

Letter from the President

I am writing this at the end of a momentous year in terms of world politics – and with that in mind, let us hope that 2002 sees peace and progress in many of the world’s most troubled areas.



WAPOR President
 Brian Gosschalk

It has also been an eventful year for WAPOR, a year in which the Council has focused on rebuilding our organisational infrastructure in order to provide the necessary foundation for future growth and development. Let me highlight just a few of these:

- We will shortly be consulting with all members on the first revision to the Constitution for many years. This may not seem terribly exciting, but the Constitution no longer reflects our changing needs, and Wolfgang Donsbach and Frits Spangenberg have done an excellent job in proposing (in my view) sensible amendments – a big thank you to both of them on behalf of WAPOR.
- A second area, which needed to be sorted out, was the Secretariat and our administrative systems. Renae Reis has really got stuck into sorting out the backlog she inherited and in 2002 we can finally look forward to having a proactive Secretariat to support the Council.
- And third, Allan McCutcheon is leading efforts to reinvigorate the system of National Representatives, and thereby our membership more widely. Again, this is a long overdue task.

There are also developments with our Code of Conduct, funding, relationships with ESOMAR and ISSC, the website and the seminar programme which are in different stages of implementation.

It is with great sadness that I learned of the recent death of H el ene Riffault, a founding member of WAPOR. She was a wonderful, inspiring example to young researchers; I first met her in Bonn in 1980, when she and Jean Stoetzel talked with great dignity about recent difficulties and disputes within the polling community in France.

H el ene was wise, had great personal integrity and was a tireless champion of high quality, international research.

H el ene was wise, had great personal integrity and was a tireless champion of high quality, international research. She was a worthy winner of WAPOR’s highest accolade, the Dinerman Prize, and her influence on many of us was considerable. A full copy of the Dinerman citation for H el ene is available on our Website, for those who would like to see this. She will be sadly missed.

In November, Kathy Frankovic, Frits Spangenberg and I had the pleasure of representing WAPOR at a regional seminar in Warsaw. It was organised by Krzysztof Zag orski, our National Representative for Poland, and co-sponsored by the Friedrich Ebert Institution and Batorego Foundation.

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The Central European Conference of WAPOR in Warsaw, November 8-11, 2001

by Hynek Jerábek

The Central European regional conference of the World Association for Public Opinion Research in Warsaw focused on the subject 'Public Opinion Research in a Period of Democracy-Building.' At the conference a total of 24 papers were presented on several groups of subjects.

The introductory block of presentations, which were conceptually divided according to subject focus, was opened by Brian Gosschalk of Great Britain, the President of WAPOR, with a paper entitled 'The Role of Survey Research in a Democratic Society.' Antoni Sulek of Poland, Vladas Gaidys of Lithuania, and Aare Kasemets of Estonia followed with papers underscoring the most important factors, agents and functions involved in the formation of public opinion in the societies of the 'new democracies.'

The large majority of papers focused on the development of public opinion research in the specific countries of Central and Eastern Europe

The large majority of papers focused on the development of public opinion research in the specific countries of Central and Eastern Europe, and on an overview of the results of the work performed by the national agencies for public opinion research aimed at participants from the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Among

these, a most interesting paper was presented by Andrei Vardamacki, a sociologist who for eight years has been conducting high-quality representative research on public opinion in Belarus in conditions incomparable to those of the other participating countries. Developments from the 1990s were presented by participants for their respective countries: Croatia (Ivan Siber and Nenad Zakosek), Ukraine – with several presentations - (Iryna Bekeshkina, Valery Khmelko, Evgeny Kopatko, Natalia Pohorela), Poland – with two presentations - (Krzysztof Zagorski, Machal Wenzel), Slovakia (Olga Gyarfasowa), Romania (Mircea Kivu), Bulgaria (Emilia Chengelova), and Hungary (Matild Sagi). Another part of this large group of papers was devoted to the specific results both of the national and international research on public opinion. In the international comparison, of

particular notice was the Polish-Hungarian-Czech comparison project. The project was developed by the Polish colleagues, led by the organiser Krzysztof Zagorski, and also involved the participation of the Czech CVVM. Some of the results from CVVM were introduced by Eliška Rendlová. Among the subjects in the presentation of the national results, the interesting interpretation of the changes in the composition within the political arena and the most recent results from the elections in Bulgaria, presented by Miroslav Yanov, are particularly worth mentioning.

Kathy Frankovic of the USA and Katarzyna Staszynska of Poland presented papers dealing with the historical development of public opinion research, first in the context of the development of American democracy and second in connection with the development of the research market.

The fifth group of presentations featured papers that were interesting particularly from the methodological point of view. This group included the presentation of Robert Tardos of Hungary on declining voter participation in Hungary. Another paper by Marina Krasilnikova on a project dealing with the formation of a system of coefficients/indices drawn from public opinion research data tracing the development of the social perception of the situation in Russia and their use in the form of time series/chronologies. The presentation by Jan Herzmann also aroused attention, dealing with the three sources of threat to public opinion research – politics, mass media, and the Internet. A joint presentation by Hynek Jerábek and Eva Veisová was devoted to international internet research on communication behaviour and the immediate reactions of people after the September 11 attacks on the USA. This paper dealt with the problem of how the results of international Internet research may be interpreted in order to prevent research of this type from becoming the kind of threat – already mentioned here – to scientific quality, representativeness, and traditional ways of conducting public opinion research.

Following the experience of the Warsaw conference it is possible to warmly recommend membership in the World Association of Public Opinion Research (WAPOR) to colleagues in the Czech Republic. The President of WAPOR, Brian Gosschalk, invited all present at the conference to do just this. He

thanked the Polish organisers (Krzysztof Zagorski, Machal Wenzel, and Andrzej Mokrzyzewski) for their excellent work and emphasised the high level of professionalism of the research conducted in Central and Eastern Europe, the results of which were presented at this conference. Thanks also should be extended to the Institute for Public Opinion Research (CBOS) in Warsaw and the foundations Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Open Society Fund, and Fundacja Batorego. Without their material and organisational support, the participation of so many researchers from Central and Eastern Europe at such a financially demanding event would have been practically impossible. Frits Spangenberg of Holland drew participants' attention to the International Journal for Public Opinion Research issued by WAPOR in English. The journal is distributed

among all WAPOR members and is the main financial target of membership contributions. It contains articles with a scientific orientation from the field of public opinion research, reviews, annotations of books from related fields, and reports. The Newsletter issued by WAPOR in both print and electronic form is the fastest source of news and contains up-to-date reports and information on up-coming and just completed conferences. The Newsletter can be found on the WAPOR website, together with information on membership in this useful international organisation: www.wapor.org or www.unl.edu/WAPOR/.

November 29th 2001
Hynek Jerábek

Editor's Note:

The following paper was submitted by Ms. Azra Abdul Cader for the 2001 Annual Conference held in Rome. The submission garnered Azra the Elizabeth C. Nelson Prize. You can read more about the Nelson Prize in the 3rd Quarter newsletter, available on our website.

Pulse of Peace in Sri Lanka

By Azra Abdul Cader

It is undeniable that the ethnic conflict and the Northeast war have worn out a majority of the Sri Lankans. Though endless studies have been conducted on various facets of this conflict, none have attempted to capture the fluctuations in public perception over a period of time, and hence lacked the feature of capturing changing trends in opinion on the peace process in Sri Lanka. Social Indicator, a Sri Lankan based social research organisation, identified this vacuum and the Peace Confidence Index study (PCI) is a solution to this void. The study will be conducted every other month, in order to gauge changes in public opinion towards the peace process with the passing of time and shifts in the political climate. Such information collected over a period of time will provide an opinion barometer of the Sri Lankan polity and ensure the opinions of the masses are given its due importance.

Opinion on perceptions of peace: In comparison to two earlier polls, there has been an increase in perceptions of those who feel that peace means feeling safe (10.4% May, 15.3% in June and 16.2% in September). Disturbingly, a majority of the Sri Lankan population reports not knowing when there will be peace in Sri Lanka, a belief that has been on the increase during all three waves, indicating the public's growing pessimism in relation to this issue.

Interestingly, a comparison of polls in June and September elucidate a slight slide in support of peace talks for establishing peace in Sri Lanka. In a similar fashion, support for a war effort too has declined. Overall, 7.1% of the population feels that peace can be achieved through the devolution of power, plotting an increase from the May (6.5%) and June (4.7%) polls, but overall a doubtful picture gets portrayed with a majority of the Sri Lankans feeling that neither party can achieve victory.

The results flag a drastic slump (from 50.2% in May and 53% in June, to 43.8% in September) in agreement that the Government is committed to bring peace through talks. An increase in views of uncertainty and disagreement portrays a negative or even suspicious picture amongst the people. A similar pattern gets reflected in relation to the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam]. There is a display of disbelief in the LTTE's commitment to bringing about peace through talks with a fall in agreement in comparison to previous polls (from 15.8% in May and 17.3% in June, to 12.9% in September), establishing clear disagreement that signifies people's feelings towards the LTTE's commitment to bring about peace through talks.

Among Sri Lankan's, 46.6% of the population

Pulse of Peace in Sri Lanka

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feels that the government should declare a ceasefire [in order to facilitate] peace talks. Also, while a notable majority think the Government should not change its position in de-proscribing the LTTE to commence peace talks, a stand that remains the same in comparison to the June poll.

The findings clearly indicate that there is overall approval (77.3%) of the Government and the LTTE going in for talks. This certainty appears to shift, however, when the people are given a condition that would lead the Government and the LTTE to go in for talks, such as peace talks ensuing a ceasefire or whilst fighting. Though a majority of Sri Lankans approve of the Government and the LTTE going in for talks after a ceasefire, a notable proportion disapprove of this condition, which is further endorsed by a majority disapproving of talks amongst the two parties whilst fighting.

For most Sri Lankans, the September 11th attack was not so far from home that its impact failed to reach local shores. While 94.2% of the population is aware of the terror attacks on America, a majority feel that these attacks will be disadvantageous to the LTTE in their fight against the Government forces, and believe it will be advantageous to the Government forces in their fight against the LTTE.

Thus, the study exemplifies ethnic harmony to be the most prominent meaning given to peace by Sri Lankans, though juxtaposing the previous two polls indicates there is a rise in opinion that peace means feeling safe. Further, a majority of Sri Lankans cannot place a timeframe on when they believe there will be peace in Sri Lanka--an increasing view with the progress of the three surveys illustrating growing gloom amongst people. But peace talks appear to be the most acceptable solution to bring about peace in Sri Lanka, though the September poll indicates a downward slide with support for a war effort declining. While the findings indicate approval among Lankans of the Government and the LTTE going in for talks, this support appears to waiver when combined with conditions that would lead to such talks. Moreover, when compared with previous polls, a majority feel that neither party can achieve total victory portraying a negative picture, stipulating that people are abandoning the view that either party can achieve victory. People also feel that the Government should not differ its position in de-proscribing the LTTE to commence peace talks. A viewpoint that remains the same in the preceding polls, and one that gets reiterated with the overwhelming awareness of the September 11th terror attacks in America, have most people feeling that these attacks will be disadvantageous to the LTTE in their fight against the Government forces.

The Promised Photos from WAPOR's Conference in Rome



Above: Martyn Lampert (Netherlands), Allan McCutcheon (USA), Mike Traugott (USA), and Mari Harris (South Africa) at Piazza di Spagna.



Right: Mari Harris in the great Coliseum



Left: Bob Worcester (UK), Hans Zetterberg (Sweden), and Fred Turner (USA); Mahar Mangahas (Philippines) being congratulated by Tom Smith (USA).



Philippine Ambassador to Italy Philippe Lhuillier, Dr. Elizabeth Nelson, Linda Luz Guerrero, Mahar Mangahas, Azra Abdul Cader, and Pradeep Peiris.



Liz Nelson (UK) relaxes in the lounge of the Hotel Boscolo.



Wolfgang Donsbach (Germany) presents the Dinerman Award to Mahar Mangahas (Philippines).



Mike Traugott (USA) and Frits Spangenberg (Netherlands) enjoy an after-dinner cigar.

Fourth WAPOR Seminar on Survey Quality Scheduled Call for Papers for *Cadenabbia IV*

What has already become a tradition will be continued in the year 2002: The World Association for Public Opinion Research (WAPOR) will hold its fourth seminar in

“Quality Criteria in Survey Research”

in Cadenabbia at the Lake of Como in Northern Italy. The dates have been set for
June 27 to 29, 2002

with a get-together on Thursday, June 27, and sessions on the two subsequent days ending on Saturday, June 29, at noon. This is already the fourth seminar on this topic since 1996, always held at the same location, the beautiful castle “Villa La Collina” and conference center overlooking the Lake of Como.

Cadenabbia IV will respond to some recent technological changes in the survey technology and at the same time deal with the old question of survey validity. This call for-papers wants to stimulate particularly submissions on the following areas:

- Quality aspects in new survey modes: Surveys via internet and email
- Psychology behind survey measurement and responses
- Why is it so easy to ask bad questions?
- The public quality of surveys: The role of the media
- Are deliberate respondents our dinosaurs? Getting people engaged in polls

As in previous years, it is not so much the technical aspects of quality (like sampling methods or data analysis) but the intellectual and content related aspects that we are interested in. Papers at previous seminars dealt with, for instance: quality concepts for questionnaire testing, the search for good indicator questions, the relevance of cognitive research for question wording, or problems of comparative research. In short, it is the degree of validity, appropriateness, and innovativeness of our research designs and questionnaires which we are focusing on in the Cadenabbia seminars.

Proposals should be sent to the convenor of the seminar by February 1, 2002. They should contain an extended abstract of 2 to 4 pages, indicating the problems dealt with and the methods used. A full paper is requested eight weeks before the seminar. There will be an electronic book of papers for all participants. For abstracts fax and email are welcome, for the full paper a hard copy and a data file are required.

The schedule will be almost identical to the last seminars: Arrival and get-together cocktail party followed by dinner on Thursday, June 27; full seminar day on Friday; morning sessions, closing lunch and departure on Saturday June 29. Participants are invited to come earlier and/or stay on for another day at extra costs.

The Villa La Collina, property of the German Konrad Adenauer Foundation, overlooks Lake Como in Northern Italy. It is one of the most beautiful places to find for seminars in Europe. Germany’s former chancellor Adenauer spent his vacation in the old villa. Modern conference facilities and fine Italian cuisine have their home in the new building.

The *package* for registration, full accommodation for two nights (either in the foundation or in a nearby 3-star-hotel at lakeside), breakfast, two dinners and two lunches will be in the area of \$500. The final package price will be announced in the next mailing to members and on the WAPOR webpage. Space is limited in Cadenabbia. The seminar room can only accommodate about 50 people. Reservations will start right after this announcement, so please mark the dates in your calendar.

Please send abstract to the convenor:
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55th Annual WAPOR Conference ***CALL FOR PAPERS***

St. Petersburg Beach, Florida
May 14 to 16, 2002
Extended Deadline: February 15, 2002

The World Association for Public Opinion Research (WAPOR) will hold its 55th annual conference at the TradeWinds Beach Resorts and Conference Center in St. Petersburg Beach, Florida from May 14 to May 16, 2002.

‘This is a year in which WAPOR and the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) hold a joint conference and share in many activities. The dates of the AAPOR conference are from May 16 to 19. This is a call for proposals for papers, panels, and roundtable concepts on any issue in public opinion, survey research, or other modes of studying public opinion for next May’s conference.

Given the nature of WAPOR’s membership, we are especially interested in topics that are directed to issues of comparative public opinion or that stress data collection issues across countries or political systems. Especially in the wake of the events of September 11 in New York and Washington DC, we are interested in papers or panel proposals that appropriately reflect issues of public opinion about the events or the responses to them that analyze differences across national, ethnic, or cultural lines. An attempt will be made in the development of the program to construct panels that reflect this interest, and there will be joint sessions co-sponsored with AAPOR that will also do this.

As always, there is an interest in receiving proposals for research reports on methodology related to the study of public opinion, including the application of new technologies to data collection and analysis, interviewing and response rates, mode effects, measurement errors and ways of minimizing them, sample design and response rates, and non-survey methods of data collection.

Proposals should be submitted to the conference chair by the contact information provided below. *Members should use the inserted form for submission or download from <http://www.unl.edu/wapor>.* Forms must include:

Contact information (name, email and mailing addresses, telephone and FAX numbers), title, abstract of no more than 300 words, and keywords describing the content of the presentation. Authors are also asked to indicate whether they will need any special audiovisual equipment for their presentation. Submission of proposals by email is preferred.

Proposals are due by February 15. Proposals will be evaluated and notices of acceptance sent out by March 1. Final copies of papers accepted for the conference will have to be submitted electronically by April 1. To submit the form or if you have any questions concerning the conference or the proposal submission process, please contact the Conference Chair:

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Letter from the President

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There were 23 papers from 13 different Central and Eastern European countries and we were struck by the extremely high standard of papers and discussion. There was a lively exchange of ideas and contacts were established in a way which was a credit to the Conference organizers and WAPOR. If you would like further information on this seminar, which is reported on more fully in this Newsletter, please get in touch with Krzysztof Zagórski or me.

In reviewing 2001, my personal memories will be of the Warsaw Seminar, which I found inspiring and uplifting, and of Rome for our Annual Conference, where another high quality conference took place. It was a delight to see Dr. Mahar Mangahas receive the Dinerman Prize in the presence of some of his family and friends – a well-deserved award for his untiring efforts in championing the cause of survey freedom in the Philippines.

On a personal note, I was also touched by the kindness of Professor Elizabeth Noelle-Neumann who made the long journey from Germany to Rome, knowing that she could only be with her WAPOR friends and colleagues for a short while, but who found the time to give me an inscribed copy of the latest edition of her classic work on the Spiral of Silence.

Overall, WAPOR ends 2001 in better shape than we started it. I am confident that, with your support, the Association will continue to grow and develop in 2002.

Brian Gosschalk, WAPOR President

Calendar

The 5th Annual Nebraska Symposium on Survey Research focusing on “The Science of Election Polling” has been set for May 2-4, 2002

Co-Sponsored by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Gallup Research Center and The Gallup Poll
To be held at The Gallup Organization,
901 F Street, NW, Washington, DC

For further information call:

Dr. Allan McCutcheon at 402-458-2035 or email at amccutcheon1@unl.edu or www.unl.edu/unl-grc/

*Please let us know your upcoming events.
Deadline for 1st quarter newsletter event
submissions is March 1st.*

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Other Upcoming Events

IAMCR Section Psychology and Public Opinion

Call for Papers for the Barcelona conference July 21-26, 2002

The International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) has renamed the old sociology and social psychology section to “Psychology and Public Opinion” in order to invite also scholars in these particular and increasingly important fields. The theme for the annual conference in Barcelona 2002 is ‘Intercultural Communication.’ As always, there will be special papers on the conference theme and papers on any other topics. Particularly, the section would like to invite papers on the following topics:

- Images and stereotypes of nations and people
- Post postmaterialism: Values and value change in the world
- Information technology as hope or threat: The digital divide in an international perspective
- The terror of September 11 in the media and in the heads of people

Deadline for the submission of papers is February 15, 2002. Submissions must contain an extended abstract. Describe the topic and the research design. Follow the procedures as spelled out on the conference web page (www.barcelona2002.org). The acceptance of papers will be announced by March 15, 2002.

Send abstracts to: Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Donsbach
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WORLD ASSOCIATION FOR PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH

Proposal/Abstract Submission Form Annual Conference TradeWinds Resort, St. Petersburg Beach FLORIDA May 14 to 16, 2002

Please provide the following information for each submission of a proposed paper or panel for the 2002 Conference.

Contact Author:

LastName: _____
FirstName: _____

Mailing Address:

Phone Number: _____ FAX Number _____

Email Address: _____

Type of Submission (check the category that applies):

Paper Panel/Roundtable

Proposal Title:

Keywords for Topic:

Paper Abstract/
Panel Proposal Topic
(No more than
300 words)

Special audio-visual requests. Check the categories that apply; an assessment of hotel charges for some equipment will have to be made:

Data projector VCR Audiotape player 35 mm. Slide projector

Paper Abstract/
Panel Proposal Topic
(No more than
300 words)

Names of ALL the additional authors that you would like to be included in the conference program:
 First co-author: _____
 Second co-author: _____
 Third co-author: _____

This form can be submitted to the 2002 Conference Chair, at:

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Email submissions are preferred.