



International
Labour
Organization

PEROSH

An effective regional network

Mr Claude Donald Loiselle

International Labour Organization loiselle@ilo.org

Pr Jorma Rantanen, MD, PhD

Director General emeritus, Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, FIOH

Visiting Scientist, Department of Public Health / Occupational Health, University of Helsinki

jorma.h.rantanen@gmail.com

PEROSH 20th Anniversary, Stockholm, Sweden

6 September 2023

▶ **PEROSH: An effective regional network**

Modernizing ILO international networking

- ▶ Type of engagement in int'l collaboration
- ▶ Objectives sought when engaging
- ▶ Criteria considered
- ▶ Factors enabling engagement

Characteristics of productive networks and future perspectives

- ▶ Typical functions of networks
- ▶ Analysis of networks cases
- ▶ Prerequisites for effective networking
- ▶ Institutional benefits from networking
- ▶ Profile of an ideal network
- ▶ Future of professional networks
- ▶ New needs for OSH networking in time of growing uncertainty

▶ Modernizing ILO international networking practices in OSH

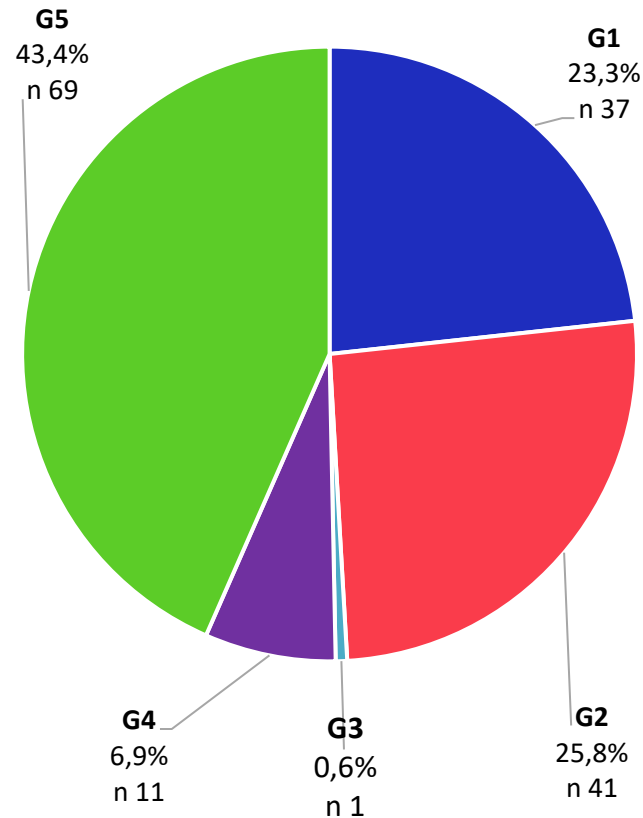
Enhancing international collaboration with and among OSH knowledge agencies, institutions, and organizations (AIOs) first required to **understand how OSH research is organized**.

A global survey of AIOs and a multiple case study analysis to **understand how and why they collaborate internationally**.



▶▶ ***AIOs, regional and thematic OSH networks to become “Partners for Prevention”***

ILO Global Survey of OSH AIOs (2016-17)

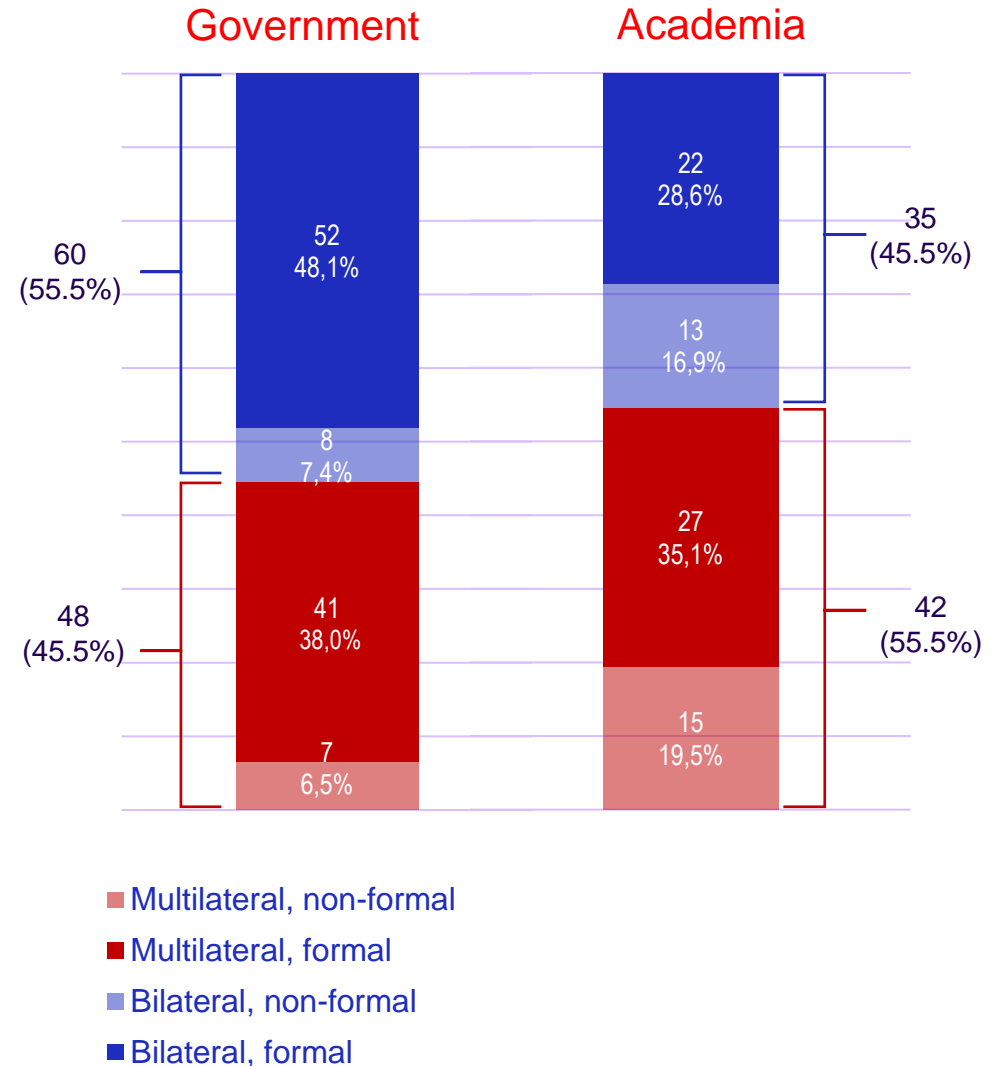


Coverage

- Key functions
- Scope of work
- Governance and management
- Research priorities, topics and outcomes
- Organization and delivery of services
- Practices in public awareness-raising
- International networking
- Resources
- Possible cooperation with ILO

Type of engagement in international collaboration on OSH knowledge

- On average, 3/4 of international collaborations are formal
- G1 and G2 from HIC primarily engage in Multilateral-Formal (43.8%) international collaboration arrangements
- LMIC show higher % of bilateral collaborations (81.8%), whereas approximately 75% for UMIC and 40.7% for HIC



Objectives sought by individual AIOs when engaging in networking

(Sorted by highest to lowest value of average score, maximum 4)



OBJECTIVES	Average	G1	G2	HIC	UMIC	LMIC
Strengthen our capacities *	3.125	3.059 *	3.200 *	2.854 *	3.769 *	4.000 *
Obtain information on latest OSH knowledge development **	2.469	2.647 **	2.267 ***	2.585 ***	2.231 **	1.857 ***
Develop new partnerships ***	2.344	2.324 ***	2.367 **	2.610 **	1.538	2.143 **
Provide technical contributions	2.063	2.176	1.933	2.268	2.153	1.286
Promote our work	2.031	2.118	1.933	1.756	2.692 ***	1.857 ***
Influence policy decision-making	1.625	1.559	1.700	1.854	1.385	0.286
Achieve economies of scale	0.594	0.618	0.567	0.610	0.769	0.286

N, total=64
respondents

G1=34/37
G2=30/41

HIC=41/49
UMIC=13/17
LMIC=7/8

* most significant ** second *** third

Criteria considered by AIOs when engaging into international collaboration

(Sorted by highest to lowest value of average score, maximum 4)

CRITERIA	Average	G1	G2	HIC	UMIC	LMIC
Sharing common goals *	3.063	3.294 *	2.793 *	3.250 *	2.385 **	2.857 *
Clarity of objectives and/or programme of work **	2.619	2.618 **	2.621 **	2.800 **	2.462 *	2.429 ***
Global character of challenges ***	2.413	2.206 ***	2.655 ***	2.425 ***	2.231 ***	2.429 ***
Complementary technical capacity	1.937	1.941	1.931	1.900	1.538	2.714 **
Organizational capacities of other members	1.127	0.618	1.724	1.125	1.615	0.714
Complementary country experience	1.095	1.265	0.897	1.025	1.615	0.429
International relations policy	0.921	1.206	0.586	0.775	1.462	0.429
Common working language	0.476	0.529	0.414	0.450	0.615	0.571
Notoriety of other member organizations	0.413	0.176	0.690	0.400	0.692	0.143
Geographical proximity	0.397	0.529	0.241	0.450	0.385	0.143

N, total=63
respondents

G1=34/37
G2=29/41

HIC=40/49
UMIC=13/17
LMIC=7/8

* most significant ** second *** third

Factors enabling engagement into int'l collaboration, networking and partnerships

(Sorted by highest to lowest value of average score, maximum 4)

ENABLING FACTORS	Average	G1	G2	HIC	UMIC	LMIC
Expertise of our staff	3.148	2.939 **	3.393 *	3.368 *	3.333 *	2.000 ***
Clarity of our role	2.623	3.091 *	2.071	2.658 **	3.000 **	2.286 **
Our autonomy of action	2.049	1.727	2.429 ***	2.000 ***	2.583 ***	1.857
Availability of financial resources	2.033	1.636	2.500 **	1.842	2.500	2.857 *
International collaboration in the mandate	1.443	1.273	1.643	1.763	0.917	0.571
Political support to collaborate internationally	1.279	1.818 ***	0.643	1.342	1.583	0.571
Adequate internal organizational setting	1.016	1.091	0.929	1.026	0.917	0.857
Availability of equipment	0.820	0.970	0.571	0.605	1.167	1.857
High speed internet	0.230	0.242	0.214	0.263	0.167	0.286

N, total=61
respondents

G1=33/37
G2=28/41

HIC=38/49
UMIC=12/17
LMIC=7/8

* most significant ** second *** third

► Analysis of six regional OSH networks

ALASEHT – Asociación Latinoamericana de Seguridad e Higiene en el Trabajo

ASEAN-OSHNET – Association of Southeast Asian Nations Occupational Safety and Health Network

BSN – Baltic Sea Network on Occupational Health and Safety

IAPRP – Interafricaine de Prévention des Risques Professionnels

PEROSH - Partnership for European Research in Occupational Safety and Health

SEENWH – South-East European Network on Workers' Health



Characteristics of productive networks and future perspectives



Typical functions of networks

Enrique Mendizabal (2006)

Filtering

Allow unmanageable amounts of information (about people, experts, events and facts) to be organised and used in a productive way.

Amplifying

Allow to amplifying a message by disseminating stories and ideas to a wider audience.

Resourcing

Offer a channel to provide members with the resources they need to carry out their main activities and may involve the distribution of goods and services from within the network (member led) or from outside the network (acting as brokers).

Convening

Bring together different individuals and groups. In the case of research, a convening network would bring researchers together to plan and carry out research; it could, for instance, convene researchers from different nationalities or disciplines. A convening network can also bring together users of the products or services of networks or their members, for instance, policymakers looking for advice or ideas from researchers.

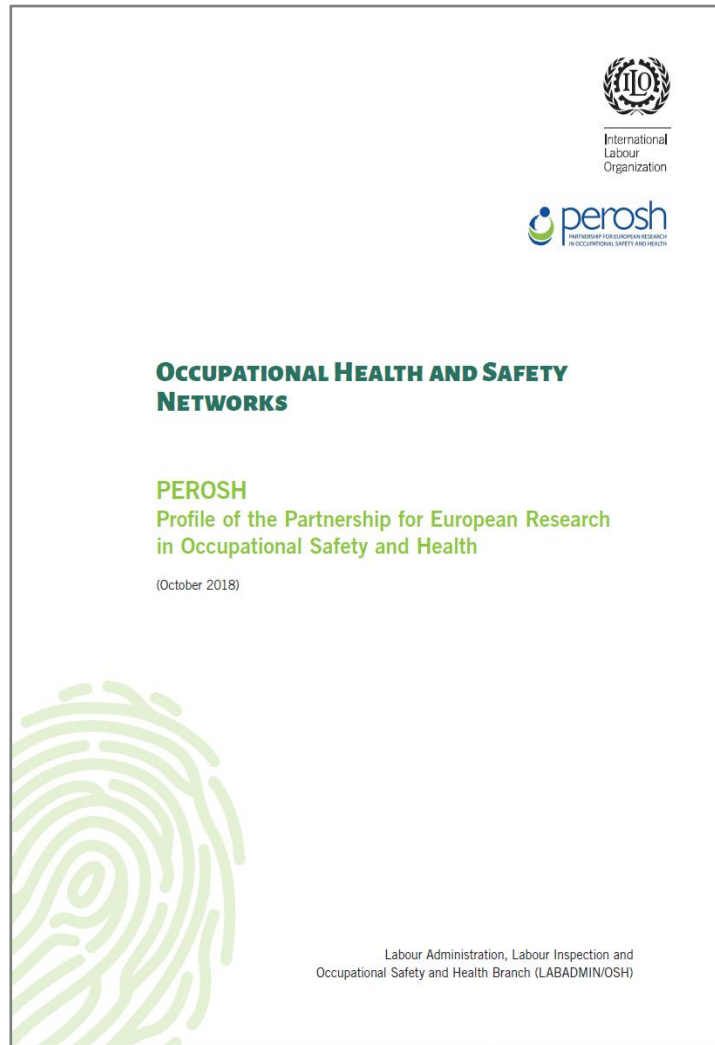
Community building

Promote and sustain the values and standards of a network of individuals or groups. These networks can work towards the formation of informal neighbourhood groups, formal research communities and even 'expatriate' communities.

Facilitating

Help members carry out their activities more efficiently and effectively. In the case of research networks, these might include organising conferences and meetings, publishing working papers and policy briefs, and providing mentoring to researchers or key individuals.

Standard set of descriptors of networks to document constitution, functions & outputs



Parameters

- ▶ Mission & Policy
- ▶ Strategy & Programs
- ▶ Status & Constitution
- ▶ Basic orientation
- ▶ Tasks
- ▶ Geographical coverage
- ▶ Membership & Stakeholders
- ▶ Organization, focal point, institutional support
- ▶ Governance, leadership and coordination
- ▶ Resources, human, network technology and financing
- ▶ Functions and activities
- ▶ Knowledge management
- ▶ Outputs, quality, quantity

6 networks

Latin America, South-East Asia, Baltic Sea Region, West and Central Africa, Central Europe, South-Eastern Europe

Selection criteria

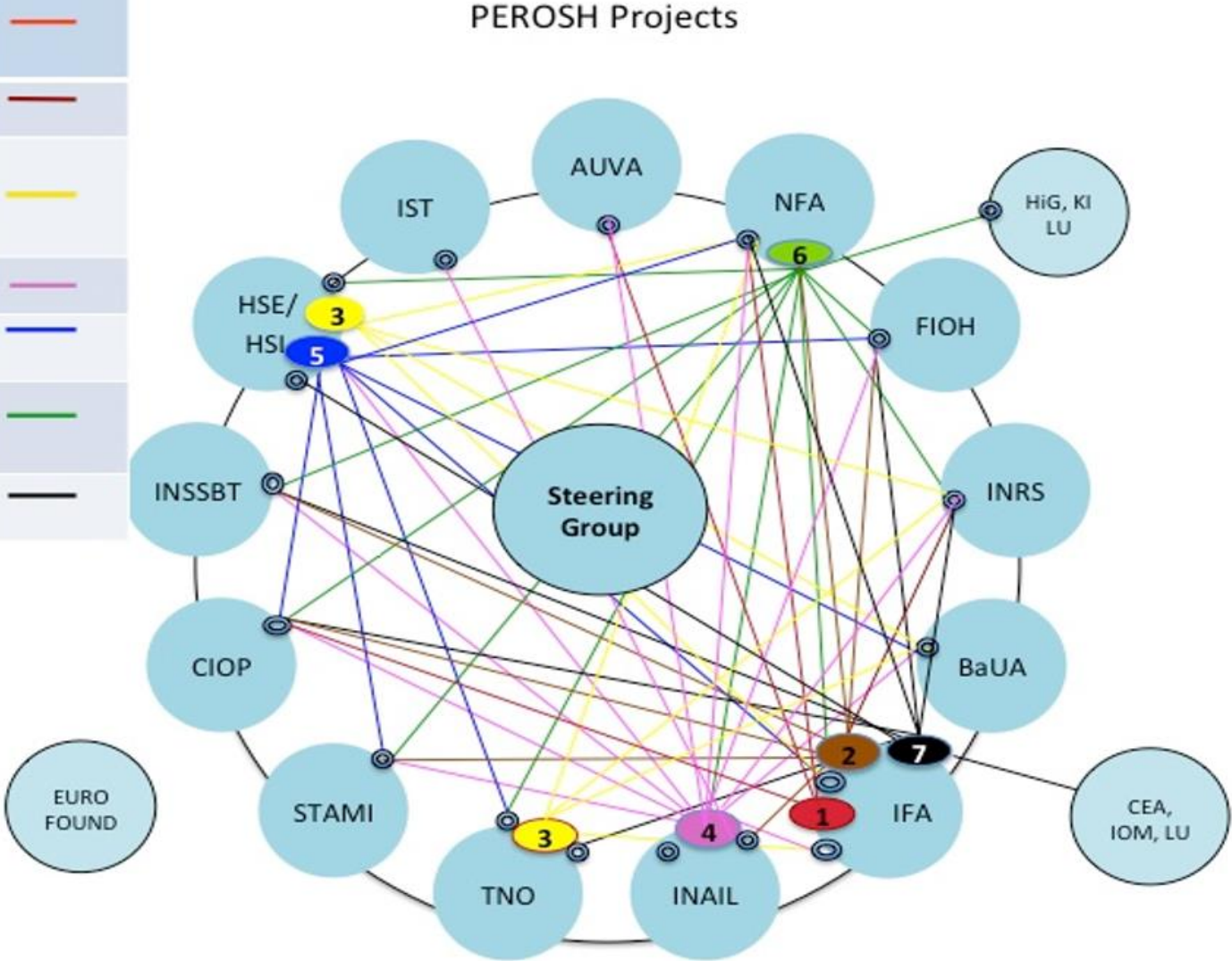
Type, status (formal, informal, institutional, non-institutional), feasibility, substance, agreement

Cross-cutting analysis

- ▶ Analytical data (quantitative on measurable parameters)
- ▶ Development challenges
- ▶ Evaluation: Functionality, outputs, effects, impacts
- ▶ Lessons learned

Connections between PEROSH members within the joint projects

1	Monitoring and assessment tool (MAT)	
2	DRR	
3	Health impact assessment of ORDs	
4	Futures	
5	Wellbeing at work	
6	Physical activity and workload	
7	Nano exposures	



Prerequisites for effective professional networking

(on the basis of this particular study)

- Actor **profile** prepared for each member,
- Collectively approved mission, **policy, strategy, objectives** and targets, aiming at some kind of utility or (professional) productivity,
- **Limited number of members**, meeting special criteria, sharing same vision (social capital)
- Clear **rules of operation**, sharing of activities and division of work,
- Well identified **focal point** for speaking the voice of the Network,
- Often **formal status** and representative role in relation to other respective professional networks,
- **Coordinator or "leader"** with competences and capacities to lead the activities of the Network
- Certain degree of **institutional support** (for example communication technologies), maintenance of pages, platforms for data depositories, and financial resources for implementation of the above,
- Growing emphasis is given to **ethical principles** in networking,
- More **outcome-orientation** in carrying out collectively agreed functions, special projects, training and education, organization of conferences and publishing data
- **Trust** between the members and between the members and leadership.

Institutional benefits from networking

A set of benefits can be derived for the research institutions from developing specific networking strategies. Such benefits may include:

- Keeping the organization updated on what is going on in their environment and in different contexts (political, industrial, educational, community, cultural context)
- Recognition of the status as a research organization
- Ensuring quality of outputs
- Sharing strategies, programs, and experiences
- Peering leaders and knowing the peers
- Expanding the base of support and the social
- Providing a ready-made audience for initiative, ideas, programs, and messages the organization wishes to spread
- Providing access to varied and multiple resources/skills or opportunities
- Attracting students, talents, and resources.

Sources:

- The POLICY Project (1999) *Networking for Policy Change. An Advocacy Training Manual*, Washington (http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/Pnacj305.pdf)
- Mendizabal E. (2006) *Understanding Networks: The Functions of Research Policy Networks*, Overseas Development Institute
<https://odi.org/en/publications/understanding-networks-the-functions-of-research-policy-networks/>

Profile of an ideal network



Future of professional networks

- In the course of digital disruption, networking will play a growing conciliatory and compensatory role
- Network strategies and organizations still need development
- OSH utilization of networking can be enhanced
- VR, AI, ML, DL, Internet of things (M2M), robotization and exoskeletons will enable and challenge OSH
- Networking has grown to be an important production factor
- Mobile broadband will facilitate use; global coverage still a problem
- Social disruption, destructive net behaviour, misinformation and disinformation: great challenges for OSH of several occupational groups. Networking one solution?
- Cybersecurity, a major challenge: more safeguards needed
- **PEROSH foresight activity a most valuable output!**

New needs for OSH networking in times of growing uncertainty

Known knowns Explanatory research Systematic reviews Meta-analyses	Known unknowns Exploratory research Delphi studies
Unknown unknowns (Black Swan) Observing emerging anomalies, deviations from "normality" Scenario building Bayesian risk prediction & Precautionary principle	Unknown knowns Multidisciplinary interactions Translation research Communication networking AI, ML, DL

Majority of our bias is not to the direction of **overestimation** of risks but to **underestimation**: There is little evidence or experience on severe consequences of overestimation of risk. Instead the whole history of industrialized society is full of severe and often long-term consequences of underestimation or ignorance.

Networking is one of the most effective tools for prevention of biases.

NASA: Not having a risk assessment performed on a system is not a risk worth taking!

Thank you !