

EAWOP DECLARATION FOR DECENT WORK

The European Association of Work and Organizational Psychology (EAWOP) has congregated from 25-28 May 2011 in Maastricht, and discussed the current state of affairs concerning decent work. Since the ILO has launched its Decent Work Agenda in 2008, significant progress has been made in raising awareness and formulating policy objectives at the level of national governments and NGOs.

However, it appears from research studies and country reports that decent work for all is still a remote aim for many in the world. Also in Europe, the quality of work and employment deserves attention. In the aftermath of the financial/economic crisis the economic rationality often seems to override issues of job security, health and well-being, and environmental issues. If we want our society to prosper, now and in the future, we need to make sure that working conditions and employment meet the current standards of decency.

Key issues in decent work are:

- Lack of participation
- Social security gaps
- Dirty and unsafe work, unfavorable working hours
- Harassment
- Low income, and so on.

Although economic and legal aspects, like low income and lack of legal protection, are salient, there are also important social and psychological aspects to be taken into account. Among them are high physical and mental work load, accumulation of fatigue, stress, awkward working hours, insufficient opportunities to recover from work, psychological harm from harassment and exploitation, abrasive leadership, uncertainty due to poor communication, exposure to risks due to lack of protection or insufficient training, lack of involvement in decision making, etc.

Due to decades of focused research and practical interventions, the discipline of psychology applied to work and organization (W&O psychology) is in the position to help those responsible in firms and communities, as well as in governments and in international bodies to:

- Raise awareness on gaps in decent work and their consequences for health, safety, well-being, and engagement
- Increase participation in the labor market and social inclusion
- Set standards for soft, hard to grasp aspects of decent work
- Assess the status quo (in quantitative and qualitative terms)
- Develop targets and actions plans
- Offer practical tools and support, as well as useful information
- Improve the life of people at work

The W&O psychologists of Europe, at the end of their conference dedicated to the quality of work and decent work in particular, express their intention to contribute through research and professional practice to achieving the objective of striving to decent work for all.

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EAWOP Executive Committee:

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