
Appendix 7: Types of organization

Introduction

Currently organizations are coded by type as follows:

- A = federations of international organizations;
- B = universal membership organizations;
- C = intercontinental membership organizations;
- D = limited or regionally defined membership organizations;
- E = organizations emanating from places, persons or other bodies;
- F = organizations having a special form, including foundations, funds;
- G = internationally-oriented national organizations;
- H = inactive or dissolved international organizations;
- J = recently reported or proposed international organizations;
- K = subsidiary and internal bodies;
- N = national organizations (not listed in this edition);
- R = religious orders, fraternities and secular institutes;
- S = autonomous conference series;
- T = multilateral treaties and agreements;
- U = currently inactive non-conventional bodies (non-governmental bodies of this type are not listed in this edition).

The approach to the selection of organizations for inclusion in this Yearbook was first developed by the Union of International Associations for the *Annuaire de la Vie Internationale* (1908-1909, 1910-1911). It was further developed after 1945 for the early editions of the *Yearbook of International Organizations*. The approach was endorsed by the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC) in 1950 and in 1953 (see Appendix "The United Nations and the Yearbook").

The Economic and Social Council, in considering these matters in 1950, itself clarified the distinction between intergovernmental and international non-governmental organizations as follows:

Intergovernmental organizations (IGOs)

The view of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations concerning intergovernmental organizations is implicit in its Resolution 288 (X) of 27 February 1950: "Any international organization which is not established by intergovernmental agreement shall be considered as a non-governmental organization for the purpose of these arrangements." The resolution was concerned with the implementation of Article 71 of the United Nations Charter on consultative status of non-governmental organizations, and it was amplified by Resolution 1296 (XLIV) of 25 June 1968: "...including organizations which accept members designated by government authorities, provided that such membership does not interfere with the free expression of views of the organizations."

The matter is complicated by the fact that, pursuant to Article 12 of the regulations of the General Assembly of the United Nations (giving effect to Article 102 of the Charter), the Secretariat publishes, in the UN Treaty Series, every instrument submitted to it by a Member State, when "so far as that party is concerned, the instrument is a treaty or an international agreement within the meaning of Article 102" (Note in UN Treaty Series, Vol. 748). The terms "treaty" and "international agreement" have not been defined either in the Charter or in the regulations. Furthermore: "It is the understanding of the Secretariat that its action does not confer on the instrument the status of a treaty or an international agreement if it does not already have that status ..."

Further complications arise from:

- the increasing number of "international agreements" in which one or more of the parties is a constituent state of a federal state system (e.g. Quebec); this matter was not resolved by the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties (Vienna, 1969);
- bilateralization of treaties when several states act together to aid another state under a "multilateral" treaty signed by all of them;
- agreements in which one of the parties is itself an intergovernmental organization (thus "multilateralizing" the agreement) acting to establish an intergovernmental institute in a particular country (thus "bilateralizing"

the agreement), of which the government is one of the parties to that agreement (e.g. many UNESCO agreements with individual developing countries to establish regional research centres);

- agreements signed on behalf of national government agencies or departments which, in the case of purely technical matters, may not fully engage the state; the resulting organizations may then define themselves as "non-governmental".

In practice therefore, the editors assume that an organization is intergovernmental if it is established by signature of an agreement engendering obligations between governments, whether or not that agreement is eventually published. If any organization declares itself to be non-governmental, it is accepted as such by the editors.

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs)

The problem of identifying eligible non-governmental organizations is more difficult. Resolution 288 (X) makes no attempt to explain what is meant by the term "international organization". Editorial experience has shown that it is useful to take seven aspects of organizational life as indicators of the eligibility of an organization: aims; membership; structure; officers; finance; relations with other organizations; and activities. These aspects are discussed below for different types of organization.

Types A to D: Conventional organizations

1. Aims The aims must be genuinely international in character, with the intention to cover operations in at least three countries. Hence such bodies as the International Action Committee for Safeguarding the Nubian Monuments or the Anglo-Swedish Society are generally excluded. Societies devoted solely to commemorating particular individuals are therefore likewise ineligible, even if they have made major contributions to the international community.

2. Members There must be individual or collective participation, with full voting rights, from at least three countries. Membership must be open to any appropriately qualified individual or entity in the organization's area of operations. Closed groups are therefore excluded, although the situation becomes ambiguous when only one member is allowed per country by the organization, thus effectively closing the organization to other qualified groups in that country. Voting power must be such that no one national group can control the organization. National organizations which accept foreigners as members are therefore usually excluded, as are religious orders or communities governed on a hierarchical basis, and also informal social movements.

3. Structure The Constitution must provide for a formal structure giving members the right periodically to elect a governing body and officers. There must be permanent headquarters and provision made for continuity of operation. Hence the exclusion of ad hoc committees or the organizing committee of a single international meeting, though standing committees which link a series of meetings are eligible.

4. Officers The fact that for a period the officers are all of the same nationality, to facilitate management operations, does not necessarily disqualify an organization, but in this case there should be rotation at designated intervals of headquarters and officers among the various member countries.

5. Finance Substantial contributions to the budget must come from at least three countries. Hence the exclusion of the many "international" unions and societies operating in North America on budgets derived almost wholly from the United States members (see Type G). There must be no attempt to make profits for distribution to members. This does not exclude organizations which exist in order to help members themselves to make more profits or better their economic situation (e.g. trade unions or trade associations); but it does exclude international business enterprises, investment houses or cartels. The distinction between a trade association and a cartel is often unclear; in practice the external relations of the body are used as a guideline.

6. Relations with other organizations Entities formally connected with another organization are included if there is evidence that they lead an independent life and elect their own officers. Internal or subsidiary committees, appointed by and reporting to one of the structural units of a given organization, are excluded.

7. Activities Evidence of current activity must be available; organizations which appear to have been inactive for over four years are eventually treated as “dissolved” or “dormant” (and transferred to Type H).

8. Other criteria No stipulations are made as to size or “importance”, whether in terms of number of members, degree of activity or financial strength. No organization is excluded on political or ideological grounds, nor are fields of interest or activity taken into consideration. The geographical location of the headquarters and the terminology used in the organization’s name (whether “committee”, “council”, etc.) have likewise been held to be irrelevant in the determination of eligibility. Organizations whose names indicate a specialized function (e.g. “foundation”, “tribunal”) are, however, placed in Type F.

Types E, F, G, H and N: Other bodies

Organizations excluded from Types A to D are included in Types E, F, G, H or N for one or more of the following reasons:

- if the available information suggests that it is probable that when further information is obtained the eligibility of the organization for inclusion in Types A to D will be confirmed;
- if the information generally available about the organization (such as in the news media) creates the impression (e.g. by the choice of title, or the image maintained by the organization) that the organization conforms to the above criteria, when in fact further information indicates that this is not the case;
- if it is a bilateral governmental organization which may be confused with multilateral bodies;
- if it is possible that information on the existence of the organization (e.g. registration in government bulletins, sponsorship of a meeting) may not be matched or followed by any further or ongoing activity;
- if an organization previously in Types A to D appears after several years to be only slightly active or inactive;
- if the secretariat is permanent or frequently moved to different addresses (with little provision for continuity) so that there is difficulty in maintaining postal contact and little awareness of its existence amongst organizations in the same domain;
- if the organization tends to be cited in specialized directories or intergovernmental studies of international organizations, or if it is held to be “international” by some or makes deliberate efforts to create the impression it is;
- if information about the organization in any way suggests that it should be registered for the benefit of users of directory of “international” organizations.

The effect of this policy is noted below for each of the organizational features mentioned above.

1. Aims If the title of the organization suggests that the aims may be international in character, it is included. This applies whether or not the activities are concerned with a particular sub-national geographical area or with the link between a particular country and one or more other countries. Organizations which are obviously bilateral are excluded (except in the case of intergovernmental bodies), although national or bilateral organizations with international programmes (e.g. aid programmes) may be included. Organizations whose titles mention the name of an individual, another organization or a place are included here even though they would otherwise be included in Types A to D.

2. Members If the title of an organization suggests that its membership may be international in character, it is included. Bodies which are clearly national in character are however excluded even if they have foreign members (except bodies which are recognized by an intergovernmental organization for purposes of consultation). No account is taken of the manner in which members participate in the control of the organization, if at all. Non-membership organizations may therefore be included.

3. Structure No account is taken of the formal structure, if any. Informal social movements and ad hoc bodies are, however, excluded unless there is a permanent office and continuity over a period of more than a year.

4. Officers No account is taken of the nationality of the elected or appointed officers of the organization.

5. Finance No account is taken of the source of the organization’s finance. National foundations distributing funds internationally may therefore be included. Profit-making organizations may be included but only when they appear (from the title) to be non-profit-making (and international) in character; multinational governmental enterprises are included. Liner/shipping/freight conferences are only included when the name could be confused with a conventional organization.

6. Relations with other organizations Bodies which have some special organic or legal connection to another organization (by which they may have been created) are included here rather than in Types A to D. This applies particularly to functional and regional bodies of large organizations, but normally only when the title would appear to imply that they are independent, or where the degree of autonomy is unclear. International non-governmental bodies specially created to coordinate commercial, industrial or professional interests within a common market (e.g. the many such bodies within the European Union countries) are included here for two reasons: first, to the extent that such communities constitute emerging federations, the non-governmental bodies lose their international character; second, some of them are merely subcommittees of other bodies with wider geographical membership.

7. Activities Evidence of current activity must be available. Organizations which have been in Types A to D at some stage but have since become inactive or have ceased to exist are however included. Organizations in process of formation may also be included.

8. Other criteria As in the case of Types A to D, no stipulations are made as to the size or “importance”, whether in terms of number of members, degree of activity or financial strength. No organization is excluded on political or ideological grounds, nor are field of interest or activity taken into consideration. The geographical location of the headquarters and the terminology used in the organization’s name have likewise been held to be irrelevant. In particular:

- all organizations incorporating the name of another organization, or a place name, or a person’s name, in their titles are located in Type E (with the exception of some intergovernmental bodies);
- all banks, foundations and funds are located in Type F;
- organizations whose names include a saint’s name (unless they are religious orders and therefore allocated to Type R), together with any unconventional structure, are located in Type F.

Types R, S and T: Special types

Type R Religious orders, fraternities and movements (of which some were included in Type F in earlier editions.)

Type S International conference series, with a distinct name and an established periodicity, which are not the responsibility of any particular permanent organization. These may function as organization substitutes.

Type T Multilateral treaties and agreements which have not given rise to an administering intergovernmental organization. As organizational substitutes they may be considered as “automated organizations”.

Types J, K and U: Supplementary information

Type J Apparently international organizations whose creation has been recently reported or proposed, but for which no further information has been obtained.

Type K Substantive units within selected complex international organizations. They may have some degree of autonomy and, if further information were available or if they had more independent activities, they might otherwise appear in Type E or F.

Type U Organizations, previously classified as Types E to G, which are either known to have been dissolved or of which there has been no news for several years.