The aims of the symposium are to:

1. Analyse why work-life balance has become a contemporary policy issue in different countries, identify the key components of the policy debate and determine its relevance for w/o psychology
2. Consider frameworks for analysing work-life balance at different levels from the individual to the national, including cross-national comparisons
3. Understand how w/o psychology has contributed to our understanding of work-life balance and how it can contribute more fully
4. Identify research priorities and in particular comparative research issues
5. Explore in more detail the meaning of “balance” in work-life balance

Timetable

Thursday 29 March

1.30: Welcome to Workshop

2.00: Exploring theory and research issues in work-life balance.

Presentation by David Guest and discussion
(This presentation will introduce the issues and concepts in work-life balance, summarise core aspects of theory and research and set out some of the themes for the symposium. It will be built around a review paper which will be distributed in advance of the symposium)

Break

3.15: Policy issues in work-life balance

Presentation by Nick Burkitt, Research Fellow, Institute for Public Policy Research, London

(The Institute of Public Policy Research is the leading “think tank” in the UK and has a strong influence on UK government policy development. Nick Burkitt has been leading a project on The Future of Work in which issues of work-life balance feature prominently. He will be discussing these policy issues, identifying why they are currently important and highlighting areas where research by w/o psychologists and others could help to improve policy).

5.00: Finish for the day

Friday 30 March

Morning: National Perspectives on Work-Life Balance

The morning will consist of two or three national inputs on work-life balance highlighting current policy priorities and research by w/o psychologists. One of the aims will be to assess the policy-relevance of the research. Another will be to identify differences in concerns and priorities in different European countries.

9.00 – 10.15: Gunn Johansson: The Case of Sweden (presentation and preliminary discussion)

10.15 – 11.30: Branimir Sverko and Dr Lidija Arambasic: The Case of Croatia (presentation and preliminary discussion)

Break

Participants will be invited to offer contributions on research in their countries.

1.00: Lunch

Afternoon: Identifying a Comparative Research agenda

2.00 – 4.00: Group discussions and Feedback.
Group discussions will provide an opportunity to discuss how the issue of work-life balance could usefully be researched on a comparative basis across European countries. Feedback and plenary discussion will seek to identify any common agenda and shared recognition of the difficulties of such research.

Break

Short contributions from founder members of ENOP about the challenges and means of establishing work-life balance

8.00: Dinner (location to be specified)

Saturday 31 March

9.30 – 12.00 Business Meeting
12.00: Close