

EURO

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Inside

Euro meetings calender

Euro gold medal 1997

Euro Summer Institute 1998

General Support second semester
1998

Open letter to the European
OR Community

Noordwijk aan Zee

Euro office annual report 96-97

Euro Working Groups
Annual report 96-97

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EURO Meetings Calender

10-13/02/98	EWG	Locational Analysis : Murcia, Spain pelegrin@fcu.um.es
26-27/03/98	EWG	MCDA 47th Meeting : Thassalonika, Greece kostas@hra.ergasya.huc.gr
27-28/03/98	EWG	Hierarchical Organisational Planning : University of Mannheim, Germany schneeweiss@bwl.uni-mannheim.de http://www.bwl.uni-mannheim.de/HOP/hop.html
13-15/05/98	EWG	ECCO XI : Copenhagen, Denmark pisinger@diku.dk
14-15/05/98	EWG	Financial Modelling : Paris, France Molenaar@few.eur.nl
24-27/06/98	EWG	Decision Support Systems : Granada, Spain jelassi@insead.fr
7-9/07/98	EWG	Project Management and Scheduling : Istanbul, Turkey pms98@boun.edu.tr
12-15/07/98	EURO-k	EURO XVI: Brussels, Belgium euro@mathro.fpms.ac.be http://image.fpms.ac.be/euro16.html
12-15/07/98	EWG	Environmental Planning : Brussels, Belgium pappis@unipi.cc.unipi.gr
16-26/08/98	ES&WI	Data Envelopment Analysis, University of Warwick, UK c.s.Sarrico@warwick.ac.uk http://www.warwick.ac.uk/~bsrlu/Euro-DEAPM/
8-10/09/98	EWG	MODEST : Lancaster, UK nahorski@ibspan.waw.pl owsinski@ibspan.waw.pl
9-11/09/98	EWG	Transportation : Goteborg, Sweden bielli@iasi.rm.cnr.it
24-25/09/98 or 1-2/10/98	EWG	MCDA 48 th Meeting : Quebec, Canada Jean-Marc.Martel@fsa.ulaval.ca
8-10/10/98	EWG	Financial Modelling : Krakow, Poland Molenaar@few.eur.nl
Spring 1999	EWG	Financial Modelling : Valencia, Spain Molenaar@few.eur.nl

ES&WI : EURO Summer & Winter Institute

EURO-k : EURO Conference

EWG : EURO Working Group Meeting

EURO Gold Medal 1997

The EURO Gold Medal, the highest distinction within Operational Research in Europe, is conferred to a prominent person or a prominent institution, either for a remarkable role played in the promotion of OR in Europe or for an outstanding contribution to the OR science. For 1997, the jury was composed by Silvano Martello (Universita di Bologna, President), Costantinos Pappis (University of Piraeus), Klaus Schittkowski (Universitaet Bayreuth), Roman Slowinski (Poznan University of Technology), Luk Van Wassenhove (European Institute of Business Administration), providing a wide range of scientific expertise as well as a wide geographical spread. It was agreed to adopt the same criteria used by the 1995 jury (chaired by Graham Rand), namely to base the decision on scientific contribution (weight 60%), contribution to the OR community (weight 30%) and contribution to the intellectual community (weight 10%).

The Award was officially bestowed in Barcelona, in conjunction with the EURO XV/INFORMS XXXIV Conference (July 14-17, 1997). Upon invitation of the jury, the President of EURO, Jan Weglarz, awarded the Gold Medal, *ex aequo*, to Rainer Ernst Burkard and Jan Karel Lenstra.

Rainer Ernst Burkard

born January 28, 1943, in Graz (Austria), is Professor of Mathematics at the Technical University of Graz. He is author of about 115 scientific papers on topics of combinatorial optimisation and numerical mathematics; he is also author of two books and co-editor of three books. He has been President of the Austrian Operational Research Society, EURO Vice-president of IFORS, Editor or Associate Editor of important international journals.

Jan Karel Lenstra

born December 19, 1947, in Zaandam (The Netherlands), is Professor of Mathematics at the Eindhoven University of Technology. He is author of about 100 scientific papers on topics of combinatorial optimisation and complexity theory; he is also author of one book and co-editor of fifteen books. He has been Chairman of the Dutch Research Community in the Mathematics of Operational Research and System Theory, Chairman of the Mathematical Programming Society, Editor or Associate Editor of important international journals.

The two Laureates are world-wide famous scientists for their relevant contribution to the theory of Operational Research, and the Award will be important for the general promotion of OR within the scientific community.

EURO Summer Institute 1998 ■ Announcement

Theme: Data Envelopment Analysis - 20 years on

Location: The University of Warwick, UK

Dates: 16-26 August 1998

DEAPM - the EURO Data Envelopment Analysis and Performance Measurement Working Group - is organising a EURO Summer Institute (ESI) in DEA. EURO institutes are organised to encourage good social and working relationships among promising young (typically aged 25-35) OR scientists in Europe. The main purpose of an ESI is to establish in each OR field a network of outstanding people who will continue to work together in the future.

The ESI will take place between 16 and 26 August 1998 at the University of Warwick and up to twenty young researchers will be invited to attend. These will be drawn from applicants throughout Europe, recommended by their National OR Societies. Participation can be considered as an honour as it is limited to a group of about 20 people, who can only participate once in their career. The applicants should have significant experience in DEA and should submit a short unpublished paper to their national society along with their CV. Each society will then select up to two papers to forward to the Scientific Committee of the ESI. From all the forwarded papers, up to twenty will be selected.

At the Institute there will be lectures from invited experts, but the main focus will be for the participants to present and discuss their papers. The papers will then be developed for submission at a later date to form a special issue of *EJOR*, subject to the normal refereeing process. There will be an organised social programme to help to establish a strong network among the participants as this is this main purpose of the ESI.

The cost of the stay at the ESI (accommodation, meals, social activities, scientific programmes) is covered by EURO, the UK OR Society, and other sponsors. The participants will have to cover the cost of travel expenses. However EURO encourages national OR Societies to cover these.

Schedule:

(*):

Deadline for submission of short paper (c2,000 words) to National Society

15 April 1998:

Deadline for submission of short papers by national OR Societies to ESI

15 May 1998:

Announcement of selected participants by the Scientific Committee of the ESI

16-26 August 1998:

ESI "DEA - 20 years on"

(*): Date to be agreed by National Society

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General Support second semester 1998

Deadline for the submission of bids for the second semester of 1998. The purpose of the "General Support funds" is to support any activity related to EURO that cannot be covered by other instruments of EURO. Priority will always be given to:

- bids that give special consideration to the need of students (e.g. organiser of an event related to EURO willing to subsidise the participation of students);
- bids that give special consideration to the need of organisers of OR events in Central and Eastern Europe;
- bids that emanate from a member society of EURO or organisers of EURO sponsored events or organisers of events sponsored by a member society of EURO.

The bids are kept informal. They should however always contain a description of the project and a budget. They should mention the support that has been obtained or solicited from other sources. Although bids emanating from individuals (e.g. students willing to attend a Conference closely related to EURO) are, in principle, acceptable they

will be given a very low priority. They are approved only in exceptional cases.

Organisers of events receiving General Support funds from EURO are required:

- to publicise the support of EURO in the documents of the Conference,
- to produce a report on the use of the funds no later than 3 months after the event,
- to accompany their report by all original receipts.

Bids for "EURO General Support funds" are examined twice a year on a competitive basis. For 1998 the budget allocated to this instrument is CHF 10 000. We plan to spend half of this money for the second semester of 1998 (bids are not restricted to projects taking place during this period).

For the second semester of 1998, bids should be sent to the Secretary of EURO (before 30 April 98)
 Denis Bouyssou, ESSEC, BP 105
 F-95021 Cergy-Pontoise, France
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 E-mail: p_bouyssou@edu.essec.fr



Open letter to the European OR Community

During the last EURO XV - INFORMS XXXIV Conference in Barcelona, I have been kindly invited by the President of the Spanish OR Society, Prof. J. Pastor, to attend the traditional meeting/lunch of the presidents of the OR Societies within EURO. Of course the meal was fine and the attendance very pleasant as you may think. More seriously it was a good yet rare opportunity for talking together and becoming fully aware that many national societies are faced to similar problems and several presidents share some interrogations. Since this reunion, I have been discussing with friends and thinking about a number of issues raised there. I have written down the result of these reflections and friends have convinced me to submit them to public discussion. Of course, these are personal feelings and although I am much indebted to a number of colleagues and friends for their precious advises, nobody else but me can be held responsible for these considerations.

In my view, the main question underlying the conversations at the presidents' meeting is "What can be nowadays the role of the national societies?" Is there still any point in maintaining societies organised on a national basis? Researchers certainly see as more profitable to discuss with specialists active in the same sub-field rather than having more or less platonic conversations with colleagues working in other sub-fields just because they live in the same country. Clearly, there are many (perhaps too many) specialised or non specialised international conferences where you can meet the best specialists of any domain; so why organising national conferences? Some reasons that remain are:

- national conferences are the place where young researchers can make their first experience;
- they are a meeting place where all people interested in OR in a small geographic area can communicate; potentially, it is a factor of cohesion between fundamental research, applied academic research and industrial applications; it is important for the overall influence of OR in the economic and cultural life;
- more trivially, but perhaps the most concrete

reason, the costs for attending national conferences are lower (at least in small countries) and speakers usually express themselves in their own language which is the language spoken in the country; this eases the participation of students and industry (my own country is a notable exception to this rule since our national congresses are held in English, whereas the mother language of most participants is either Flemish or French ! Of course there are extra-scientific reasons to that).

National societies within EURO produce an amazing effort: they publish all together no less than 15 scientific journals ! Unfortunately, very few of them receive an international audience. They are often printed in a few hundred copies and distributed to the members (how many read them?); they can hardly be found in university libraries. The editorial boards of such journals struggle for attracting good papers and sometimes they are lucky; all together the general level is not so bad.

Many societies publish newsletters. Do they contain information that are both useful and cannot be found in OR/MS Today or in the British newsletter or in the EURO Bulletin? Probably but how many people read them?

Is there anything that can be done to make the national societies more lively or should we let them die and make EURO a society of individual members ? The latter question is too big an issue to be discussed here; I shall concentrate on the former and try to make a few constructive suggestions.

Most small OR societies are small because they mainly have academic members. For becoming bigger, one can try to address a wider audience, in particular trying to be more present and better perceived in companies, public sector, organisations. How to reach that goal? One way is through organising seminars and workshops where our best "communicators" disseminate information about the new techniques and methods developed in our field; this of course must be done through a discourse at the appropriate technical level and in

a practically oriented mood; it is highly desirable to let that job be done by instructors having a minimum of experience in (true) applications. I believe that there is a huge potential of demand for such seminars; suffice it to look at the programme advertised in the newsletter of the British OR Society. In these days where theoretical advances are increasingly evaluated through their applicability and the profit that can be made by using them, we have to convince that our discipline can help to save money and increase efficiency. This is a key issue if we want more resources for developing our research and if we want to attract young researchers.

Needless to say, setting up such activities requires resources, willingness, efforts and skills which are not easily available especially to small societies. Even if we don't throw ourselves into such ambitious projects, we may perhaps improve things especially by developing international co-operation. For instance, small societies could periodically organise joint events such as conferences. This can raise financial problems for non-neighbouring countries but as shown by the example of the video conference organised in Italy and Belgium during the last AIRO meeting in Saint-Vincent (Aosta, Italy), there could be intermediate solutions.

Another point is the possible co-operation in the publication of national journals. There are examples of groups of countries putting together their resources for publishing a journal; it is the case of CEJORE, jointly edited by the Austrian, Croat, Czech, Hungarian and Slovak societies. Without going so far and merge together existing journals one could suggest several actions that could make them more attractive or more widely accessible; for instance:

- advertise the contents (titles and abstracts) of the national journals in all societies within EURO (and perhaps IFORS);
- make national journals more easily available to members of the other societies within EURO;
- (and perhaps IFORS);
- re-publish a selection of the best papers published in the national journals; this could be done in a new journal that would be available at low cost to the members of all EURO societies. This journal

could have been EJOR but unfortunately EJOR is very expensive and hence cannot stand on everybody's shelves;

- (variant of the previous) offer the editorial board of the other journals to re-publish the papers that have appeared in a national journal; the selection could be done according to the perceived interests of each national community.

At least the first of the above actions could be easily undertaken; summaries of the national journals recent issues could be put on the Web site of each society (which is already the case for some of them) but also on the Web site of EURO. Why not systematically publishing also on the EURO site the announcements and programmes of the national conferences?

To conclude, a word about the role of EURO. EURO could very well play a supporting and stimulating role in the co-operation between its member societies. Of course EURO does help the national societies especially in the Eastern countries but at the same time some of the tools set up by EURO, the EURO conferences and EJOR, the journal of EURO, tend to short-circuit the national societies: why meeting at national level, whereas larger conferences at the European level are organised? Why publishing national journals whereas EJOR is widely distributed? So EURO empties the national societies of a part of their "raison d'être" but does not stimulate and help them enough to be a link between all persons potentially concerned with OR in each country. By saying this I don't want to criticise the action of EURO, in particular EJOR and the EURO conferences which are invaluable tools; I just want to draw the attention on the difficulties of the national societies, in the hope that it could open a discussion between EURO and its member societies and lead to some positive outcomes.

Marc Pirlot,
President of the Belgian OR Society

Noordwijk aan Zee

1. In the beginning we were pioneers

Let me start by asking you a question. What part did Noordwijk play in the expansion of OR in Europe?

When the EC last met in Noordwijk, it reminded me that in my youth I spent some happy years assisting in the development of OR for an international oil company. Noordwijk was the site of the last European affiliate conference which I organised in support of OR. Previous OR conferences had been held in London, Port Jerome, Antwerp and Hamburg. Many others were held in the USA.

Those early days were full of optimism. We approached our work with a pioneering spirit. We were confident that we were offering management an alternative and more profitable approach to its decision making. Since then OR in Europe has seen much change, but the basic forces which determine the success or failure of OR will remain in place.

2. What value does meat have to a vegetarian?

The amount of practical OR work available to an industry depends upon the types of activities being undertaken by that industry. Thus the value of OR to any industry is largely determined by circumstances.

In the oil industry, the fortunes of OR have been linked to the industry's own developments. Oil well production units, very large crude oil carriers, large refinery complexes, pipeline developments and off shore oil production, have each attracted OR projects. Attendant activities, like national chains of service stations and product distribution systems have also benefited from OR intervention.

3. OR has supported the oil industry on the Continent for over 40 years

Before OR training courses were well established in Continental Europe, the oil companies were actively training their Continental staff in the uses of OR.

For my company, OR started with the IBM Petroleum Conference in Endicot, N.Y. (1953) and

a survey by influential managers in our parent company who in 1955 produced a book entitled: "Linear Programming: The Solution of Refinery Problems". During the next 10 to 20 years, the advent of fast computer support enabled all the oil companies to develop these mathematical techniques into routine operational planning tools.

With the rapid expansion of oil refining in Europe, all the refinery planners were trained in the new techniques. These same people were also in the vanguard of technical computing and the two developments were mutually supportive.

4. Managers and specialists worked together to use OR?

There was enough management support to enable OR methods to be used and prove their worth. Refinery managers were the largest group of supporters. Dedicated OR specialists carried out the essential research needed to initiate each new application.

During my time as the Co-ordinating Secretary of the European Committee on Mathematical Techniques, an organisation formed by our parent company to foster the use of these new techniques by its affiliates in Europe, there were some 30 Europeans involved in OR work. They were located throughout Europe - in the UK, in France, in Germany, in Belgium, in the Netherlands, in Italy and in Denmark.

They had been recruited into the Company's research, corporate planning or refining departments, and were graduates in engineering, mathematics, economics or science. Much of the original OR expertise used in starting projects came from our parent organisation in the USA. As more projects were undertaken, the Europeans developed a working knowledge of mathematical programming, simulation and inventory control, often using special computer packages. The affiliates exchanged information on their OR projects and sent their people on OR training courses.

5. The OR specialists had a cosmopolitan approach to tackling company problems

At this time I would be hard pressed to make a complete list of the OR projects undertaken in Europe. Some affiliates had more than one OR group. One affiliate had four separate OR groups operating - in refining, supply, corporate planning and marketing. Between them these people tackled a wide range of company projects.

In addition to the single, refinery planning models which were produced for each location, there were crude oil allocation models built which represented multi-refinery operations. Such models were used to co-ordinate the distribution of crude oils to refineries located in a number of different locations.

Several affiliates built marketing distribution models which were used to reduce the cost of distributing finished oil products to customers. A common feature of such models was the attendant work of setting up customer demand areas and their requirements for each petroleum product.

As most of the refineries received their crude oil by sea, marine terminal simulators were produced and used to improve the operations. Complications arose in the operation of marine terminals when a new breed of super tankers was built of a size which placed new demands upon the existing berthing facilities.

Many other OR studies were undertaken, including ship, truck and pipeline scheduling procedures. A variety of simulators were built to represent the operation of road and rail loading racks.

In marketing, the emphasis was on solving outstanding problems in the allocation of salesmen to customers, aspects of product pricing and the selection of service station sites. All-in-all the OR people assumed a cosmopolitan approach to their work and became involved in many aspects of the Company's operations.

6. Like the Vicar of Bray, OR people need to change their alliances

You may recall the oil crisis of 1974 when oil prices quadrupled and the oil industry was thrown into temporary disarray. Although OR survived the crisis, the subsequent reduction in the number of refineries throughout the world led to a general reduction in staff numbers, including OR people.

Some of the OR people moved into management. A few switched to other industries, and some retired. Many of the younger OR people moved into computer systems groups - an area of work which continued to grow. They worked on management information systems, and some provided traditional OR support.

The systems developed by the OR people continued to function as part of the routine planning operations. A new job was created - the data co-ordinator.

7. The conclusions

Although the oil industry experience may not be fully representative of other industries, I believe it provides a useful guide to the minimum conditions for OR to flourish in an industry. These are :

- The industry is prospering - and reviewing its resources and procedures.
- It's senior managers are backing the OR approach.
- OR specialists are available with practical experience.
- There is a sense of urgency prevailing.

Finally, unlike subjects such as accountancy and law, the demand for OR in any industry is not constant. The wave of potential OR work which passes through an industry is linked to other critical developments. Like a surfer, the OR person must learn to spot each wave, jump on it and make a contribution quickly.

E. A. Field

EURO Office annual report July 96 - July 97

A special effort has been given to design the structure and to build a new EURO web site. Other tasks, such as the editing, hard copy printing and distribution of the EURO Bulletin, the EURO Brochure, the EURO Working Groups annual report and the EURO Directory have been carried out.

The EURO web site:

(http://www.ulb.ac.be/euro/euro_welcome.html) has been completely rebuilt, keeping the previous location. Frames have been used in order to structure the information around five items as shown in the following table:

EURO ?	EURO structure	Education and research	EURO conferences and publications	OR related information (link with other web sites)
What is OR ?	The EURO Executive Committee	Handbook of OR-MS courses in Europe	EURO calendar (in appendix)	General interest
What is EURO ?	The EURO Working Groups	EURO Working Groups	EURO-k conferences	Organisations
What is EURO doing?	The EURO Members Societies	EURO Summer and Winter Institutes	EURO-k conferences thesaurus	Open positions
EURO calendar (in appendix)	The EURO Statutes	EURO Gold Medal	Mini EURO conferences	Conferences
EURO supports	The EURO Office	European initiatives	EURO prime conferences	Publications
Organizing a EURO activity	IFORS		Eastern European conference initiative	
Joining EURO	Joining EURO		EJOR	
			EURO prize for the best applied paper	
			EURO Bulletin	

The EURO-k conferences thesaurus is a new tool based on the EURO-k conferences data and processed in order to induce and relate OR disciplines, key-words, authors and address, papers. The EURO XIV conference thesaurus has been produced in such a way and integrated in the International Abstracts OR Classification scheme.

Four issues of the EURO Bulletin have been distributed :

- Volume 5.2 : Summer '96 : Valerie Belton : Ways of making friends and influencing people; Call for papers, 15th ESI in Italy, E. Field : sustainable OR.
- Volume 5.3 : Fall '96 : EURO Brochure, Christoph Schneeweis : a proposal for a EWG on hierarchical organisation planning; Call for papers.
- Volume 5.4 : Winter '96 : Jan Weglarz : A message from the President Elect; EURO Directory; Call for papers.

- Volume 6.1 : Spring '97 : Paolo Toth : A report from the Past President; E. Field : Brainstorming to success; A. Tenenbaum : European initiatives for R&D funding; A. Tenenbaum : Some on going ESPRIT projects which be of interest for OR; A. Tenenbaum : your participation to the European 4th framework programme; R. Bisdorff : Organising a Mini EURO Conference; Call for papers.

A new edition of the EWG annual report 1996-97 and of the EURO Directory has been prepared in order to be distributed in Barcelona at the EURO XV Conference.

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http://www.ulb.ac.be/euro/euro_welcome.html

