

# 1. Introduction

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What do ‘social cash transfers’, ‘public internal financial control’, ‘regulation impact assessment’, or ‘skills toward employment and productivity’ have in common?<sup>1, 2</sup> These frameworks, concepts, and instruments have been promoted by international organizations (IOs) and used in policy programmes at the regional, national, and local levels. Indeed, the action of IOs impacts not only domains that require cross-border approaches (peace, war, transport, international trade), but also understandings of governmental knowledge and accepted practices across a range of policy areas (Barnett and Finnemore, 2004: 21; Bezes, 2007; Cassese and Wright, 1996; Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000: 11; King and Le Galès, 2011; Nolan, 2001; Ougaard and Higgott, 2002; Pal, 2012). The significant role IOs play in transferring policy models in turn relates, and this is one of the assumptions of our book, to the power and legitimacy *economic and financial* IOs have gained since the late 1980s.

## FOUR CORE HYPOTHESES ON ECONOMIC IOs

Economically, some of these organizations are endowed with resources unmatched in other sectors of the international system. For instance, with a planned capital budget of \$80 billion for 2019,<sup>3</sup> the World Bank (WB) has significant leverage on beneficiary states in terms of material power. In political terms, IOs like the WB, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the World Trade Organization (WTO), or the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have appeared to embody the ‘victory’ of the Western political and economic order after 1989. In contrast with other IOs (like the United Nations (UN) General Assembly and Security Council), the Soviet Union and its satellites didn’t participate in these organizations during the Cold War, facilitating the identification of these organizations with the ‘Western’ camp.

In recent decades, these organizations have clearly broadened their competencies beyond their initial domains. Since the 1980s, economic IOs have extended their expertise production to the realms of social policy (Deacon et

al., 1997: 3; Gliszczynski and Leisering, 2016: 326) and public governance (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2004: 20–1). On a global level, specialists link this evolution to the ‘institution building’ turn which emerged progressively within development aid policy communities (World Bank, 1992; Roberts, 2010: 15).<sup>4</sup> As a result of dynamics which still require further unpacking, these economic IOs now deal with areas as diverse as public governance, education, health, or phytosanitary policies. This expansion is not solely thematic; it has actual political implications. At a minimum it implies a gradual change in the approach adopted by IOs with member and beneficiary states from one where they were seen as working amongst states to one where they work ‘within them’, becoming thus ‘more politically intrusive’ (Woods, 2006: 11).

In this context, economic IOs have started to expand the ways in which they interact with member and non-member states. Alongside treaties and loans, IOs have reinforced their capacities as knowledge producers, accumulators, and transmitters, which in turn has allowed them to increasingly engage in policy analyses and recommendations. In other words, these organizations are not only endowed with resources for normative power (the enactment of shared norms) and financial power (loan conditionality). They also seek to equip themselves with cognitive and symbolic resources (Bourdieu, 1979), in an effort to gain the legitimacy needed to guide the contents of governmental policies in areas pertaining to domestic policy and the development of national societies.

How is this symbolic authority built? What are its consequences? What are the effects of the extension of the expertise of economic IOs into policy domains in which market efficiency and economic profit were not initially the main driving forces? What difference does it make that economic IOs are active in domains which until recently were managed, valued, and assessed in a sectoral/professional and/or national manner? How does this affect the professional and policy domains in question? Conversely, does this relatively new broadening of their interests (and responsibilities) alter economic IOs themselves?

Despite the topicality of these questions, there has so far been little research on the construction and effects of IO expertise at the global level, with welcome recent exceptions that we will discuss in the following pages. To bridge this gap, this book analyses the ways in which economic IOs build a specific cognitive authority that allows them to shape public policy across a range of fields. Accordingly, our research assumes that the power (or vulnerability) of our case-study IOs does not depend solely on hard power resources or mechanisms (e.g. compliance mechanisms, normative competencies, financial conditionality, etc.) but also on their position in the international field of expertise and their ability to develop authoritative or consensual knowledge (Broome and Seabrooke, 2012; Littoz-Monnet, 2017).

The book analyses the strategic importance of the production and dissemination of expertise in the activities of IOs by addressing four core hypotheses:

1. IOs are semi-autonomous organizations whose inner logic partially depends on the interests and initiatives of external public and private actors representing pluralistic interests and visions.
2. An IO's authority depends on its ability to make policy problems intelligible and manageable.
3. The boundaries and contents of IOs' expertise depend on the type of regime of the 'power/knowledge' nexus in which it is produced and disseminated.
4. The legitimization of the economic IO's expertise in new (non-economic) policy domains favours the adoption of economized frames to interpret the 'problems' and the 'solutions' in the diverse policy domains concerned.

## SEMI-AUTONOMOUS ORGANIZATIONS IN COMPLEX INTERDEPENDENCES

Conceptually, this book analyses IOs as semi-autonomous organizations whose inner logic partially depends on the interests and initiatives of exogenous public and private actors representing pluralistic interests and visions: other IOs, member-state governments, and in some domains private firms, coalitions, professional networks, etc. Empirically, this book examines a cross-section of the main intergovernmental organizations whose mandates centre on financial and economic areas: the WB, the IMF, the OECD, and the WTO. Methodologically, all case studies are based on in-depth analyses of the concrete activities and connections of the studied IOs, drawing on primary sources (official documents, internal working materials, reports at various stages, etc.), direct observations at the headquarters and/or in local branches, and interviews with officials from IOs and their partners.

We opted for close scrutiny of the day-to-day activities of IOs because we analyse IOs not as simple diplomatic translators of the political interests of their most powerful member states, but as partially autonomous organizations, whose activities and choices matter. More precisely, we think it is crucial to study IOs from the inside because 'the internal dynamics of IOs... shapes the influence they have over member states' (Broome and Seabrooke, 2012: 3). We argue that analysing the micro-politics of the construction and dissemination of IOs' knowledge will allow us to interpret the 'influence' which is generally given to these IOs.

Fortunately, a sizeable body of literature has demonstrated the benefits of approaching micro-processes and actor configurations when studying international activities and processes (Barnett and Finnemore, 1999, 2004; Broome and Seabrooke, 2012; Gayon, 2009b; Hadjiisky et al., 2017; Nay, 2012; Pal,

2012; Radaelli, 2018; Reinalda and Verbeek, 2004; Trondal et al., 2010). For instance, Barnett and Finnemore (1999) showed that IOs can be relatively autonomous organizations that develop distinct cultures, which shape how they see the world:

the mission statements of most large public IOs are ambiguous and require interpretation. IO staff must transform these broad mandates into workable doctrines, procedures, and ways of acting in the world... Once in place, the staff of IOs take their missions seriously and often develop their own views and organizational cultures to promote what they see as 'good policy' or to protect it from states that have competing interests. (1999: 5)

In line with these findings, our research agenda assumes that international secretariats need to be analysed as agents in their own right, just as autonomous as other political institutions.<sup>5</sup> Yet, unlike some sociological institutionalism studies, we insist on the fact that, to construct their own legitimacy, IOs partially depend on heteronomous actors and dynamics.

Obviously, the pressure exerted by the most powerful states factor in the complex picture of the functioning of these IOs. Perhaps precisely because they are powerful, these organizations elicit a particular investment from member states.<sup>6</sup> This has been shown in particular in relation to the IMF and the WB. As banks, the voting influence of member states depends on the share they own in them and the relationship with member states depends to a certain extent on their status as borrowers or net contributors. This bank status complicates the functioning of the economic multilateralism that these organizations actually embrace. The existing literature emphasizes in particular the close ties between the United States (US) political institutions and the Washington DC-based decision-making bodies of the two banks. While some specialists argue that the WB and the IMF act as levers of a transnational elite dominated by the American powers (Dezalay and Garth, 1998), most conclude that the WB and the IMF have a relative autonomy (see Woods, 2006; Wade, 2002), but that the autonomy of these powerful IOs is partial in the sense that they cannot work in isolation and must take the interests of their relevant partners into account. In fact, these interdependences are numerous and complex, making any unilateral control highly implausible. This leads us to analyse IOs as collective constructs, involving various categories of actors (bureaucratic segments of the secretariat, national delegates, ambassadors, academics, think tanks, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), lobbies, etc.) whose conceptions and interests vary (Nay and Petiteville, 2011).

The relative openness of IOs paradoxically becomes an important component of their autonomy. Diverse configurations of cooperation and competition shape their activities, through different involvements, interactions between experts, policymakers, and interest groups but also different forms of

compromises, consensuses, and brokering processes capable of transcending individual state interests. A realistic account of their influence must bring into the picture all their ‘relevant partners’, meaning here the actors that count for their activities and expansion – which may not be the most visible ones (but which can be identified through careful field research).<sup>7</sup>

In this book, the activities of international secretaries and of their partners are contextualized depending on the issue they deal with and on the partnerships they participate in. These policy areas range from training and education (Maire, Grek, Fontdevila and Verger), to food and agriculture (Fouilleux), employment (Gayon), chemical safety (Martin), participatory governance (Nay), and transnational care chains (Mahon). These ‘segments’ of international secretariats participate to issue-based spaces of interconnections, alongside other segments of IO secretariats, NGOs, groups of experts, scholars, etc. Our chapters bring to light the importance of the relationship between the IO’s secretariat and the national delegations (Gayon, Grek, Fontdevila and Verger), the fruitful interaction between different international bureaucracies (Gayon, Grek, Martin), the conditions of the interaction with the academic fields (Maire, Nay), the role that can be played by private stakeholders (Maire, Martin), or the conditions under which the relationship with social movements and NGOs may induce change inside the IO (Nay). In line with recent developments of the ‘international political sociology’,<sup>8</sup> this micro-political and contextualized perspective aims at identifying the entities and interrelations composing the social ecosystems which shape policy agendas at the international level. The study of micro-processes opens the way to a deep and balanced perspective about international spaces of discussion and action, considering the internal heterogeneity of IOs’ activities that are hidden by scientific approaches which perceive organizations as monolithic entities.<sup>9</sup>

## AGENDA SHAPERS

Our book analyses economic IOs as policy agenda shapers. In line with our second hypothesis, ‘the authority of an IO depends on its ability to make policy problems intelligible and manageable’, our chapters analyse the way in which economic IOs seek to identify and frame policy problems and propose solutions to them in the form of ready-to-use policies and policy agendas. As policy agenda shapers, IOs must behave and be recognized as legitimate forces for bringing forward proposals. Haas and Haas depicted IOs as ‘agents of the redefinition’ of policy agendas in that they propose “road maps for governance” (1995: 259). Thus, the ways in which IOs gather, produce, and try to ensure the authoritative character of their ‘relevant-for-action’ knowledge is crucial for our analysis. That economic IOs attribute importance to knowledge production and dissemination is not a new development. Some IOs like the

OECD and WB have a long history of ‘shaping global politics through knowledge production’ (Pfister and Horvath, 2014: 313). Recent moves – like the investment of the WB in the Open Knowledge Repository program – confirm that knowledge production and dissemination has become one of the primary strategies some IOs use in their attempt to gain or retain a central role in global politics.

Scholars across a number of academic fields have studied this trend in the activities of IOs. International relations scholars have long been interested in the power of knowledge in IOs (Haas, 1990), the role of scholars in their activities (Haas, 1992b), or more specifically the ideational role of the OECD (Marcussen, 2004b). In relation to political economy, Broome and Seabrooke (2012) explicitly address the question of the influence of IOs on domestic structural reforms and relate it to the ‘cognitive authority’ gained by IOs. In the field of governance, Stone sees ‘ideational power’ as ‘central to emerging patterns of global governance’ (Stone, 2003: 43). Barnett and Finnemore consider that IOs ‘do more than just manipulate information; they analyze and interpret it, investing information with meaning that orients and prompts action, thereby transforming information into knowledge’ (1999: 7). In a similar vein, Littoz-Monnet sees:

an evident connection between the use and production of certain forms of knowledge and international bureaucracies’ claims to authority. It is because they produce and use knowledge that is both unique (in its comparative form) and highly technical (quantitative and highly specialized) that international bureaucracies can best legitimize their existence, their expansion into new domains, and their specific policies. (2017: 15)

## WHAT STATUS FOR SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE IN ECONOMIC IOs?

Our third hypothesis states that the boundaries and contents of IOs’ expertise depend on the type of regime of the ‘power/knowledge’ nexus in which it is produced and disseminated. This can be interpreted as an illustration of a broader trend, whereby the alleged specificity and unicity of scientific institutions and their (historically built) claim to monopolizing the production of ‘real’ scientific knowledge are challenged.<sup>10</sup> The WB and OECD’s significant investments in knowledge production and dissemination (World Bank, 1999; OECD, 2000, 2001) indeed tend to suggest that the secretariat (and its member states) links the cognitive authority of the WB and the OECD to the quality of their data and analytical productions. This conception ties in with the ‘linear perspective on the relationship between science and policies, which considers that expertise guides policy by “speaking truth to power”’ (Pfister and Horvath, 2014: 311; see also Lidskog and Sundqvist, 2015).

Much of this is based on two rationalistic assumptions evidenced and criticized by the literature (specifically the sociology of expertise and the science and technology studies literature): first, scientific research tells the truth, and second, good research generally feeds policymaking processes. As such, we pay keen attention to the rationalistic tendency that considers scientific research as being independent from its social context.<sup>11</sup> Knowledge is utilized as an intellectual tool that allows rational policy actors to reduce and control uncertainty in decision making even if ‘neither ideas nor the research that codifies them are neutral’ as they are ‘broadly supportive of open economies and free markets’ in the contexts concerned (Stone, 2003: 43–4). There is a process of ‘epistemic selectivity’ at work (Vadrot, 2014), which gives the institution a real margin to manoeuvre among different ‘scientific truths’.

In other words, ‘ideas prevail not because they are the “best” ideas in a technical or professional sense but because they best meet the social, organizational, and political needs of key actors’ (Woods, 2006 : 69; see also Deane, 1978; Lakatos and Musgrave, 1970). As stated by Littoz-Monnet, the ‘expertization of knowledge is itself political’: ‘what constitutes expert knowledge is itself the object of negotiation amongst relevant stakeholders in a given issue domain’ (Littoz-Monnet, 2017: 2). Moreover, by the end of the process, ‘research does not by necessity “trickle through” into policy. In many circumstances, policy-relevant research is ignored or even repressed by governments’ (Stone, 2003: 47).

### **Expertise: It is Political**

Inferring the cognitive authority of IOs from the scientific quality of its production means thus forgetting that IOs are not academic institutes, but inter-governmental organizations and, as such, political organizations.<sup>12</sup> In our case studies, we try not to remain mindful of the specific social and political context in which knowledge is used and (when applicable) produced. In line with the study of international expertise (Ambrus et al., 2014; Borraz, 2007; Broome and Seabrooke, 2012; Erkkilä and Piironen, 2014; Lera St. Clair, 2006; Marcussen, 2004b; Martens, 2007; Pfister and Horvath, 2014) and the science and technology studies literature (Demortain, 2017; Lidskog and Sundqvist, 2015), we make a distinction between ‘knowledge’ and ‘expertise’, in the sense that ‘expertise’ is specialized knowledge built specifically to be relevant for action. In this volume, Maire examines the role played by the OECD in shaping the new concept of ‘soft skills’ and derived education policies. In her case, the IO acts not only as a knowledge *broker* but also as a cognitive *shaper*. Positioned as a mediator between science and policy, it produces new hybrid knowledge which, through the concept ‘soft skills’, disseminates its vision of human capital and of the knowledge economy, and then translates it into education policies (Chapter 6).

The significant investment of some IOs in scientific research corresponds to the blurring of roles between international and scientific institutions. Martin illustrates this while explaining how and why the OECD, which is not a scientific institution, and whose primary objective is not to protect health and the environment has, from the 1970s, made a significant investment in the area of laboratory testing of chemicals. The goal of the organization is to harmonize the conception of what has to be considered a relevant production of scientific proof. This role reversal has specific political implications: the scientific register endorsed by the IO contributes to its legitimacy as a policy shaper, as the compliance to OECD guidelines has become a condition for a national state, to be considered a regular actor of the world trade in chemicals.

Two consequences can be derived from the difference we make between knowledge and expertise: first, IO expertise involves processes of elaboration and use in which specialized (or professional) or scientific considerations inevitably mix with political considerations. The availability and validation of data as well as their processing and interpretation (in method and scope) depend at least partially on the nature of the actors interested in the expertise and on the (sometimes evolving) configurations of power between these actors during the process of elaboration, use, and dissemination of the expertise. It ensures secondly that expertise is not an abstract and autonomous phenomenon, but on the contrary, a contextual and relationally defined reality. It is at least partially shaped by the type of relationship existing (and evolving) between the decision maker (which is more often than not a group of persons) and the knowledge-for-action producer.

To characterize the knowledge/power nexus, we draw on Foucault's concept of 'problematization', which refers to 'a set of discursive and nondiscursive practices that makes something enter into the play of the true and false, and constitutes it as an object of thought (whether under the form of moral reflection, scientific knowledge, political analysis, etc.)' (Foucault, 1988: 257). In this vein, institutions of power and scientific arguments and methods are articulated in devices ('*dispositifs*') related to a common challenge (problem) (Foucault, 1980). These devices pre-frame the socially acceptable answers to a challenge in a given moment of time/history. This idea is here articulated with the classical sociological concept of legitimacy. The academic knowledge used in the international spaces should not be considered independently from the transformations generated by their acclimatization to the IOs' environments. Nor should it be viewed as a passive tool in the hand of strategic agents. In a more interrelated way, international spaces are spaces where the 'relevant' words, parts of the reality, definitions of what has to be assessed or measured, etc. are discussed and selected; this selection creates a power effect by naturalizing the terms of the problem and by framing the terminals of the 'possible',

by delimiting the symbolic forms which constrain the social practices acceptable in a given social field (Bourdieu, 1979).

The relational nature of expertise explains why, in our view, studies on the authority of IOs must delve into the micro-dynamics of IOs in a non-monographic manner. Scholars must work toward discovering for whom and with whom the IO's secretariat builds a specialized knowledge which becomes the IO's perceived expertise by the end of the process. In this volume, Gayon analyses the circuits of production of the employment policy expertise of the OECD and of the European Commission through a sociological investigation of their socioeconomic programmes since 1990. His analysis shows how isomorphism linking policy fields actually transcends institutional boundaries. He shows the 'trans-governmental mode' of production of this expertise, characterized by 'a homologous division of bureaucratic labour within the OECD and the EC, but also within governments which participate to the activity of those international organizations'. In other words, 'OECD reports are negotiated politically' (Chapter 3).

The fact that IOs' expertise is partially framed by political power relationships makes them vulnerable to the pressures and strategic uses that governments and lobbies make of them. As we know and is underlined in Martin's chapter, 'science may be manipulated by industry'. More directly, Martin notes the influence of a professional organization funded by the chemical industry, which has been active in preventing the European Commission from fulfilling its obligation to define endocrine disrupters. Science is here a power issue because the battle focuses 'on knowledge production methods and appropriate tests for identifying certain effects of chemicals on the environment and health' (Chapter 7).

## AGENTS OF A GROWING YET DIVERSIFIED ECONOMICIZATION

Lastly, how are we to characterize the expertise of economic IOs in terms of content? The legitimization of the economic IOs' expertise into new (non-economic) policy domains favours the adoption of economized frames to interpret the 'problems' and the 'solutions' in the diverse policy domains concerned. Nevertheless, underneath the apparently broad policy and ideology consensus, debates and divergences do exist but still need to be precisely characterized.

### **Economic Standardizers?**

On these subjects, two interpretations have been put forward that are often taken for granted. We argue that they need to be distinguished and made more

explicit. The first addresses the content of the IOs' productions and considers that the implication of economic IOs leads to a progressive commodification of all the policy domains in which they invest. It describes the homogenization of policy problem construction and solving, characterized by the translation of these problems in economic terms. For example, Porter and Webb argue that the OECD's 'advice often takes the form of applying liberal economic theory to policy problems' (2008: 45). In their comparative analyses of the public governance indicators in the WB and in the OECD, Erkkilä and Piironen (2014: 349) conclude that, despite the content and method differences between government at a glance (OECD) and the worldwide public governance indicators (WB), these productions share a common 'economism', defined as a conception 'that primarily and fundamentally focuses on economic aspects of governance – often at the cost of alternative values (e.g. democracy, environment, social cohesion)'. In the same vein, Djelic and Sahlin-Andersson talk about *marketization* to refer 'both to market ideologies and market-oriented reforms. A market ideology reflects the belief that markets are of superior efficiency for the allocation of goods and resources... Market-oriented reforms are those policies fostering the emergence and development of markets and weakening, in parallel, alternative institutional arrangements' (2006: 53). As a result of this trend, there are increasingly multiple domains where the activities of economic IOs involve overlapping competencies from sectoral organizations of the UN system. What is the effect of this overlap? Some studies suggest that it happens at the expense of the sectoral organizations of the UN system, as a generic economic realm progressively downgrades the specialized and sectorial approach of the UN organizations and the Human Right values they are based on (like the World Health Organization or Food and Agriculture Organization) (Serré and Pierru, 2001; Chapter 2, this volume).

The second school of thought argues that their methods of production and dissemination of policy expertise steer economic IOs towards governing by numbers and technical standardization. IOs are seen as the main agents of standardization of public governance, through the dissemination of standards justified in technical and apolitical terms. Broome and Quirk analyse 'global benchmarking' as a process which translates 'complex phenomena into numerical values via simplification and extrapolation, commensuration, reification, and symbolic judgements. This process of translation takes what might otherwise be highly contentious normative agendas and converts them into formats that gain credibility through rhetorical claims to neutral and technocratic assessment' (Broome and Quirk, 2015: 813). It is worth noting that what distinguishes much of this literature is that it actively criticizes what it sees as the homogenizing approach of IOs, considered as 'global standardizers' (Brunsson and Jacobsson, 2002; Sahlin-Andersson, 2000), reproducing

'one-size-fits-all models' (Radaelli, 2004; Hood, 1998; Suleiman, 2003; Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2004).

Does the nature of international expertise conform to the 'governing by numbers' hypothesis (Broome and Quirk, 2015; Davis et al., 2012)? In other words, do IOs (and more specifically, economic ones) facilitate the introduction of measures and metrics in policy fields that were once considered incommensurable and, if so, what are the effects of the generalization of quantitative evaluation and rankings in these domains? The argument assumes that, due to their distinctive regulative constraints and vocations, IOs are bound to promote a decontextualized standardization of public action models and instruments, and that economic IOs are standardizers to a greater extent than others because of the dominance of mathematic models in modern economics (Dezalay and Garth, 1998).

Some of these studies root their analysis in the sociological scrutiny of international staff profiles, noting their apparent uniformity. For instance, Woods notes that a 1991 study of the WB Policy, Research, and External Affairs division indicated that 80 percent of senior staff were trained in economics and finance (Stern and Ferreira, 1997, cited by Woods, 2006: 53). Of course, like all academic disciplines, economics is a diverse field, relying on a variety of methods and theories. Yet, Woods describes considerable homogeneity in the academic itineraries of staff. The previously cited report of the WB concluded that the vast majority of senior staff were trained at US and United Kingdom institutions (Stern and Ferreira, 1997, cited by Woods, 2006: 53). At the time, some 90 percent of IMF staff with PhDs received them in the US or Canada (Clark, 1996, cited by Woods, 2006: 53). Woods concluded that the staff of these two organizations have a 'shared, albeit narrow, methodology and particular understanding of the world, its problems, and their solutions' (2006: 54) that 'tames' local economic realities and knowledge 'by reducing them to the core elements' of their 'profession', namely neoclassical economics (Woods, 2006: 54).

### **Micro-Politics and Power Configurations**

While these studies are stimulating and constitute a heuristic basis for the cases presented in this volume, the commodification and the standardization assumptions may overestimate the autonomy of economic IOs, underestimate their internal complexity, and downplay the diversity of the constraints they face in their activities, particularly the need to meet the different expectations of member states or beneficiary governments. In other words, these approaches 'risk misconceptualising how these IOs work by excluding analysis of their distinct "organisational personalities" (Vetterlein, 2006), range of socialisation

mechanisms (Broome, 2010), and investigation of internal policy debates' (Broome and Seabrooke, 2012: 7).

In support of this view, some of the contributors to this volume have shown that economic IOs, that share the same global liberal frame, develop different perspectives and contrasting recommendations on the same policy question (Mahon, 2010a). Often, this occurs because different sections within an IO and across different IOs do not work in the same ways and do not consider the same partners as valuable. As relevant as they can be, the global research indicators like training profiles, official organizational hierarchy, and prevailing modes of report writing need to be connected with the specific context in which they are embedded. Micro-mechanisms, linked with the organizational functioning of a unit inside the secretariat with the interactions developed with strategic external actors or with the interests of specific segments of a national government, may indeed act as a filter. In their chapter, Fontdevila and Verger describe what they have identified as a disjunction between the WB discourse and practices in the educational realm. Based on a content analysis of a large corpus of documents, their chapter shows that the misalignment between knowledge products and lending activity within the WB can be explained by the existence of contradictory preferences and incentives operating at two levels: external (between the IO, the international environment, and its clients) and internal (between the sub-units of the IO). In sum, the WB's portrait as an advocate of market-oriented reforms is accurate mainly at the discursive level, but this policy discourse does not consistently translate into its lending practices. In the agri-food policy field, however, Fouilleux's chapter captures how global public policymaking points to a clear and relatively strict division of labour between IOs. It describes the interconnected concomitant processes which contribute to the diffusion of the market referential in this field.

Indeed, there is potentially a strong tension within IOs between uniformity and diversity, between the homogenization required by global dissemination and the contextualization that is essential to respect the member states' diversity and to increase the chances of co-building the reforms in ways that are likely to lead to the successful transfer of reform. Of course, a solid belief has it that a unified world must be capable of 'speaking the same language', but this apparent benefit can produce new problems if policies are not tailored to fit local circumstances (Broome and Seabrooke, 2012). International secretariats and the experts working with them are well aware of the dilemma created by the respective merits of generic or tailored knowledge. In her chapter, Grek goes beyond the 'contextualization versus standardization' debate. She shows how the 'OECD's quantitative and qualitative works are mutually reinforcing and dependent'. In her view, the 'OECD's technocratic legitimacy is only made possible by a great amount of local, national, face-to-face and deeply

contextual work, in order to maintain the reputation of the global knowledge producer and mediator’.

In her chapter, a comparative study of three IOs – the OECD, the WB, and the International Organisation for Migration – Rianne Mahon develops and examines the way their organizational structures have affected their capacity to see the issue at stake, namely here global care chains. Mahon argues that the OECD and the WB each see pieces of the problem but neither has been able to grasp the connections among them (Chapter 5).

Since the critical (and self-critical) responses to the WB and IMF’s structural adjustment programmes (Cling et al., 2011) and the 2008 financial crisis (which many international civil servants experienced as a personal failure), these organizations have also experienced internal tensions concerning the role that should be attributed to economic growth in reducing social inequality, and the role to be entrusted to the market in regulating financial, economic, and social relations. Fuelled by social protests targeting institutions such as the WB and the IMF since the 1990s, a tension has emerged between the neoliberal approach (which became routine in the 1980s) and calls for an alternative approach, generally emphasizing civil society participation (‘empowerment’, ‘inclusiveness’) and the consideration of ‘well-being’ in the evaluation of economic policies. Nay’s chapter examines how the issue of ‘participation’ initially pushed by social movements gained traction within the WB before being turned into a new policy standard for development. It identifies the ‘insiders’ who strived to import sociological views into the WB with the intention of triggering policy change. It shows that a minority group of social reformists played an instrumental role in the incorporation of participatory ideas into the WB’s social and environmental agenda.

In sum, the authors in this volume address the construction of the knowledge authority of the IOs under consideration and how they use this authority to gain the legitimacy needed for their analyses and recommendations to be ‘accepted’ by member and recipient governments. First, the authors describe policy programme shaping; analysing how economic IOs frame policy problems and elaborate solutions that are relevant for governments, which tells us a considerable amount about the concrete functioning of these organizations. Second, the contributors to this volume analyse policy implementation shaping, showing how economic IOs work at orienting policy paths and reform management in recipient and/or member countries. In doing so, this volume tries to reveal much about the actual, and often very political, routes of international power.

## NOTES

1. This chapter has been partially translated and edited by Jean-Yves Bart, with support from the Maison Interuniversitaire des Sciences de l'Homme d'Alsace and the University of Strasbourg's Initiative of Excellence.
2. We would like to thank Rianne Mahon and Vincent Gayon for their precious help during the elaboration of this introduction. Special thanks also to Gildas Renou for his insightful suggestions on the last version of this text.
3. By way of comparison, the UN had \$13 billion at its disposal for its regular budget and its peacekeeping operations.
4. For instance, the OECD established its public governance department in 1990 and the WB published the *Governance and Development* report in 1992, giving priority to good governance to ensure sound development management. Three years later, the WB Institute began to work on the Worldwide Governance Indicators project.
5. Unlike Barnett and Finnemore, our objective is not normative but analytical. We do not consider the development of the autonomy of IOs as pathological or harmful per se (about this discussion, see also Biermann and Siebenhüner, 2009b).
6. In one of the first books on the 'influence' of IOs, a heuristic distinction was made between IOs whose output is perceived as unimportant by states and those that work on questions that are considered priorities. The former are governed internally by 'participant subsystems' (interaction between the national delegates, international civil servants and external experts); the latter operate through 'representative subsystems' in which member states regain the initiative (Cox and Jacobson, 1973: 424–8, cited by Bauer et al., 2009: 17).
7. In contrast to Broome and Seabrooke (2012), who focus on 'analytic institutions' housed by IOs, our case studies illustrate the decentralized construction of the analytical tools of IOs (by different units in their everyday business), which happens in a much less controlled manner. It is plausible that the comparison with the state (through reference to Scott's *Seeing Like a State* (1998)) leads Broome and Seabrooke to overestimate the unity and capacity of control of IOs as organizations.
8. International political sociology considers that international and transnational dynamics are empirical fields in their own right, allowing the researcher to use the methods and concepts of 'ordinary' political sociology (see Ambrosetti and Buchet de Neuilly, 2009; Dezalay, 2004; Dudouet et al., 2006; Klein et al., 2015; Kott, 2011; Saunier, 2008; Siméant, 2015).
9. In our meaning, 'micro-politics' does not refer to the anthropological sense of this expression that can be replaced by 'infra-politics' or 'non-institutional politics' (Turner, 1966).
10. Ulrike Felt identifies new levels where science is governed, new sites where knowledge is produced, and new agents claiming to be legitimate producers of systematic and publicly relevant knowledge (Felt et al., 2013; also Irwin, 2006, cited by Pfister and Horvath, 2014: 311).
11. In contrast with some of the Peter Haas developments about 'epistemic communities', we try not to overestimate the coherence and autonomy of the academic groups of scholars who actively participate in international arenas.
12. Of course, academic institutions are themselves social spaces, which shape the production of science not only through scientific but also through social condi-

tions. The ‘contingent, local, and culturally embedded nature of scientific work’ has been shown since the 1970s by scholars in science studies (Knorr Cetina, 1999; Latour, 1987, cited by Pfister and Horvath, 2014: 311).