A new reading of primary sources via the digital analysis of social networks. [1]
'The Werner Committee and the debates on European economic and monetary integration'

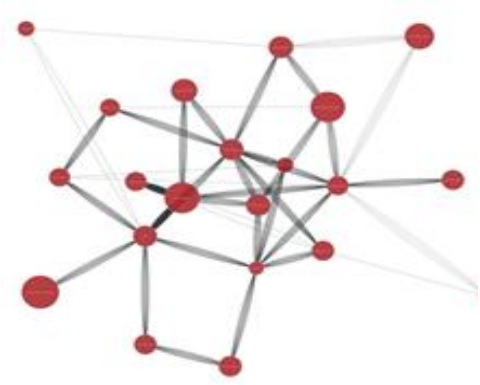
This pilot project was carried out in connection with the CVCE's strategy of combining humanities and social sciences research with digital tools and publishing the results via its digital research infrastructure on European integration, CVCE.eu. Methods borrowed from social network analysis and qualitative data analysis were applied to a specific section of the digital publication on the 1970 Werner Report, a publication which was compiled on the basis of the 'traditional' exploration and interpretation of a vast number of previously unpublished primary sources. [2]

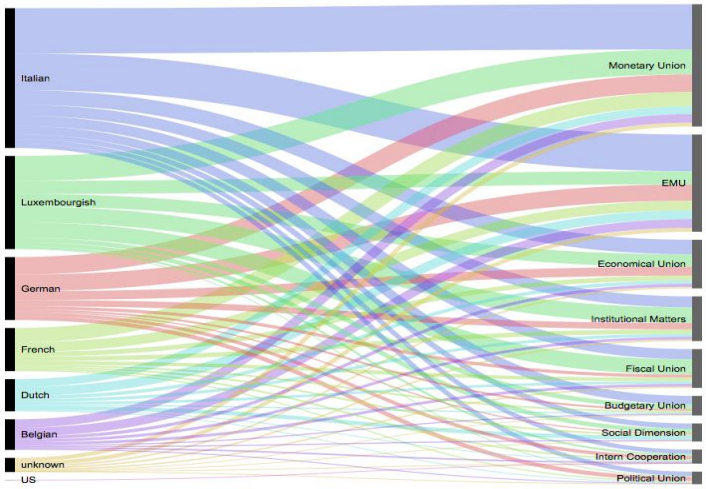
The aim of the analysis was to summarise and visualise the negotiations within the Werner Committee so as to shed new light on the historical facts. By using this innovative technique we were able to demonstrate links, affinities and oppositions among the members of the committee, identify the influence of individual Member States in the ongoing dispute between 'economists' and 'monetarists' which characterised the debates on EMU, and highlight contributions to the political consensus on the Werner Report.

From a methodological perspective, we started by setting a timeframe (the period 1969–1972) and selecting a corpus of 51 relevant documents (official and confidential correspondence between the members of the Werner Committee and associated figures — a total of 25 people). We then established an encoding method, with a system for classifying the aims of each document (analysis, information, political influence, etc.), the relationships between correspondents, the subjects covered ('economic union', 'monetary union', 'political union', 'institutions', etc.) and, finally, areas of agreement and disagreement. On this basis, we manually extracted relational data which describe the complexity of the interactions between correspondents. This opened up a bird's eye perspective of how the debates developed within the group as well as an overview of the process as a whole. We visualised this data using NodeXL and RAW by Density Design.

In our presentation we will pay particular attention to the added value of this method for historical research. The application of this method has so far provided us with four types of results. We have been able to 1) confirm and consolidate the conclusions of traditional research; 2) provide a relevant visual representation of the processes: the diagrams and graphs showing relationships proved to be essential in exploring and interpreting the data [3]; 3) decipher the information contained in primary sources in a different way, over and above a traditional human interpretation, and reveal new conclusions or avenues for research; 4) in a broader sense, reinvent and enhance the traditional methods used by historians. These digital technologies enabled us to identify recurrences and regular patterns in all the documents and

1 *Figure 1: Subjects raised by each correspondent (two-node network)*





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[2] DANESCU, Elena. Research corpus 'A rereading of the Werner Report of 8 October 1970 in the light of the Pierre Werner family archives', CVCE. 2012. Source: http://www.cvce.eu/recherche/unit-content/-/unit/en/ba6ac883-7a80-470c-9baa-8f95b8372811
[3] DÜRING, Marten. *From Hermeneutics to Data to Networks: Data Extraction and Network Visualization of Historical Sources*, 2015. Source: http://programminghistorian.org/lessons/creating-network-diagrams-from-historical-sources#about-the-case-study. See also https://cvcedhlab.hypotheses.org/125; https://cvcedhlab.hypotheses.org/106.