

BERNHARD WILPERT'S NETWORKING IN THE FIELD OF W&O

We will never know what exactly drove Bernhard Wilpert in his activities on the international scene, but it was obvious that promoting collaboration across national borders was one of his main interests. He initiated and promoted many projects that led to effective collaboration in Europe and beyond. Bernhard stood out by his network building activity. He established numerous networks, "loosely coupled" to each other, many of which generated a variety of other smaller networks. These networks were typically international and often multidisciplinary. Bernhard's way of working was simple and effective. Being a likeable and erudite person who communicated easily in German, English and French, he easily made friends and invited them to participate, something to which they readily agreed. Although these networks were characterized by an atmosphere of comradery and friendship they were all goal-oriented in some sense. Having meetings without some tangible and worthwhile objective in mind, made no sense to Bernhard. He usually took on a substantial part of the work himself. Here are a few of the main networks.

The ***European Network of Organizational Psychologists (ENOP)*** was established in 1980 by Charles de Wolff (Netherlands), Pieter Drenth (Netherlands), Sylvia Shimmin (UK), and Bernhard Wilpert (Germany). This "mother" network included university professors in work and organizational psychology from many European countries, personally selected on the basis of their scientific and social reputation. The network had a name and a mail address, but no formal charter. It operated informally, steered by a "coordination committee" (CoCo) of which Bernhard was the leader. The annual meetings consisted of two parts. The first and major part was a symposium dedicated to an issue with European dimensions. Examples are: Unemployment (1983), Entry into the world of work (1986), Economic and organizational change in Eastern Europe (1991), The Future of work (1994), W&O Cyberpsychology (1998), Work-life balance (2001), National differences in job satisfaction (2006). The second part was a business meeting, devoted to issues such as "membership", projects, and setting the theme of the next symposium. The meetings normally took place at the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme in Paris, which sponsored the network and made a staff member, Anne Rocha-Perazzo, available for secretarial support. The location and timing of the annual meeting probably contributed to its success. Who does not want to travel to Paris in the early spring?



Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, Paris

One of the rules of ENOP was that members should be active in some way. This is how new and smaller networks were created. Typically a group of members, sometimes expanded with outsiders, would take on a project of some kind, such as organizing an event, conducting collaborative research, writing a book, establishing educational collaboration, etc. Well known are the research networks such as Industrial Democracy in Europe (IDE), Work Socialization of Youth (WOSY), Managers of Tomorrow (MOT), Meaning of Working (MOW) and Safety in Nuclear Power Plants (SNPP). Quickly proliferating over the years the networks generated by ENOP produced a wide array of products, including symposia and workshops on a broad range of issues, comparative studies, books, educational curricula, and so on. Below are some pictures from small networks being at work in Paris. There is also a picture from one of the outcomes: the Workshop on 'Psycho-social Aspects of Employment', Sofia, Bulgaria, September 1992. More information on ENOP and its activities can be found on the ENOP website: <http://www.enop.ee/>.



A network at work in Paris.

From left to right Peter Herriot, Bernhard Wilpert, Claude Lévy-Leboyer and Jose-Maria Prieto.

Photo taken mid 1980's.



A network at work in Paris.

From left to right Gert Graversen, Robert Roe, Bernhard Wilpert.

Photo taken late 1980's.



ENOP Workshop on 'Psycho-social Aspects of Employment', Sofia, Bulgaria, September 1992 (Bernhard Wilpert in highest position)

Another well-known network, having loose ties to ENOP, was the **Network for New Technologies and Work (NeTWork)**. It was multidisciplinary in composition and was devoted to the study of the emerging new technologies in relation to work and organization. The NeTWork typically met in Schloss Homburg in Germany and was sponsored by the Werner Reimers Foundation and the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme. Every year a different group of scientists – reputed scholars as well as newcomers – was invited to discuss a particular topic. Participants committed themselves to write a paper in advance and to read all papers of others before coming to the meeting. This, of course, led to intensive and fruitful discussions. Afterwards the papers were edited and published in books and special issues of scientific journals. The NeTWork's major outlet was a book series initially published by John Wiley, titled "New technologies and work", with Bernhard Wilpert as series editor. Some titles are: *New Technology and Human Error* (1987), *Developing Skills with Information Technology* (1989) and *Distributed Decision Making* (1990). Later books appeared with Lawrence Erlbaum and Elsevier, for example: *Telematics and Work* (1994), *Safety Management. The Challenge of Organizational Change* (1998); *System safety - Challenges and pitfalls of intervention* (2002); *Knowledge sharing and learning in organizations* (2004). Like ENOP, the network operated informally, steered by a "core group" with members like Jens Rasmussen, Jacques Leplat, Berndt Bremer, Andrew Hale and Bernhard Wilpert as "speaker". It was very productive, involving more than 210 scholars from 21 countries between 1983 and 2003 only. Its success can largely be attributed to Bernhard who, working behind the screens, arranged for the location,

financial support, publications and so on. A list of the NetWork's publications can be found on: <http://www.icsi-eu.org/index.htm?http%3A//www.icsi-eu.org/english/research/NeTWork/publications.html>

A major concern for Bernhard was the education of work and organizational psychologists in Europe. From the early days on he was involved in setting up exchanges for students and professors, fully using the EU's new granting opportunities (E.g. Erasmus, Tempus). He insisted that ENOP should create possibilities for young European W&O psychologists to receive postgraduate education. This is how the **European Summer Schools for New Information Technology and Work Psychology** were born. In 1985 a small group, consisting of Bernhard Wilpert (Berlin), Maurice de Montmollin (Paris) and Robert Roe (Delft) set out to develop the concept of the summer school. Thus, a new network was created, meeting at different places (including Vercorin, Switzerland; see picture) to plan the truly European school with teachers and students from many different countries.



*Network - preparing the First Summer school - having coffee in Vercorin.
From left to right: Antonio Ruiz-Quintanilla, Vincent Rogard, Maurice de Montmollin, Robert Roe and Bernhard Wilpert.*

The school had a broad scope and depth. It covered macro, meso and micro aspects of new technologies and work, combined classes with self-study, project work and individual tutoring, but it also comprised excursions and leisure activities. The first school was held in Berlin (September 1989), the second in Tilburg (July 1992), the third in Budapest (1997), the fourth in Paris (2002). These schools were financially supported by the German Volkswagen Foundation, the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, and the

organizing universities. The success of the summer schools is demonstrated by the fact that participants established their own networks for contact and collaboration and engaged in joint research projects.



Participants of the Summer School 2002 in Paris; top right: Bernhard Wilpert

By the late 1980's another network was created consisting of ENOP members Bernhard Wilpert, Claude Levy-Leboyer, Pol Coetsier, Jose-Maria Peiró and Robert Roe. Its purpose was to take down barriers to educational collaboration in Europe and to strengthen the identity of European W&O psychology in Europe. Supported by an EU-grant this network first did a survey to examine the state of affairs regarding the education of W&O psychology in Europe. Next, it tried to define a "common core" for the education in W&O psychology in terms of scope and depth. This resulted in *ENOP Reference Model and Minimum Standards*, first published in 1994. The reference model had a great impact in Europe serving as a useful guideline in curriculum reform. In collaboration between ENOP and EAWOP (see below) it has been updated and been brought in line with the Bachelor-Master system of education and the EuroPsy European Certificate in Psychology. It is now referred to as ***European Curriculum Reference Model with Minimum Standards for W&O Psychology: Basic and Advanced*** (2008).

Bernhard had a clear preference for informal networks but he also participated in formal organizations. He was one of the founding members of the *European Association of Work and Organizational Psychology (EAWOP)*, created in Rouen (France) in 1991. Ever since, there has been a close cooperation between ENOP and EAWOP.



*Signing the foundation document of EAWOP in Rouen, 1991
From left to right: Rita Claes, Pol Coetsier, Bernhard Wilpert*