nationalism. *The Review of International Organizations* 14(2): 169–186.

Copelovitch M and Rickard S (2021) 'Partisan Technocrats: How Leaders Matter in International Organizations.' *Global Studies Quarterly* 1(3).

Cortell A and Peterson S (2021) Autonomy and international organisations. Journal of *International Relations and Development*.

Debre M and Dijkstra H (2021a) Institutional design for a post-liberal order: Why some international organizations live longer than others. *European Journal of International Relations 27(1): 311-329.*

Debre M and Dijkstra H (2021b) Conceptualizing and Operationalizing the Decline of International Organizations: Toward a Relative View of Institutional Change. *NestIOr working paper.*

Dijkstra H (2016) *International Organizations and Military Affairs*. Palgrave.

Dijkstra H (2017) Collusion in International Organizations: How States Benefit from the Authority of Secretariats. *Global Governance,* 23(4): 601-618.

Dingwerth K, Schmidtke H, and Weise YT (2020) The rise of democratic legitimation: why international organizations speak the language of democracy. *European Journal of International Relations* 26(3): 714–741.

Drezner D (2020) *The Toddler in Chief: What Donald Trump Teaches Us about the Modern Presidency*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.

Ecker-Ehrhardt M (2018). Self-legitimation in the Face of Politicization: Why International Organizations Centralized Public Communication. *Review of International Organizations*, 13(4): 519–546.

Eckhard S, Patz R, Schönfeld M, and van Meegdenburg H (2021) International bureaucrats in the UN Security Council debates: A speaker-topic network analysis. *Journal of European Public Policy*, online first.

Ege J (2020) What International Bureaucrats (Really) Want: Administrative Preferences in International Organization Research. *Global Governance* 26: 577-600.

Ege J, Bauer M, and Wagner N (2020) Improving Generalizability in Transnational Bureaucratic Influence Research: A (Modest) Proposal. *International Studies Review* 22: 551–575.

Eilstrup-Sangiovanni M (2020) Death of international organizations. The organizational ecology of intergovernmental organizations, 1815–2015. *Review of International Organizations,* 15(2): 339-370.

Eilstrup-Sangiovanni M (2021) What kills international organisations? When and why international organisations terminate. *European Journal of International Relations* 27(1): 281-310.

European Commission (2022) EU budget. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/eu-budget_en, accessed 12 May 2022.

Fazal T (2008) *State Death: The Politics and Geography of Conquest, Occupation, and Annexation*. Princeton University Press.

Gerring J (1999) What Makes a Concept Good? A Criterial Framework for Understanding Concept Formation in the Social Sciences. *Polity* 31(3): 357-393.

Gray J (2018) Life, Death, or Zombie? The Vitality of International Organizations. *International Studies Quarterly* 62(1): 1–13.

Gronau J and Schmidtke H (2016) The quest for legitimacy in world politics – international institutions' legitimation strategies. *Review of International Studies* 42: 535-557.

Gwatiwa T (2022) *The African Union and African Agency in International Politics*. SpringerLink.

Hall N and Woods N (2018) Theorizing the role of executive heads in international organizations. *European Journal of International Relations* 24(4): 865-886.

Heldt E and Schmidtke H (2017) Measuring the Empowerment of International Organizations: The Evolution of Financial and Staff Capabilities. *Global Policy* 8(5): 51-61.

Heinkelmann-Wild T and Jankauskas V (2022) 'To Yield or Shield? Comparing International Public Administrations' Responses to Member States' Policy Contestation.' *Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis: Research and Practice* 24(3): 296-312.

Hirschmann G (2021) International organizations' responses to member state contestation: from inertia to resilience. *International Affairs* 97(6): 1963-1981.

Hofmann S and Kreuder-Sonnen C (2022) The imperfect elasticity of global governance: IGO crisis responses between expansion and contraction. *Working paper prepared for the Barcelona Workshop on Global Governance, 16-17 May 2022*.

Hooghe, L, Marks G, Lenz T, Bezuijen J, Ceka B, and Derderyan S (2017) *Measuring International Authority. A Postfunctionalist Theory of Governance, Volume III*. Oxford University Press.

Hopewell K (2021) When the hegemon goes rogue: leadership amid the US assault on the liberal trading order. *International Affairs*, 97(4): 1025-1043.

Howes D (2003) When States Choose to Die: Reassessing Assumptions About What States Want. *International Studies Quarterly* 47(4):669–692.

Ikenberry G J (2020) *A World Safe for Democracy*. Yale University Press.

Jankauskas V (2022) Delegation and Stewardship in International Organizations. *European Journal of Public Policy* 29(4): 568-588.

Jervis R (2013) Do Leaders Matter and How Would We Know? *Security Studies* 22(2): 153-179.

Johnston T (2014) *Organizational Progeny: Why Governments are Losing Control over the Proliferating Structures of Global Governance*. Oxford University Press.

Jones E, Kelemen D, and Meunier S (2021) Failing forward? Crises and patterns of European integration. *Journal of European Public Policy* 28(10): 1519-1536.

Jurado I, Leon S, and Walter S (2021) Brexit Dilemmas: Shaping Postwithdrawal Relations with a Leaving State. *International Organization*, online first.

Kaarbo J (2017) Personality and International Politics. *European Review of International Studies* 4(2+3): 20-38.

Karlsrud J and Reykers Y (2020) Ad hoc coalitions and institutional exploitation in international security: towards a typology. *Third World Quarterly* 41(9): 1518-1536.

Knill C, bin L, Enkler J, and Grohs S (2019) Bureaucratic influence and administrative styles in international organizations. *Review of International Organizations* 14: 83-106.

Koremenos B, Lipson C, and Snidal D (2001) The Rational Design of International Institutions. *International Organization 55*(4): 761–799.

Koschut S (2016) *Normative Change and Security Community Disintegration: Undoing Peace.* Springer International Publishing.

Kreuder-Sonnen C (2019) *Emergency Powers of International Organizations*. Oxford University Press.

Laffan B (2019) How the EU27 came to be. *Journal of Common Market Studies* 57(1): 3-27.

Lake D, Martin, L, and Risse T (2021) Challenges to the Liberal Order: Reflections on *International Organization*. *International Organization* 75(2): 225-272.

Lenz T, Schmidtke T, Kroesche N, and Schirmer S (2020) Legitimation Communication of Regional Organizations: Conceptualization and Empirical Findings. Working paper.

Lipscy P (2020) COVID-19 and the Politics of Crisis. *International Organization* 74(1): 98-127.

Louis M and Martens L (2021) *Why International Organizations Hate Politics*. *Depoliticizing the World.* Routledge.

Margulis M (2021) Intervention by international organizations in regime complexes. *Review of International Organizations* 16: 871-902.

Meissner K (2018) *Commercial Realism and EU Trade Policy. Competing for Economic Power in Asia and the Americas*. Routledge.

Merand F (2021) *The Political Commissioner: A European Ethnography*. Oxford University Press.

Moravcsik A (1999) A New Statecraft? Supranational Entrepreneurs and International Cooperation. *International Organization* 53(2): 267–306.

Morse J and Keohane R (2014) Contested multilateralism. *Review of International Organizations* 9:385–412.

Mosley L (ed) (2013) *Interview Research in Political Science*. Cornell University Press.

NATO (2022) Funding NATO. Available at: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_67655.htm, accessed 12 May 2022.

Petridou E and Mintrom M (2021) A Research Agenda for the Study of Policy Entrepreneurs. *Policy Studies Journal* 49(4): 943-966.

Roger C (2020) *The Origins of Informality: Why the Legal Foundation of Global Governance are Shifting, and Why It Matters.* Oxford University Press.

Rogers I (2019) *9 Lessons in Brexit*. Short Book Publishing.

Rohlfing I (2012) *Case Studies and Causal Inferences: an integrative framework*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Ruggie J (1992) Multilateralism: The Anatomy of an Institution. *International Organization* 46(3): 561-598.

Saunders N (2022) Elites in the Making and Breaking of Foreign Policy. *Annual Review of Political Science* 25(9): 9-22.

Schimmelfennig F (2018) Brexit: differentiated disintegration in the European Union. *Journal of European Public Policy* 25(8): 1154-1173.

Schuette L (2021a) Why NATO survived Trump: The neglected role of Secretary-General Stoltenberg. *International Affairs* 97(6): 1863-1881.

Schuette L (2021b) Forging Unity: European Commission Leadership in the Brexit Negotiations. *Journal of Common Market Studies 59(5)*: 1142-1159.

Schuette L (2022a) Shaping institutional overlap: NATO's responses to EU security and defence initiatives since 2014. *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, online first.

Schuette L and Dijkstra H (2022b) The show must go on: the EU's efforts to sustain the multilateral order since 2016. *NestIOr working paper*.

Seabrooke L and Tsingou E (2019) Europe's fast- and slow-burning crises. *Journal of European Public Policy* 26(3): 468–481.

Silove N (2018) Beyond the Buzzword: The Three Meanings of "Grand Strategy". *Security Studies* 27(1): 27-57.

Snodgrass G (2020) *Holding the Line: Inside Trump's Pentagon with Secretary Mattis*. Sentinel.

Stoltenberg J (2017a) Doorstep Statement. Available at: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_143329.htm?selectedLocale=en.

Stoltenberg J (2017b) Remarks at the Inauguration of the Helsinki Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats. Available at: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_147499.htm?selectedLocale=en.

Stoltenberg J (2018a) Remarks at the opening session of the Munich Security Conference. Aavilable at: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_152209.htm?selectedLocale=en.

Stoltenberg J (2018b) Keynote speech at the "NATO Talk around the Brandenburg Tor" Conference. Available at: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_160241.htm.

Stone R (2011) *Controlling Institutions: International Organizations and the Global Economy*. Cambridge University Press.

Tallberg J (2002) Delegation to Supranational Institutions: Why, How, and with What Consequences? *West European Politics* 25(1): 23-46.

Tallberg J and Zuern M (2019) The legitimacy and legitimation of international organizations: introduction and framework. *Review of International Organizations* 14: 581-606.

Tokhi A and Zuern M (2021) International Authority and Institutionalized Inequalities. Working paper.

Vabulas F and Snidal D (2013) Organization without delegation: Informal intergovernmental organizations (IIGOs) and the spectrum of intergovernmental arrangements. *Review of International Organizations* 8(2): 193-220.

van Middelaar L (2019) *Alarums and Excursions: Improvising Politics on the European stage*. Agenda Publishing.

von Allwoerden L (2022) When contestation legitimizes: The UNFCCC and the US withdrawal from the Paris Agreement. *NestIOr working paper*.

von Billerbeck S (2020) 'Mirror, Mirror On the Wall:' Self-Legitimation by International Organizations. *International Studies Quarterly* 64(1): 207-219.

von Borzyskowski I and Vabulas F (2019) Hello, goodbye: When do states withdraw from international organizations? *The Review of International Organizations* 14(2): 335-366.

Waltz K (1979) *A Theory of International Politics*. Michigan Press.

Westerwinter O, Abbott K, and Biersteker T (2021) Informal governance in world politics. *Review of International Organizations* 16(1): 1-27.

White J (2022) The de-institutionalisation of power beyond the state. *European Journal of International Relations* 28(1): 187-208.

Xu Y and Weller P (2008) "To be, but not to be seen": exploring the impact of international civil servants. *Public Administration* 86(1): 35–51.

Zaccaria G (2022) You're fired! International courts, re-contracting, and the WTO Appellate Body during the Trump presidency. *Global Public Policy*, online first.

Zuern M (2018) *A Theory of Global Governance*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Zuern M, Tokhi A, and Binder M (2021) The International Authority Database. *Global Policy* 12(4): 430-442.