

Frank Pfetsch (1936-2021)

Obituaries and Nachrufe on Prof. Frank Pfetsch

Source: Institute for Political Science, Heidelberg University
< <https://www.uni-heidelberg.de/politikwissenschaften/> >



The Institute for Political Science at the Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg mourns the death of Professor Dr. Frank R. Pfetsch

He passed away on 18 November 2021. Our thoughts and sympathy are with his family and loved ones.

Frank R. Pfetsch was a professor at our institute from 1979 until his retirement in 2003. His research areas were diverse, with a particular focus on international relations. Here, on the one hand, he devoted himself to conflict research, which he left a lasting mark on in Heidelberg, as can be seen in particular in the founding of the Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research (HIK), which continues to develop his work to this day. On the other hand, Frank Pfetsch distinguished himself as an internationally recognised expert in the field of European integration. Among other things, this is evidenced by the Jean Monnet Professorship of the European Commission, which he was awarded in 1999. In addition, Frank Pfetsch has taught and influenced generations of students and graduates of the IPW.

The Institute for Political Science at Heidelberg University will gratefully honour Frank Pfetsch's memory for his many years of commitment to our subject, our institute and our university.

Source: Reimut Zohlh fer, in: [RNZ](https://www.rnz.de/kultur-tipps/kultur-regional_artikel,-wegweisender-politologe-frank-r-pfetsch-im-alter-von-85-jahren-gestorben-_arid,782770.html), 4 December 2021 < https://www.rnz.de/kultur-tipps/kultur-regional_artikel,-wegweisender-politologe-frank-r-pfetsch-im-alter-von-85-jahren-gestorben-_arid,782770.html >

Frank R. Pfetsch has died at the age of 85.

With his enthusiasm and very special approach, he left his mark on generations of students.

By Reimut Zohlh fer

Heidelberg. Political science examines many fields that are important for living together: from the major questions of state philosophy to processes of constitution-making to political decision-making. Professor Frank R. Pfetsch has dealt with all these topics in his many years at the Heidelberg Institute for Political Science.

Frank Pfetsch had studied economics and political science between 1956 and 1964, in Karlsruhe, Berlin and, of course, Heidelberg, but also in Italy, France and at the renowned Harvard University in the USA. His academic interests were as broad as his education. He received his doctorate in Heidelberg in 1965 with a thesis on the development of the fascist F hrerstaat, and his habilitation in 1973 on the history of German science policy. With this work, he had basically done political field analysis *avant la lettre*, a sub-discipline that only entered German political science on a broader scale a decade later. He remained associated with this branch later on, when he dealt with constitutional processes.

Appointed professor in Heidelberg in 1979, Pfetsch concentrated more on international relations in the years that followed. In 1981, two books on German foreign policy were published, some of which were translated into English and reprinted several times. His 1994 textbook on international relations was also translated, this time into French. He researched international conflicts particularly intensively and founded the Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research (HIK), which continues to develop his work today. In this way, Frank Pfetsch established a unique data basis for conflict research.

He also researched cooperation and international negotiations. The European Union played an important role in this, to which Pfetsch dedicated two books. Clear evidence of his expertise in this field is undoubtedly the award of the Jean Monnet Chair by the European Commission in 1999. His numerous visiting professorships (in Paris, Pittsburgh or Seoul, among others) as well as his six-year work in the presidium of the European Political Science Association underline his broad international impact.

After his retirement in 2003, Frank Pfetsch remained academically active and continued to publish. Among other things, the third edition of his major work on political theorists from ancient Greece to the present day was still published in 2019, a writing that illustrates the immense breadth of his academic knowledge. With his enthusiasm and specific approach, he left his mark on generations of students. Frank R. Pfetsch died on 18 November at the age of 85.

Translated with www.DeepL.com/Translator (free version)

Personal Obituary of the Editor

I met Frank Pfetsch when I was studying political science at the Institute for Political Science (IPW) at Heidelberg University (1967-1976) when he had become a professor at the IPW in

1976. He was the second examiner in my oral exams for my Dr. phil degree in June 1976. Later he contributed a book chapter to vol. 1 of my Hexagon book series published in 2003 by Springer Publishers in Heidelberg-Berlin on:

“Conflicts in and among Mediterranean Countries (1945-2001)”, in: Hans Günter Brauch, P. H. Liotta, Antonio Marquina, Paul Rogers, Mohammad El-Sayed Selim (Eds.): *Security and Environment in the Mediterranean – Conceptualising Security and Environmental Conflicts*. With Forewords by the Hon. Lord Robertson, Secretary General of NATO, and the Hon. Amre Moussa, Secretary General of the League of Arab States (Berlin – Heidelberg – New York: Springer, 2003): 145-145-156.

Based on a research project of Frank R. Pfetsch the *The Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research* (HIIK) emerged in 1991 as an independent and interdisciplinary registered association, established by his students that has survived for more than three decades located based on donations and grants at the Department of Political Science at the University of Heidelberg that has since 1991 published annually a Conflict Barometer with topical research results. Thus, the HIIK inspired by Frank R. Pfetsch’s teaching has become a lasting legacy beyond his death that has been started by the commitment of his former students and maintained by subsequent generations of students and junior scholars at the IPW.

Cuernavaca (Mexico), 20 December 2021

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