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Volume Title: Works Councils: Consultation, Representation, and Cooperation in Industrial Relations

Volume Author/Editor: Joel Rogers and Wolfgang Streeck

Volume Publisher: University of Chicago Press

Volume ISBN: 0-226-72376-3

Volume URL: <http://www.nber.org/books/roge95-1>

Conference Date: May 13-16, 1992

Publication Date: January 1995

Chapter Title: Front matter, table of contents, acknowledgments

Chapter Author: Joel Rogers, Wolfgang Streeck

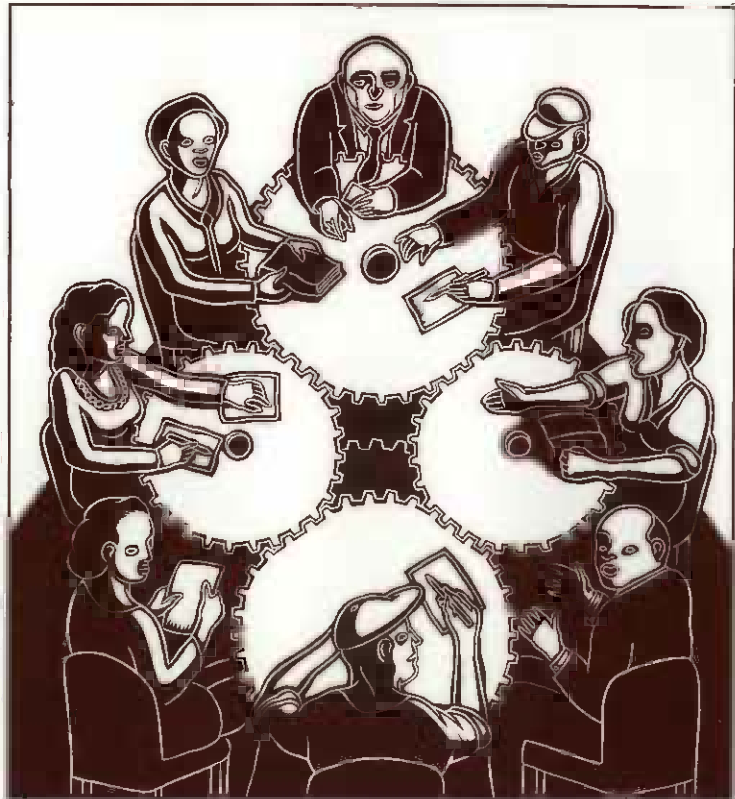
Chapter URL: <http://www.nber.org/chapters/c11553>

Chapter pages in book: (p. -11 - 2)

Rogers & Streeck

WORKS COUNCILS

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CONSULTATION, REPRESENTATION, AND COOPERATION IN INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

Edited by

Joel Rogers and Wolfgang Streeck

National Bureau of Economic Research
Comparative Labor Markets Series



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Works Councils

Consultation, Representation, and Cooperation in Industrial Relations

Edited by Joel Rogers and Wolfgang Streeck

As labor union membership has declined in the United States, workers' influence in the workplace has decreased. Because industry needs workers to continue to be involved in changing production systems, and because both employers and workers have become dissatisfied with existing structures of workplace regulation, the search has begun for new ways of providing a voice for workers outside the traditional collective bargaining relationship.

Works councils—institutionalized bodies for representative communication between an employer and employees in a single workplace—are rare in the Anglo-American world, but are well-established in other industrialized countries. The contributors to this volume survey the history, structure, and functions of works councils in the Netherlands, Germany, France, Spain, Sweden, Italy, Poland, Canada, and the United States. Special attention is paid to the relations between works councils and unions and collective bargaining, works councils and management, and the role and interest of governments in works councils. On the basis of extensive comparative data from other Western countries, the book demonstrates that well-designed works councils may offer a solution to many of the management-labor problems that beset America's workplaces today.

Works Councils will be indispensable reading for policy makers and researchers in management, labor relations, labor law, and comparative economic institutions.

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Works Councils



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Works Councils

Consultation, Representation,
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JOEL ROGERS is professor of law, political science, and sociology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where he directs the Center on Wisconsin Strategy. WOLFGANG STREECK is director at the Max-Planck-Institut für Gesellschaftsforschung in Cologne; at the time this book was written, he was professor of sociology and industrial relations at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

The University of Chicago Press, Chicago 60637
The University of Chicago Press, Ltd., London
© 1995 by the National Bureau of Economic Research
All rights reserved. Published 1995
Printed in the United States of America
04 03 02 01 00 99 98 97 96 95 1 2 3 4 5
ISBN: 0-226-72376-3 (cloth)

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Works councils : consultation, representation, and cooperation in industrial relations / edited by Joel Rogers and Wolfgang Streeck.

p. cm.—(NBER Comparative labor markets series)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

1. Works councils—Case studies—Congresses. 2. Comparative industrial relations—Congresses. I. Rogers, Joel. II. Streeck, Wolfgang. III. Series.

HD5650.W643 1995

338.6—dc20

95-13423

CIP

ⓈThe paper used in this publication meets the minimum requirements of the American National Standard for Information Sciences—Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials, ANSI Z39.48-1984.

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(Resolution adopted October 25, 1926, as revised through September 30, 1974)

Contents

Acknowledgments ix

I. INTRODUCTION

- 1. The Study of Works Councils: Concepts and Problems** 3
Joel Rogers and Wolfgang Streeck
- 2. An Economic Analysis of Works Councils** 27
Richard B. Freeman and Edward P. Lazear

II. THE EUROPEAN EXPERIENCE

- 3. Germany: From Collective Voice to Co-management** 53
Walther Müller-Jentsch
- 4. The Netherlands: From Paternalism to Representation** 79
Jelle Visser
- 5. France: From Conflict to Social Dialogue?** 115
Robert Tchobanian
- 6. Spain: Works Councils or Unions?** 153
Modesto Escobar
- 7. Sweden: Joint Councils under Strong Unionism** 189
Göran Brulin

8. Italy: The Costs and Benefits of Informality	217
Ida Regalia	
9. The European Community: Between Mandatory Consultation and Voluntary Information	243
Wolfgang Streeck and Sigurt Vitols	
10. Poland: Councils under Communism and Neoliberalism	283
Michal Federowicz and Anthony Levitas	
11. Works Councils in Western Europe: From Consultation to Participation	313
Wolfgang Streeck	

III. THE NORTH AMERICAN EXPERIENCE

12. Canada: Joint Committees on Occupational Health and Safety	351
Elaine Bernard	
13. United States: Lessons from Abroad and Home	375
Joel Rogers	
Contributors	411
Author Index	413
Subject Index	419

Acknowledgments

Work on this book would not have been possible without the support of a great number of institutions and, more important, individuals. Above all, Richard Freeman of the National Bureau for Economic Research convinced us to take up the subject in the context of his ambitious Working and Earning under Different Rules project—an effort whose scholarly excellence and practical importance we could not fail to note. Through him, we were happy to receive financial support from the Ford Foundation, which we used to assemble an international group of researchers and maintain a central project office at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Room for this office was contributed by the University's Industrial Relations Research Institute.

Comparative institutional analysis requires extensive communication between researchers from different countries. In directing our project, we were lucky to be able to hold two project conferences. A first workshop took place in May 1991 in Madison, made possible by grants from the Washington Bureau of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung and from the Hans-Böckler-Stiftung in Düsseldorf, a foundation maintained by the German Union Federation (DGB) and devoted to the study of co-determination. Dieter Dettke and Gerhard Leminsky, respectively, represented the two organizations and helped give us the confidence that our work would come to a good end. The conference was also attended by a number of representatives of American unions—in particular, James Cavanaugh (Wisconsin South Central Federation of Labor), Larry Cohen (Communications Workers of America), Jay Foreman (United Food and Commercial Workers), Peggy Kelly (Service Employees International Union), Charles McDonald (AFL-CIO), David Newby (Wisconsin AFL-CIO), Chris Schenk (Ontario Federation of Labour), and Denny Scott (United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners)—whose comments and advice greatly improved our understanding of the problems of workplace representation in a North American setting.

One year later, the second project conference was hosted by the International Institute for Labour Studies at the International Labour Organization (ILO) in Geneva. We are still impressed with the unending attention to detail with which our friends at the Institute, in particular Werner Sengenberger and Duncan Campbell, helped make this conference as productive as it turned out to be. Conference participants also had the benefit of excellent comments on the draft papers from some of the leading experts on labor relations, who graciously took the time out of their busy schedules to contribute to our work. For their comments, we thank Robert Boyer, Duncan Campbell, Colin Crouch, Gerhard Leminsky, Charles McDonald, Bernd Marin, Werner Sengenberger, Tiziano Treu, and Kirsten Wever.

Finally, in running the central project office, we benefited from the support of three graduate students—Joohee Lee, Barbara Wootton, and Jooyeon Jeong—who successively served as project assistants, and Abby Coble, who assisted in final manuscript preparation.

I

Introduction

