



A view of the ANSE community in action: Opatija (Croatia), 16 March 2018: 20 years HDSOR



ANSE 25 years

A short overview of the main developments

■ Wolfgang Knopf & Sijtze de Roos

Abstract

In this contribution we highlight the most important moves and achievements of ANSE. Our purpose is to show how a thriving cross border community of professional practitioners emerged and which steps - or sometimes even leaps - were taken to get us that far. As we aim to sketch no more than the major characteristics of ANSE as it grew and developed over the years, we will focus mainly on the period between 2004 and 2018, when we both were active as ANSE board officials.

Introduction

The history of supervision and coaching in Europe is also the history of its institutions. As all professional activity, supervisory practice, too, is embedded in society, both locally and nationally. Sooner or later practitioners will develop professional communities. In order to support and sustain these, the need for formal organization arises. It should therefore not surprise us that supervisors and coaches in many European countries organized themselves in professional associations. Informal networking combines with formal organization to secure and enhance professional development.

By extension, this move repeats itself on the European level. Once practitioners start crossing borders to engage themselves in international activities, as many of them do, they will soon feel the need for some form of supra-national institutionalization. Such arrangements carry and align their cross-border efforts, help them to define and defend their professional interests and to represent their trade internationally. No wonder then, that twenty-five years ago, in 1997, ANSE emerged as a platform for - and clearing house of - national organizations for supervision and coaching in Europe.

It is not our intention to smother you with long elaborations, nor to suffocate you with intricate details, extensive citation of board minutes or with long lists of the many colleagues who contributed to the efforts of ANSE; lists that will never be complete anyway. A detailed history certainly deserves - and still remains - to be written. For the festive purpose of highlighting ANSE's 25th anniversary, however, we limit ourselves to outline the path traveled thus far by focusing on what we consider the most characteristic milestones. Let us now turn to this task.

The pioneering phase and the mission of ANSE

Vienna is an important city in the history of ANSE. In 1995 the Austrian capital hosted the so called 'Wiener Vereinbarung'. With this agreement, the German, Swiss and Austrian signatories recognized the certified supervisors and training courses of their respective national organizations. This event sparked off even more lively cross-border activity between German speaking supervisors and attracted the attention of other national organisations. Louis van Kessel, already active in Europe as trainer of supervisors, picked up this initiative. He was included in further talks and subsequently asked to coordinate the first steps towards a European association

of supervisors. After several preparatory meetings, the Association of National Organizations for Supervision in Europe - in short: ANSE - came to be (Van Kessel, 2005). Representatives of national organisations from Germany (DGSv), Switzerland (BSO), Austria (ÖVS), Hungary (MSZT) and The Netherlands (LVSB) came together to serve as founders. With great ceremony, this happy event took place in - where else? - Vienna on 21 November 1997 (see Fellermann, 1998).

The first ANSE Board came up with a plethora of sparkling ideas

Getting down to business, the first board, presided by Louis Van Kessel, came up with a plethora of sparkling ideas. The initial challenge was to carefully define supervision and to articulate the mission of ANSE. First of all, ANSE was to promote and enhance the position of supervision - and later coaching as well - and thereby the position of all its practitioners in Europe. In line with this objective, clear quality standards had to be formulated to regulate and synchronize certification and admission procedures. ANSE should further strive to disseminate practical and theoretical material on supervision, coaching and consultancy. This naturally presupposed close attention to cross-border exchange of information and professional knowledge between practitioners, their national organizations and training institutes.

Big plans, for sure, and a lot of work to be done. To tackle these tasks, the board first had to take care of everyday

matters such as work procedures, statutes and a minimal organizational framework. Changing the financing of ANSE proved to be a very important move. In 2001 the fifth General Assembly decided to shift the financial base from unequal contributions per national organization - mainly depending on size - to a fixed amount per individual supervisor, regardless of which member association he or she is affiliated with. This considerably leveled the field and gave all supervisors equal status, resulting in a stronger sense of shared solidarity.

While still a fledgling venture, ANSE grew rapidly in size and scope. More national organizations scrambled to join, conferences had to be organized and preparations made for the first ANSE Summer University in the Hungarian city of Szalgotarjan. Elsewhere in this issue, our Hungarian colleague Iván Török tells you more about how the summer university concept came to life.

Strengthening operational effectiveness and expanding the network

In retrospect, the ANSE pioneers performed admirably and succeeded in laying a sound foundation to build on. Yet consolidation was needed, as well as further and more structured orientation to the world around us.

Roughly speaking, we may say that the pioneering phase came to an end in 2003. In that year, Bernhard Münning took over the presidency. The new board got to work, further strengthening the organization, clarifying not always clear internal procedures and starting to record those in a board manual; the so-called ANSE Handbook. Bernhard and the board worked diligently at improving the demarcation and distribution of clearly defined tasks and responsibilities. In addition, the board set realistic and achievable external goals, with special attention to the manageable expansion of the network.

As cross-border exchange between practitioners is an es-

sential ANSE activity, ways to better support international contacts were sought. Building on the successful HASI project of colleagues from Hungary, Austria, Slovenia and Italy (see Tatschl, 2003), the board stepped up its efforts to initiate and support 'international intervision groups' (IIGs). Participation would, under certain conditions, be recognized by ANSE and counted as advanced training.

In the meantime, valuable content was generated by seminars and conferences and shared in publications, such as for instance Brush up your tools (Heilinger et al, 2004) or a special issue of the German magazine 'Supervision' (2003). Since its first international conference about the differences and similarities between supervision and coaching (Munich, 2000), ANSE pushed forward with a second conference in Leiden (2004) on the ethical challenges of thinking and acting as supervisors and coaches. Zygmunt Bauman and Peter Heintel delivered memorable keynotes on respectively Liquid Modernity and The Problem of Values. On top of that, ANSE successfully sought contact with existing coaching associations, and participated in the 2nd Coaching Congress, (Frankfurt, 2006) under the title Wandel im Coaching, Wandel durch Coaching (Change in and through Coaching).

In 2006 health problems forced Bernhard Münning to resign as president, but not before initiating one of the most significant changes in ANSE's history: the move to one common language: English. Until that moment we all spoke our own language - with German by far the most dominant - necessitating cumbersome simultaneous translation during meetings, which, in turn, caused endlessly drawn-out proceedings and, more often than not, splitting headaches. This fundamental policy change was enthusiastically implemented by his successors, Wolfgang Knopf as president and a renewed board. From then on, all ANSE-related communication had to be in English,

leading to the emergence of a way of speaking now commonly and fondly known as 'ANSE-pidgin'. The effect was striking: Since English was the second language for most of us, board members, delegates and conference- and IIG-participants were now communicating on a much more equal footing than before.

At the same time, the board made efforts to bring operations more in line with the principles of the ANSE mission. For the short term, emphasis was placed on cross-border information exchange between practitioners, national organisations, training institutes and with sister organizations such as the European Association of Supervision (EAS) and the European Mentoring and Coaching

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Council (EMCC). To this end, ANSE put a lot of energy into organizing time and space for further exchange, in-depth theory development and research. ANSE Summer Universities in particular developed into hotspots for supervisors and coaches from all over Europe to meet, network and study together. No wonder ANSE decided to host these events bi-annually, to be organized in turn by

national member organisations. Unfortunately, the second SU, scheduled for 2005 in Szalgotarjan, had to be canceled due to insufficient registration, but with the Summer University 2007 in Tallinn (Estonia) ANSE went full throttle and managed to keep up the pace from that moment on. At the end of this article you will find a list of all ANSE Summer Universities between 2003 and 2019.

Moving forward in Europe

Starting from a still modest operational base and hindered by very limited finances, the board nevertheless managed to broaden its range of activities. To enhance the effectiveness of communication with national organizations, ANSE in 2009 staged its first meeting with national presidents preceding the General Assembly. This arrangement proved effective and therefore became a regular part of the ANSE meeting circuit. With the presidents in an advisory capacity and the General Assembly as the policy-making body, all was set for a stronger bond with the (boards of) national organizations. At the same time, the board managed to support the emerging ANSE community more intensively. All in all, this organizational adjustment turned out helpful to the discussion on professional morals and the development and final adoption of the ANSE Code of Ethics (2012).

The board also explicitly refocused on long-term ANSE objectives, such as the formulation and implementation of (European) quality standards, reliable quality assurance systems and cross-border research projects. Finally, the pursuit of mutual recognition of all certified members and training courses - an essential precondition for our professionals to freely practice their trade all over Europe - was placed high on the ANSE agenda.

As early as 2005 we called out the slogan 'ANSE goes Brussels' for the first time. In the years since, several

attempts were made to get in touch with the EU administration in order to safeguard our professional interests at the European level.

Initially these all failed. Nevertheless, during 2007-2010 the first independent EU project was carried out as part of ANSE's Grundtvig program: Counseling in a Multicultural Europe. A key competence in lifelong learning. The motto of the program was "Learning Partnership". Our learning process and results were discussed and reflected on at conferences in Vienna and Timisoara (2008 and 2010). The final product of this adventure was the module 'Dealing with diversity and interculturality as a supervisor'. This training program has since been delivered by several trainers in different 'ANSE countries' and is still available to any party that may be interested.

In 2009 a unique opportunity presented itself. EUROCADRES, the European trade union for self-employed and highly specialized professionals, managers and senior staff functionaries, happened to be looking for expertise for an ongoing EU project - Professional and Managerial Staff: Social Responsibility for Innovation - and contacted ANSE. In December 2010, Carlo Parietti, President of EUROCADRES, attended the 2nd ANSE President Meeting in Vienna. This culminated in a signed agreement on representation at the 'European Table of Social Dialogue' - an influential body on policy level - between ANSE and EUROCADRES in 2011. ANSE had finally landed in Brussels. As a source of specific expertise, ANSE was also involved in the following EUROCADRES EU projects: SHIRT-PSR - Safeguarding Health In Restructuring: Tools for Managing Psychosocial Risks for Line Managers and Employee Representatives (2011) and, together with the European Council for Liberal Professions (CEPLis) - Implementing Cards for the Recognition of European Professional Qualifications - A Multi-Stakeholder Approach to Enhance Mobility (2011).

A 'professional card' - as carrier of personal qualification data - would enable any (registered, recognized) professional of whichever European nationality to freely practice his trade everywhere in the EU. The feasibility of a such a card for supervisors and coaches was thoroughly discussed, but it has as yet not been implemented. As a metaphor, however, the idea of a professional card did great service. It sharpened our focus and helped to speed up our continuing efforts to effectuate mutual recognition between national organizations, to broaden our scope and to deepen our transnational aspirations.

The most important EU project to date, however, was EC-Vision - A European System Of Comparability And Validation Of Supervisory Competences as part of the LEONARDO program. From 2012 to 2015, an international project team of seven colleagues, supported by a group of twelve experts, developed a fundamental competence framework for supervision and coaching. In 2016 the results were published under the title In the Mirror of Competences - Supervision and Coaching in Europe. Concepts and Competences (Judy & Knopf, 2016). This document was subsequently translated by national organizations from, for instance, Austria, Hungary and Croatia, and used by various educational institutions to hone their training programs.

Simultaneously, ample energy was spent on the upkeep and improvement of the relations with national organizations and on the support of the smaller, sometimes struggling ones among them. In 2014 our Bosnian colleagues, for instance, were dramatically confronted with the consequences of a heavy flood, causing more than 100.000 people to lose their homes. ANSE immediately rushed to help, setting up a support structure to coach and supervise first line aid workers who themselves were

in need of care.

All these activities pushed ANSE forward and increased its visibility on the European scene of supervision, coaching and (organizational) consultancy. Despite occasional setbacks, ANSE activities between roughly 2008 and 2018 proved successful in crafting broad acceptance of supervision and coaching as a profession by agencies and organizations in Europe hitherto unfamiliar with our trade.

Consolidation and expansion

Looking back on the period up to about 2014, it is clear that ANSE has made a significant leap forward. Over the years ANSE grew in seize as well as in scope and influence. With it came many technical, administrative and financial challenges. Subsequent ANSE boards met these with trial and error. Doing so, we also learned to deal with the rapid digitization of the world around us and its consequences for our organization.

In 2014, a renewed board, including four new members, took over, inheriting a far higher and far more complex rate of activity than ever before. Ongoing operations had to be taken care of, such as the formal and festive presentation of the EC-Vision report in Vienna (2016), the organisation of the first ANSE Research Conference (Budapest, 2015) and the production of the conference reader (Geißler-Piltz, Nemes & De Roos, 2017). We should, of course, also mention the Summer Universities in Zadar (2015) and Rotterdam (2017), and, not to forget, the 'ANSE European Network Conference' on Teaching Supervision and Coaching in Frankfurt, December 2018.

To get the work done, tasks were reshuffled and allotted, and lines and modes of communication modified. Furthermore, the board made efforts to involve the ANSE community more often and more intensively by means of a regular digital newsletter. And so, the first tentative steps on social media were taken. Since then, digital net-

working has become routine. Boosted by Corona, the use of social media is now part of our communication structure. In the summer of 2021, for instance, ANSE organized a digital Summer Online Special in which around 120 people from all over Europe (and beyond) participated. On top of that, we present regular digital 'Talent Talks'. And because this magazine, too, is digital, you may read all about this on your Laptop, iPad or Smartphone.

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The board further concentrated its efforts on the reorganization of the finances and a (limited) raise of the yearly contribution. As far as the long term goals were concerned, the board continued to work on mutual recognition and on establishing supervision and coaching as a high quality profession on the European level.

Due attention was given to the rapid expansion of the ANSE community; several 'new countries' choose to join ANSE. The board also invested energy in promoting research, innovation and the social relevance of supervision and coaching, and continued to look for ways to promote cross-border quality development. To help all this forward, the board did well in developing a twice-yearly digital periodical for and by the ANSE community (and beyond that for anyone who would like to read it). The first issue of ANSE Journal saw the light in 2017. The sixth volume is currently on the way, as you can see from this issue. And

the beauty of it is: all issues are available for free. Please find the link on the ANSE website.

In conclusion

Since its founding 25 years ago, ANSE consistently strived to create a culture of cross-border understanding and to give shape and substance to our core business: bringing colleagues from all over Europe together to learn from each other and further develop our craft. It has taken a lot of time and effort and will continue to do so. But it has been - and will be - more than worth it. To take proper care of this inheritance, ANSE boards operate as a team. Decisions are taken collegially, and all board members through their portfolios represent the responsibility and authority of the board. Board members operate on four basic principles: communication, cooperation, commitment and care; principles which we feel express the ethics of supervision and coaching.

To play their role, boards need to be legitimized, supported and properly financed by ANSE as a whole. The flipside of this coin is that the board holds itself fully accountable to the entire community as it is represented by the bi-annual General Assembly. Fortunately, all ANSE Boards up till today have been carried by a growing ANSE community. We cannot emphasize the importance of our professional community enough. ANSE does not only exist at board level, all of us together are ANSE. ■

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- **2003:** Szalgotarjan (Hungary). *Intercultural dialogue in supervision*
- **2007:** Tallinn (Estonia). *International and intercultural experience in supervision*
- **2009:** Dublin (Ireland). *Supervision - a vital vision for today*
- **2011:** Stavanger (Norway). *Inspiring moments in Supervision - how to promote change*
- **2013:** Kaunas (Lithuania). *Trust - building trust through supervision*
- **2015:** Zadar (Croatia). *Supervision - guiding lights for development in times of crisis*
- **2017:** Rotterdam (The Netherlands). *Moving and being moved - coaching and supervision in a rapidly changing world*
- **2019:** Bolzano (Italy). *Bridging - connecting worlds through supervision and coaching.*

Box 1. ANSE Summer Universities between 2003 and 2019



ANSE General Assembly Buffet: Signature dishes from member countries)

- First Board:** Louis van Kessel (The Netherlands; President), Ueli Brännimann (Switzerland), Angela Gotthardt-Lorenz (Austria), Györgi Sávári (Hungary), Wolfgang Weigand (Germany)
- Second Board:** Louis van Kessel (The Netherlands; President), Ueli Brännimann (Switzerland; Secretary), Edeltrud Freitag-Becker (Germany), Angela Gotthardt-Lorenz (Austria), Sonja Zorga (Slovenia)
- Third Board:** Louis van Kessel (The Netherlands; President), Ueli Brännimann (Switzerland; Secretary), Edeltrud Freitag-Becker (Germany), Janko Mijoc (Slovenia), Erszebet Wiesner (Hungary), Renate Wustinger (Austria)
- Fourth Board:** Bernhard Munning (Germany; President), Wolfgang Knopf (Austria; Secretary and Acting President), Konrad Willeit (Italy; Treasurer), Liselotte Schoch (Switzerland), Janko Mijoc (Slovenia), Erszebet Wiesner (Hungary)
- Fifth Board:** Wolfgang Knopf (Austria; President), Barbara Gogala (Slovenia; Secretary), Konrad Willeit (Italy; Treasurer), Beatrice Conrad (Switzerland), Edeltrud Freitag-Becker (Germany), Ines Rinke (The Netherlands)
- Sixth Board:** Wolfgang Knopf (Austria; President), Sijtze de Roos (The Netherlands; Vice President), Barbara Gogala (Slovenia; Secretary), Stefan Habicher (Italy; Treasurer), Beatrice Conrad (Switzerland), Eva Nemes (Hungary; Acting Treasurer), Barbara Baumann (Germany)
- Seventh Board:** Sijtze de Roos (The Netherlands; President), Inese Stankus-Vida (Latvia; Secretary), Rolf Brüderlin (Switzerland; Treasurer), Eva Nemes (Hungary), Barbara Baumann (Germany), Agnes Turner (Austria)
- Eight Board:** Sijtze de Roos (The Netherlands; President), Inese Stankus-Vida (Latvia; Secretary), Rolf Brüderlin (Switzerland; Treasurer), Eva Nemes (Hungary), Barbara Baumann (Germany), Agnes Turner (Austria), Piret Bristol (Estonia)
- Ninth Board:** Agnes Turner (Austria; President), Inese Stankus-Vida (Latvia; Vice President), Márta L.vai (Hungary; Secretary & Deputy Treasurer), Andrea M. Geering (Switzerland; Treasurer), Piret Bristol (Estonia), Miriam Ullrich (Germany), Reijer Jan van 't Hul (The Netherlands)

Box 2. ANSE Boards 1977-2022

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Dr. Phil Wolfgang Knopf (left) is organizational consultant, supervisor (ÖVS), coach, teaching supervisor and group dynamics and management trainer. Next to that he lectures at the Universities of Vienna and Zagreb and at the 'Institut Triangel' in Berlin. He served as ANSE president (2006-2014) and VS General Manager (2014-2021). In line with his professional activities he edited and published a sizeable number of articles and books on supervision.

Sijtze de Roos (right) is LVSC certified senior supervisor, policy adviser and coach. He acted as co-founder, trainer and lecturer of the Master Organizational Coaching of The Hague University of Applied Sciences. He was LVSC president from 2004 till 2010, and he served as ANSE vice president and president between 2010 and 2018. Next to that, he published books and articles on social work, supervision and coaching in several languages. He is currently acting as chief editor of this journal and as editor of the Dutch Coaching Magazine.