The IO BIO Project is constructing a biographical dictionary with short biographies of Secretaries-General (SGs), or other executive heads with different titles, of International Organizations (IOs). The biographical literature on SGs is limited, giving an incomplete picture of the variety of people who have held these positions and the interactions between them. IO BIO focuses on those SGs of intergovernmental organizations who have left a mark for any reason, whether good, bad or unusual. IO BIO includes deceased SGs and those who have been out of office for five years or more and most probably will not return to office as SG. The short biographies (between 800 and 3,600 words; the length is determined by level of importance, with three category levels) present an accurate and coherent description of the entire life and career of each SG. Entries provide biographical data, a balanced account of life and work, as well as references and a picture. To allow for group analyses (another IO BIO objective) authors are encouraged to pay attention to the social and professional connections of SGs. Scholars and practitioners are carrying out the IO BIO Project on a voluntary basis. More information and its Instructions for Authors, Tools to Find More Data and Databases 1 and 2 (respectively Persons and Entries, and IGOs and their SGs) are available at the website.

Are you an expert on an intergovernmental organization and its executive head(s), either as a scholar or as a (former) practitioner? Are you interested in writing a short biography of a Secretary-General? IO BIO is looking for experts willing to write an entry. To express an interest, or for more information, please contact us by e-mail: iobio@fm.ru.nl.

The Editors: Bob Reinalda, Radboud University Nijmegen, NL, Kent Kille, The College of Wooster, US
Jaci Eisenberg, Graduate Institute, Geneva, CH

IO BIO Entries Published (as of January 2019)


IOs Covered by IO BIO: A-Z

Bank for International Settlements Johan Willem Beyen (1937-39)
Commission of the European Community Sicco Leendert Mansholt (1972-73)
Council of Europe Marcelino Ortega Aguirre (1984-89)
European Bank for Reconstruction and Development Jacques de Larosière (1993-98)
European Commission of the Danube John Stokes (1856-71)
Food and Agricultural Organization Edouard Victor Saouma (1976-93)
General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade Eric Wyndham White (1948-68)
Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration Bastiaan Wouter Haveman (1962-69)
Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization Edward Colin Viner Goad (1968-73)
International Monetary Fund: Hendrikus Johannes Witteveen (1973-78), Jacques de Larosière (1978-87)
International Telegraph Union: Charles Louis Curchod (1869, 1873-89)
Latin Union: Geraldo Holanda Cavalcanti (1997-2000)
League of Nations: James Eric Drummond (1919-33), Joseph Avenol (1933-40), John (Séan) Ernest Lester (1940-46)
League of Nations Health Organization: Ludwik Witosld Rajchman (1921-39)
League of Nations High Commissioner for Refugees: Fridtjof Nansen (1921-30)
League of Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Coming from Germany: James Grover McDonald (1933-35)
League of Nations Social Affairs Section: Rachel Eleanor Crowdy (1919-31)
Nordic Council of Ministers: Per Unckel (2003-06)
Organisation for European Economic Cooperation: Robert Ernest Marjolin (1948-55), Thorkil Kristensen (1960-61)
Union of South American Nations: Néstor Kirchner (2010)
United Nations Economic Commission for Europe: Gunnar Myrdal (1947-57)
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Secretariat: Yvo de Boer (2006-10)
United Nations (International) Children’s (Emergency) Fund: Maurice Pate (1947-65), James Pinoe Grant (1980-95)