‘Walking the extra mile’: how governance networks attract international organizations to Geneva, The Hague, Vienna, and Copenhagen (1995-2015)

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1 Introduction

1.1 Setting the Stage: Attracting International Organizations

At the end of the 19th century, the Russian Tsar, Nicholas II, and his ministers were looking for a location for a Peace Conference. They decided early on that St. Petersburg was less than suitable. Preference would be given to a small, neutral country. The cities of Copenhagen, Brussels, and Bern were considered but later rejected. Denmark announced that it was not interested and in Belgium, disagreement between King Leopold II and the parliament on whether to host the conference faltered. Switzerland was considered too dangerous, due to the fatal assault on Austrian Empress 'Sisi' near Lake Geneva. After lengthy discussion, the choice eventually fell on The Hague.

The Hague was considered a favorable neutral location, with its stable parliamentary tradition as well as the legacy closely associated with Hugo Grotius in the field of international law. Another asset was the family connection between Queen Wilhelmina and Nicholas II, as Wilhelmina's grandmother, Anna Paulowna, was the daughter of Tsar Paul I. The fact that The Hague had already been the center of international meetings on transnational legal questions had surely weighed heavily in its favor. From the First Hague Peace Conference in May-June 1899, the city of The Hague became increasingly *the* international city of Peace and Justice. The Hague Peace Conference became the continuity of this international path of Western, if not global, recognition (Joor, 2013). Today, over 22 Intergovernmental Organizations are based in The Hague (Decisio, 2020).

This is just one of many examples of how decision-making processes concerning a choice of location for the establishment of an International Organization took place in the past. In the recent example given in the prologue, one can read that the competition between host cities increasingly intensified and that an array of distinctive aspects was considered. And yet, all these processes are quite distinct from each other. How cities such as The Hague, supported by their host state, attract the establishment of International Organizations (hereafter IOs), is therefore a topic worthy of further study.

Host states compete to attract IOs, and throughout the relatively short history of such competition, the contest has grown stronger. Quite clearly, states and cities do not attract IOs independently but incorporate other actors in the process. Since the number of IOs has been growing and the distribution of IOs has widened to include many more countries scattered around the world, the competition has become fiercer. Therefore, the need to understand the intrinsic processes at work in attracting IOs has gained considerable ground in recent years.

This thesis attempts to illustrate how such processes are enacted to attract IOs from the perspective of governance networks. A premise of this thesis is that host states and cities attracting IOs work in a collaborative manner, and how they do this affects the outcome of such a process. Diplomatic relations are key in these types of processes, as the member states of an IO are usually the ones voting for a suitable location. As the number and variety of IOs have increased, the processes to attract them have also become more and more complex along the way.

Since the arrival of the very first IOs, the Red Cross in 1863 and the Universal Postal Union in 1874, there has been steady growth. In 1950, there were only 123 IOs; in the 1980s, this number had increased to 3,546. That, in turn, grew to almost 8,000 in 2019 (Union of International Associations, 2020). International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs) became even more ubiquitous: from 832 in 1950 to more than 40,000 in 2017 (Turner, 2010; Appel, 2018). As IOs of different types are seen by many cities as important for their status and economy, competition between cities to host them has also increased substantially.

Small to medium-sized Western European cities are increasingly interested in attracting IOs. They face competition from non-Western cities in emerging countries such as South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, and African and South American countries. As IOs operate in the vicinity of other IOs, INGOs, and Public Private Partnerships good infrastructure in the host city is crucial to their success. IOs need specialists, both highly skilled and medium-skilled staff, and several cooperative partners. In addition, a variety of local knowledge-based institutions, as well as suitable facilities and infrastructure will be required. To address the necessity for international schooling, as well as opportunities available for others closely associated with the core staff, these secondary facilities must be conveniently located, as well.

Attracting an IO is a complicated process that involves many actors. Success or failure depends on numerous circumstances. Candidate cities try to influence the process by offering attractive conditions and premises. Especially small to medium-sized cities are involved in the process of attracting IOs by interacting closely with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, because smaller cities do not necessarily have as many international contacts as so-called *global cities*. In addition, improving their international presence can be beneficial, as they are often at a disadvantage as the second or third city in their country. Part of the complexity stems from the involvement of different layers of government: ministries, provincial and local authorities, housing agencies, marketing departments, and divisions dealing with protocol and host state issues will all be called upon for their input. These actors form networks of largely unknown effectiveness. An IO attraction process is made even more complex as there is a lot of political maneuvering.

International diplomatic relations undoubtedly play a role; however, locally formed networks need to pay due regard to these relationships, too.

1.2 Governance Network Approach

The fact that IOs are attracted by various departments and stakeholders indicates that a network approach is worth considering when seeking to understand these processes. Collaborative governance is a field that underlies a governance network perspective. The concept of collaborative governance can be linked to the study of intergovernmental cooperation in the 1960s, while others trace its roots back to the birth of American federalism – "the most enduring model of collaborative problem resolution" (McGuire, 2006, p. 34). Others explain it as group theory and the theoretical response and evolution of Olsen's (1965) *Logic of collective action* or refer to the prisoner's dilemma and game theory (Emerson, Nabatchi, & Balogh, 2011). In collaborative governance, a focus on governance networks is often a sound point of departure. Since attracting IOs occurs in a network constellation, exploring this topic through a governance network approach seems most appropriate. Governance networks can be defined broadly enough to include actors from different levels. These different levels are municipal, provincial/cantonal, federal, and national, as well as IOs, NGOs, specialists, and knowledge centers. These governance networks are by their nature dynamic and differ in each case.

Since a clear set of conditions evident during the attraction of an IO and the reasons why these processes succeed or fail are not readily available, I have adopted an exploratory research approach. This means that this research does not have a theory testing or theory building purpose. While exploring the topic of governance networks attracting IOs, it can be useful to examine the actions of networks from different angles. Starting from the empirical complexity sketched above and the literature on governance networks, it seems useful to first focus on host policies and the experiences of those affected by such policies. This is called the *instrumental perspective*. Next, it is important to find out what narratives the involved network actors have on attracting IOs. What do *they* think is important during the process of attracting or retaining IOs? Consequently, do the IO representatives themselves have different ideas than the network attracting IOs? This is coined the *discursive perspective*. Thirdly, it is important to examine network characteristics and the positions of actors in the networks. Who are the key actors involved in the processes of attracting IOs? What is the frequency of their meetings and how does the size and structure of this network affect the outcome? This is to be understood as the *relational perspective*. These three perspectives form the basis of my exploratory approach.

There are two main advantages in using three independent perspectives. First, by looking at this topic with different theoretical perspectives, I expect to highlight contrasting accounts which, together, better explain how governance networks succeed or fail. In the work of Allison and Zelikow, who inspired me to select three perspectives, they argue that "while in the process of explaining and predicting the actions of governments, where one group of simplifications becomes convenient and compelling, it is paramount to have one or more conceptual frames at hand – a reminder of what is likely being omitted" (1999, p. 8). As Allison and Zelikow state further on: "Alternative frameworks are essential as a reminder of the limitations of whatever framework one employs" (p. 15). When independent perspectives are specified into concrete questions, these can offer the researcher a grip on the subject during an exploratory investigation.

Secondly, different criteria are often used in the field of network effectiveness studies. In the debate on how to assess network effectiveness, scholars have agreed that collaboration *alone* is not enough (Klaster, Wilderom, & Muntslag, 2017). When looking at influential studies in this field, for example those of Provan and Milward (1995), Sørensen and Torfing (2007), Isett et al. (2011), and Kenis and Raab (2020), what they have in common is that they use differing effectiveness criteria, where soft indicators such as network trust are combined with hard criteria such as goal attainment. Furthermore, in network effectiveness studies there is often a focus on collaborative policy design (Howlett, 2018), contextual factors such as 'system stability' (Provan & Milward, 1995; Provan & Kenis, 2008), and network structures and relationships (Provan & Sebastian, 1998; Raab, Mannak, & Cambré, 2015). These three frames form the basis of my exploratory approach: collaborative policy design, contextual narratives, and relational characteristics.

In short, the three perspectives are concentrated on the following. The first considers the *policy* of attracting and hosting IOs. In every host state, increasing attention is being paid to the climate for these IOs – and businesses, as well. Host policies are designed at different levels, firstly at a national level: national governments consider the themes they want to invest in, and often consider whether bringing in a new IO would contribute to the profile and image of the country. Secondly, they are designed on a municipal level: authorities work on their marketing – such as 'The Hague, *the* International City of Peace and Justice'. Policymakers try to align this profile with both regional and national ambitions. Thirdly, to attract an IO, a local network often creates a *bid book* (a brochure including answers to the IO's questionnaire) that is in line with the national *brand*. They do this with the above-mentioned policies in mind. In policy design studies, the coherence and congruence of policy goals are often presupposed (Hood & Margretts, 2007; Howlett & Mukherjee, 2018) but the question is whether this approach is sufficiently attuned to the IOs in question. A second question is whether the implementation of these policies is successful, and how the perception of IO employees already in the city affects the outcome of the attraction of a new IO.

The second perspective has more to do with the *discursive* background of the networks that attract IOs, therefore focusing more on the context of the topic. Governance networks are working on preparing bids and retaining IOs in the city, but the actions they take are based on their shared perceptual frames. What policymakers prioritize and what they think IOs consider important sometimes differs from what the IOs and their employees themselves consider to be central. This discursive scope is interesting because actions and decisions are often taken based on perceived *discourses.* Particularly in a world that changes rapidly, the assumptions made by policymakers based on perceptual frames may be incorrect (Peters, 2012; Boräng & Naurin, 2015). Through taking a discursive view, looking at the differences and similarities in discourses of the networks involved, the query becomes apparent as to whether the overlap of different groups' narratives may lead to success in attracting IOs.

The third perspective concerns the relational sphere in which the networks operate. The structure of those types of networks has been studied, especially the conditions for effectiveness of goal-oriented organizational networks (Kenis & Provan, 2009; Kenis & Raab, 2020). What has not been investigated is whether these conditions are also applicable to the networks attracting IOs. Actors in those networks lobby voting member states, collaborating with specialists and permanent representatives. The question here is how do network characteristics, such as network cooperation, centrality, and network size and diversity affect network failure or success?

In my approach it is my choice to focus on governance networks. When it comes to networks, I pay attention to different aspects, for instance policy, but also actors and their discourses. While doing this, I can also discuss politics in a way that is important to me, posing the questions: who are the participants, what is their connection with others, and what are their views, what shapes the discourse? Furthermore, all kinds of contextual factors can play a role, but I try to keep these factors as 'constant' as possible by choosing comparable cases and by looking at successfully and unsuccessfully attracted cases within the same circumstances (e.g., municipality and country).

1.3 Research problem and questions

These perspectives are derived from the governance network literature and from the empirical puzzle: how governance networks attract IOs. The mechanisms that lead to success or failure when attracting IOs seem hidden in a black box. Following the independent perspectives, I arrive at my research question and sub-questions:

> *What contributes to the successes and failures of governance networks in small to medium-sized Western European host cities in attracting International Organizations?*

Due to the broad scope of the research question, I divided this into several sub-questions:

- Sub-question 1: *How do host policy design and its implementation contribute to success?*
- Sub-question 2: *How do overlaps of perceptual frames of the networks involved contribute to success?*
- Sub-question 3: *How do network characteristics – such as level of cooperation, centrality, diversity, and size – contribute to success?*

In answering the questions, I have limited myself to small to medium-sized host cities in Western Europe, as these cities find themselves in a particularly challenging position. Firstly, large global cities are perceived as more attractive than small to medium-sized cities. Secondly, the distribution of IOs is shifting toward Eastern Europe and other parts of the world and is therefore subject to more and more competition.

1.4 International Organizations

Since my interest in attracting IOs started in 2013 when studying the peace and justice sector in The Hague, the focus is mainly on IOs with universal membership. At the time, 18 of these organizations were housed in The Hague, whereas now – in 2022 – there are 22. Many universal IOs are involved in peace, justice, and security in The Hague and the city's ambitions to participate in this field are far-reaching globally. This city has been called 'Geneva at the North Sea', which is an interesting fact, as the UN cluster in Geneva is much larger than in The Hague. Based on this interest, a comparison between medium-sized cities with the same ambition, such as Geneva, was obvious. Using this comparison as a base, it was thereby established in an early stage that regional organizations such as EU agencies would be excluded from this study.[1]

IOs are defined as "intergovernmental entities based on a multilateral treaty possessing a permanent secretariat" (Ege & Bauer, 2013, p. 135). IOs differ from INGOs in that their memberships predominantly consist of states. They have plenary meetings at

1 The relevance of the example in the Prologue to this study is still evident, as the ECMWF is an Intergovernmental Organization with EU funded branches, that needed to move due to the outcome of the Brexit negotiations. The headquarters of the climate-related IO remained seated in Reading in the UK. Although the competition between candidate cities to host EU agencies has similar mechanisms as features, there are also substantial differences. This is the main reason why these are excluded from this study.

least every ten years, as opposed to ad hoc international conferences, and they have a permanent secretariat and correspondence address, which differentiates them from regular international conferences or regimes (Rittberger, Zangl, Kruck, & Dijkstra, 2019). Traditionally, scholars distinguish four different types:

1) Universal IOs (e.g., the UN, which strives for universal membership) that aim to make global rules and try to expand their membership as widely as possible.

2) Intergovernmental IOs or IGOs that are organized as a cooperation between states. These can decide to create organizations for handling specific subjects at a governmental level, but the governments of the member states remain responsible for decision-making. Intergovernmental organizations can be subdivided into general ones, discussing general issues, and functional ones operating in narrowly defined fields. Examples of functional IGOs include the Arms Trade Treaty Secretariat in Geneva and the International Criminal Court in The Hague.

3) Closed IOs, which are intended to cover only a limited group of states. Many of these IOs address themselves to a particular region, such as the African Union, or the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) (Schermers, 1991; Fischer, 2012).

4) The Supranational Organizations with powers above the level of the state. These are, for example, the EU and some technical organizations that are legally not supranational but have such powers in their field of operation that their decisions have an almost supranational force, such as the World Meteorological Organization or the International Civil Aviation Organization (Schermers, 1991).

In my study, I focus on type 1 and 2: the universal and the intergovernmental organizations. Both types can be divided into headquarters and departments that leave or aim to leave. There is also a newer type in category 1: the Quasi-IO. This is a hybrid between an INGO and an IO. It has a non-profit character and should have permanent staff, and its work must be related to an established IO. The legal status of a Quasi-IO entails certain tax exemptions. As noted, in these considerations I steer clear of the EU, since the cities I started investigating are focused on UN organizations, IOs and Quasi IOs, and because Geneva is not part of the EU.

In the UN literature, scholars also make a distinction between the 'First UN', the arena for state decision-making, and the 'Second UN' consisting of heads of secretariats and staff members who are paid from voluntary budgets. The 'Third UN' comprises NGOs, experts, commissions, businesses, and academics (Weiss, 2013). All these international actors influence how a location is decided upon, for headquarters or other divisions. The First UN, however, is the most important in this process. These actors are permanent

representatives of their host state and the ones voting on a decision about the creation or relocation of an IO. Nevertheless, regional actors as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAG), and the EU also play a role in influencing these voting procedures (Panke, Lang, & Wiedemann, 2018). When a state is part of a regional group, it is often lobbied to take a position in a voting procedure. How this process evolves depends on the type and specialization of the IO and how the IO is planning to relocate or set up an office.

Several IOs started looking for new premises in the mid-1990s, when the economic crisis of the 1980s seeped through into the IOs' world, and again in 2008 due to the financial crisis. An unstable UN system causes more unrest, as UN departments consider moving to cheaper locations. In the years between 2008 and 2013, for instance, 21 UN and other departments relocated from Geneva alone. They moved IT, logistics, and finance branches to Turin, Budapest, Istanbul, Manila, Kuala Lumpur, Bangkok, and Nairobi, but also to New York, Copenhagen, Brussels, and Paris (Bradley, 2013). To understand why IOs settle in certain cities it is necessary to understand what their 'survival mechanisms' are during financial hardships.

When an IO (partly) relocates, the organization's bureaucracy changes. Its optimal functioning is key to an IO and in fact the whole UN system, and when an IO operates well, it also enjoys more legitimacy. This legitimacy is crucial for the relevance of an IO (Tallberg & Zürn, 2019). The choice of location helps with its optimal functioning and legitimacy. When focusing on the vitality of IOs, studies point to the physical relocation of bureaucracies as a way of improving their performance (Gray, 2018; Ireland, 2006). The vitality of IOs is linked to where they are located because autonomous bureaucracies "cannot work well without competent staff" (Gray, 2018, p. 4). A report commissioned by CARICOM, a regional organization among Caribbean countries, also argues that the convenience surrounding the location of their operation can play a prominent role in IO functioning (Bishop, et al., 2011). The location of an IO is crucial considering the requirements for qualified staff, good working conditions, and international schools for the staff's children.

Remarkably, social sciences literature has paid little attention to the geographic location element inherent in the decision-making process of IOs. Some anthropological studies deal with the relationship between an IO and its host city (Abélès, 2011; Müller, 2013; Niezen & Sapignoli, 2017; Dairon & Badache, 2021). Historical studies considered reasons for IOs being headquartered in a city (Mires, 2013; Meyer, 2013). Furthermore, there are several impact studies on UN presence in cities as New York and Geneva (Fondation Pour Genève, 2013; Fondation pour Genève, 2015; City of New York, 2016). Recent studies by Badache (2020) and her colleagues conceptualize locations of IO headquarters as 'ecosystems' (Dairon & Badache, 2021). This concept aims to capture

the complexity of what the location means for the performance of IOs. The impact of a location on an IO has been studied by these scholars, albeit to a limited extent, but not from the perspective of the cities: How do networks in cities attract IOs, and what are the mechanisms of attracting IOs from a local perspective?

1.5 Interurban competition to host IOs

One of the relevant areas of literature that deals with this topic addresses the location of corporate headquarters and economic geography, as this aims to explain why headquarters are situated where they are. Adler and Florida (2020) argue that the locations where corporate headquarters settle have changed in tandem with the rise of post-industrialism. They find that a key factor of post-industrialist geography is the clustering of human talent and economic activity. According to Porter (2000), competitive advantage is grounded in the capacity of its cluster, being the nearby firms with which it shares institutional support, suppliers, and workers. Others showed that head offices are more likely to cluster near each other (Mariotti, Piscitello, & Elia, 2010). Strauss-Kahn and Vives (2009) also identify airports as a decisive factor, beside relevant services, same-industry specialization, and taxes. Although cluster theory is one way of looking at the importance of a location, Adler and Florida (2020) argue that, nowadays, the main means firms seek are human capital or talent. They imply there is a necessity of a new paradigm for the (re)location of corporate headquarters, which is based more on talent or human capital and on the locations where these are concentrated. It is an intriguing question whether the need for a new paradigm also applies to IOs moving their headquarters and departments, or whether this is only the case for big firms.

When focusing on the (re)location of IOs from the cities' perspectives, the literature on attracting events and international conferences is relevant, in the absence of literature on cities attracting IOs. These include global summits (Death, 2011; Falk & Hagsten, 2018), or sports competitions (Salisbury, 2016). *Why* cities want to attract these events is evident: it enhances the reputation of the host city and brings economic advantages. Global summits, for instance, are often perceived as 'moments of political theatre' and are established as landmark moments of different types of global governance (Death, 2011). Why *small to medium-sized Western European cities* attract conferences and sports events is also evident. As 'hosting' is perceived to achieve a higher position in the global hierarchy, bidding for events has become increasingly attractive for cities around the globe (Nauright, 2004). Bidding has become an 'industry' for cities and is linked to city marketing. Promoting a city globally has the advantage that a certain strategic location can increase its competitiveness and position itself as an attractive center for interurban competition.

To reach a high position in the rankings to attract IOs, the following locational factors are considered crucial for the international profile of cities: performing arts, hospitality, real estate and architecture, academia, corporate services, museums, media, (other) IOs and multinationals, and finance (Grosveld, 2002). Rankings, such as Mercer's Quality of Living Index or the Global Urban Competitiveness Report, are essential to policymakers when they are working on regional innovation. Most of these benchmarks are based on locational factors. Recently, the so-called 'soft factors' (for instance, livability, social cohesion, and urban amenities) have become increasingly important (Hu, Blakely, & Zhou, 2013; Csoti & Van Haelst, 2016).

Rankings also started to measure which cities are popular loci of sustainable, peaceful, and legal global governance. Since 2010, the Global City Index, which ranks 65 cities with 25 measures on five globalization dimensions, added the dimension 'political engagement' (Kearney, 2015). This dimension measures the degree to which a city influences policymaking and dialogue by examining the number of embassies and consulates, major think tanks, IOs, INGOs, and the number of political conferences hosted by that city (Groen, 2016).

Larger cities on these benchmarks have more political weight, whereas small and medium-sized cities are perceived as objects within the changing dynamic of globalization, and they are often seen as the victims of interurban competition. Although local studies and reports consider the role of IOs in these cities, an exploration of how cities are involved in the attraction of IOs is currently lacking in this body of literature.

While studying this topic, it has become clear that attracting IOs takes place by an assembly of very different actors, working on winning such a bid. Candidate cities, in tandem with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and collaborating with other relevant actors, organize the process of attracting an IO together. In short, attracting (and retaining) an IO is the result of a multitude of actors and not of just one or a few. This makes using a network approach to this topic so interesting.

1.6 Research approach

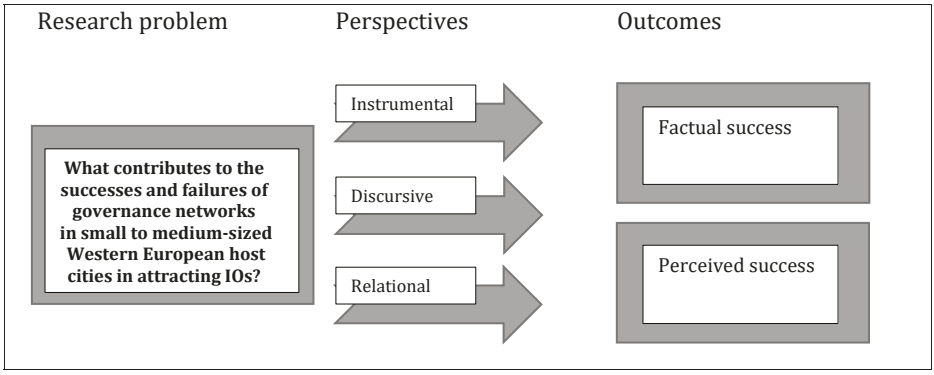
In this thesis I will use three perspectives, as explained, to investigate the successes and failures of governance networks in attracting IOs. The reason why using three perspectives is helpful is twofold. On the one hand, other network effectiveness scholars have agreed that collaboration alone is not enough and that soft factors should be combined with hard factors in analyzing network effectiveness. Also, they consider collaborative policy design, contextual indicators, and relational aspects as essential. This has, however, not been used to analyze governance networks attracting IOs. On the other hand, inspired

by the work of Allison and Zelikow (1999), the use of three theoretical frameworks can be useful to see what aspects are being omitted in each of the three perspectives. As the literature in this field indicates, collaborative policy design, contextual narratives, and network characteristics appear to be important factors in the functioning of networks. This may also be the case for attracting IOs.

While conducting this exploratory research, I seek to find out how the perspectives may explain network success or failure. Within qualitative research, process tracing is often used for investigating causal relationships, with the aim of establishing a better link between possible causes and outcomes. Whereas the goal of process tracing is to find as many steps as possible in the causal mechanism, I try to investigate whether the theoretical expectations match the outcomes found in the case studies I analyze.

Policy success is a much-debated topic, which is why I have differentiated between two success types. The two ways I look at success, considering the literature, are factual and perceived success. This will be explained in more detail in Chapter 2. My exploratory approach can be summarized as follows:

Figure 1.1 Research problem, perspectives, and outcomes



This study follows a comparative case study design throughout. When comparing cases, a researcher can decide on a large set of cases with hypothesis-testing possibilities, or a small set of cases, with less confidence but higher internal validity. In this study, I decided to use a small set of cases, to be able to explore the cases in depth and compare them properly. For the sake of comparability, I decided to select four cities with similar characteristics. Considering several objectifiable criteria, I selected Geneva, The Hague,

Vienna, and Copenhagen. For each of these cities, I then selected a successfully attracted IO and a failed attempt to attract or retain an IO.[2]

Governance networks responsible for attracting and retaining IOs are defined as "a relatively stable horizontal articulation of independent actors which interact by the means of negotiations that take place in a self-regulating framework" (Sørensen & Torfing, 2007, p. 15). Governance networks are divided into three groups: a (usually small) organizational network attracting IOs; a policy network retaining IOs; and IO representatives already established in the city. These are the three network levels I used as units of analysis.

In my work, I conducted interviews and document analysis of policy documents, IO websites, government reports, and requested insights into previous communications between the host country and IOs. The interviews (N=175) were conducted in several rounds with a total of 150 employees from IOs, municipalities, ministries, and businesses, specialists, and policy advisors. I decided to hold interviews rather than conduct a survey as it was not clear in advance which elements would be important for IOs when deciding where to settle, and because the perceptions and narratives of the people involved were to be central. These issues would have been impossible to determine with a survey.

1.7 The contribution of this work

The contribution of this work is threefold. First, it seeks to contribute to the discussion on governance network and network performance studies. While network governance literature discusses the internal composition of networks and the positive effects of good network collaboration (Isett, LeRoux, Mischen, & Rethemeyer, 2011; Raab, Mannak & Cambré, 2015; Kenis & Raab, 2020), in this work I address that a less internal orientation of networks can potentially lead to better results. This work contributes to network governance and collaborative governance theory, in that it provides a step towards a more externally oriented scope when studying networks. In doing so, it advocates a more actor-oriented approach when looking at governance networks. On a more practical note, with this book it can become more tangible as to what local governments can do to improve how they welcome and host IOs.

Secondly, this book contributes to the literature on moving IOs and what the host city signifies to IOs. While relying on many interviews in combination with other empirical

2 This study speaks of 'attracting IOs', when referring to 'attracting and retaining IOs'. These two processes are similar in that some cases were attracted to one city while other cities attempted to retain the IOs.

sources, it provides an overview of what the IO representatives consider to be important locational elements. This has been less researched in the public administrative literature and provides new information to policymakers. It also helps to further develop theorizing about the (proper) functioning of IOs. When looking at the recent work of Badache (2020), theory development on how IOs interact with their physical surroundings is quite new. Time and space have been new elements considered in the study of IOs, and this book contributes to that notion by including the appreciation of the space where IOs are located (Maertens, Kimber, Badache, & Dairon, 2021), and by proposing that the timing of attracting IOs is crucial, too.

The third contribution is on the role of medium-sized cities in the international arena. This study shows that a city's role in a lobby towards member states to attract an IO is limited. Nevertheless, it also shows that the contribution of city actors in governance networks attracting IOs can be quite significant. This has not been studied in-depth before and furthers the discussion on *city diplomacy*, an upcoming literature on local influence on a larger scale. Global problems are increasingly solved at a local level. This study adds to this discussion, by taking cities as examples of actors that affect crucial decisions, such as the (re)locations of IOs. This is a valuable contribution to the city diplomacy literature, as it focuses on cities' actions in the international arena and it lifts a tip of the veil of how city actors can be strategically involved in processes of attracting IOs (Amiri & Sevin, 2020).

In terms of relevance, this study is quite topical. While the United Nations is in an era of transformation, attracting IOs is now very important. UN departments and other IOs are relocating more frequently and therefore cities and states need to re-examine their host policies. Due to increased global competition, the topic is even more urgent for cities. Practitioners are often puzzled when an opportunity to attract an IO comes along. They need better strategies, not only for attracting IOs but also for retaining them. This study may help by providing further insight into questions related to the success or failure of these attraction or retention policies.

1.8 The outline of this thesis

Successes and failures of governance networks in the host cities are explored in this study by examining eight attracted IOs. Chapter 2 offers the theoretical background, the definitions and context of governance networks, the three perspectives, and policy success. Chapter 3 sheds light on the case selection, data collection, and operationalization of the three perspectives. Chapters 4–7 discuss the four cities and the eight selected cases from these three different perspectives. After describing the history of the city as a host to IOs, the cases and their success measures are described. Then, each perspective sheds

light on the two cases, concluding with a summary of the findings per perspective. Each city chapter concludes with a summary of the results. Chapter 8 offers a comparison between the eight cases, discussing the outcomes of the expectations and making sense of the relations between the explored cases and the possible causes of success or failure. Chapter 9 synthesizes the findings and implications for theory and practice and highlights the opportunities for further research. In the Epilogue, I discuss the outcomes of the case presented in the Prologue.