

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR KOSTEL GERNDORF
(20 October 1945 – 26 June 2019)
IN MEMORIAM

Kostel Gerndorf was born on 20 October 1945 in Tallinn. His education started at Rahumäe Primary School and further at Tallinn Secondary School No. 20. In 1964–1969, Kostel Gerndorf studied at Tallinn Polytechnic Institute (TPI) majoring in Engineering Economics and Organisation. During his senior years as student at TPI, he took interest in management theories and joined Professor Raoul Üksvärav’s research group. Kostel Gerndorf’s connection to Tallinn Polytechnic Institute (TPI) and its successor, Tallinn University of Technology (TTÜ), was lifelong. During 1995–2000, he worked as Development Director at the Estonian Privatization Agency. Further, in 2002–2003 he worked as Adviser to the Minister of Economics, Roads and Communications. During both periods he continued teaching at Tallinn University of Technology (TTÜ). As a Head of Chair of Industry Management and Planning at TPI and TTÜ, Kostel Gerndorf lectured on management-related disciplines, incl. corporate governance.

Kostel Gerndorf’s academic career took him from postgraduate studies to posts of assistant, senior lecturer and to that of associate professor. In 1989–1992, he acted as Head of Department, and 1992–1999 as Head of Chair. Kostel Gerndorf supervised hundreds on Diploma theses, Bachelor’s and Master’s theses, as well as Doctor’s theses. To many a younger colleagues Kostel Gerndorf was a valued mentor. Kostel Gerndorf’s professional publications mostly deal with application of procedural analysis and corporate governance, but here are also publications of his writings on the activities of the Popular Front of Estonia.

Kostel Gerndorf’s career as Management Consultant was long, spanning almost fifty years. During this time he consulted mostly companies, but also public and national authorities. Kostel Gerndorf, in capacity of Adviser to the Minister, was involved in the merger of the Ministry of Economic Affairs with the Ministry of Roads and Communications, acting as the chairman of the merger committee. During 1997–2008, he was also involved in the reorganisation of the Estonian Road Administration. Both above processes had an important role in the chain of reorganisations after restoration of Estonia’s independence.

Vital share of Kostel Gerndorf’s work as a researcher covers development of the method of procedural analysis. The method addresses actions of an organisation as consisting of parts of action in progress. The foundations of the method of procedural analysis were put in place in 1972 and it allowed to start with practical application of the method. In 1975, Kostel Gerndorf presented his Candidate of Sciences thesis – Problems of Improving Performance of Economic Organisations by Procedural Analysis. In Estonia, the method has been by now implemented in hundreds of organisations. It is the most used method for improving the performance of organisations. Taking into account the new opportunities offered by information technology, the method is among the first to have been supported by different software solutions.

Kostel Gerndorf's activities as a professor, researcher and consultant did not keep him away from social life and hobbies. The end of 1980s brought along new opportunities for changing life in Estonia and Kostel Gerndorf duly joined the active reformers. He became one of the founders and leaders of the Popular Front of Estonia. During 1988–1991, Kostel Gerndorf was a member of the Fronts council and its first chairman. When the Estonian Estonian Center Party was founded in 1991, Kostel Gerndorf was among its founders and played influential role in the party for many years to come. Due to his professional knowledge, organising skills and activity, Kostel Gerndorf was elected to managerial bodies of many organisations. His interest in Estonian history and culture helped him to become an vivid bibliophile. Years of systematic collecting has made Kostel Gerndorf the owner of one the most representative private collections of printed publications in Estonian language. He was also interested in and collected old securities, documents and written records.

In his own words, Kostel Gerndorf owed his many achievements to the support of his family.

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Teo Saimre, Mati Vaarmann and Ants Kikas
Longtime colleagues and friends of Kostel Gerndorf