



EUROPEAN SOCIAL WORKER



International Federation of Social Workers – European Region

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Special Interest:

- European Seminar 2005 - Cyprus
- Global Seminar 2006 - Germany
- European Seminar 2007 - ??????.

Country Highlights:

Romania

Turkey

Portugal

Spain

Denmark

Russia

Great Britain

France

Ireland

Bulgaria

First steps for National Federation of Romanian Social Workers

Even though it is a very young organisation, The National Federation of Romanian Social Workers has already succeeded in imposing itself upon both the professional social workers and the authorities.

After only one year of existence, with backing from World Learning by Child Net Project, National Federation of Romanian Social Workers (FNASR) organised The First National Conference of Social Workers. More than 150 social workers were present at the event, representing all the locations of Romania. Due to this conference, FNASR deposed at the Labour Ministry the Social Worker's Statute, The Ethic Code and also The Statute of Social Workers College.

The developing strategy of the Romanian Federation is looking for representing more and more organisations from the entire country so that it would represent as many social workers as possible. In

this respect, three new organisations have already expressed their will to become part of FNASR and they have already been evaluated.

The relationship with IFSW has opened brand new horizons of collaboration for us, has made us believe even more in our meaning and power and has also improved the image of the National Federation of Romanian Social Workers with both internal authorities and foreign organisations.

For the near future, we want to make the Federation be more representative, to enact The Ethical Code and the two statutes and to organise the second National Conference of Social Workers. We also want to attain new interesting projects with other IFSW organisations. We, Romanian social workers, salute our IFSW colleagues, hoping that we shall all have the power to make this world a better place for each person, group and community.

News from Turkey

The Sixth National Social Work Conference was held May 20-22 in Ankara, Turkey. The main theme of the conference was globalization, social justice and social work.

At the same time the efforts to restructure social work services in Turkey are continuing.

The association's educational activities for our members are also

continuing: We started four new programs for social workers:

- a) Family Education and Family Counseling
- b) Education for Adolescent Counseling
- c) Drama and Social Work
- d) Communication Skills for Social Workers

WORKING IN SOLIDARITY IN PORTUGAL – “THE KNOWLEDGE SERVING OTHERS”

Dra Joaquina Madeira

Institute of Solidarity and Social Security-Portugal

(Instituto de Solidariedade e Segurança Social- Portugal)

The occurrence of fires of big proportions that happened in several districts of our country, simultaneously and with more intensity due to the climate, has caused the adoption of exceptional measures from our Government through a Council of Minister's Resolution, which declared several districts national disaster areas. After the 20th of July, 2003, as soon as alerted to the serious consequences, multi-disciplinary teams began treating the affected populations.

In each district, teams of Social Workers, Psychologists, Sociologists, Child Educators, Lawyers, Engineers and others, working for the Social Security Services, Municipalities, Civil Protection Services and Health Centers, have proceeded to the survey of the situation, evaluate needs and started giving support in a material and psychological way.

In addition, the Council of Minister's Resolution, has created a Coordination and Control Committee including members from several governmental departments and has developed a process that made it possible to

intervene quickly on the complex social problems which the teams had to handle on the local level.

We had to act effectively, supporting at the right moment, diagnosing, evaluating situations, giving material and psychological help, working in different services with the purpose of doing the best we could, as soon as we could and in the most efficiently and technical way.

Throughout the process Social Workers worked on the multi-disciplinary teams on the front line throughout the emergencies and afterwards.

This work goes on, even if on a different level, because it is necessary to try to rebalance the families, rebuild the houses, and act on the social and economical situations.

The role of these almost 60 Social Workers involved in this operation has been of a great importance, they have been on the front line as well as on the planning committees, due to their training and commitment in serving the community

CONSEJO GENERAL DE COLEGIOS OFICIALES DE DIPLOMADOS EN TRABAJO SOCIAL Y ASISTENTES SOCIALES

The Spanish Association of Social Workers is the highest representative, coordinating and executive body... of the regional Official Associations of Social Workers.

The Spanish Association of Social Workers (Consejo General de Colegios Oficiales de Diplomados en Trabajo Social y Asistentes Sociales) is the highest representative, coordinating and executive body, both at the national and international levels, of the regional Official Associations of Social Workers.

The government bodies are the Government Board, elected each four years, and the General Meeting. It consists of the Presidents of the regional organizations and the members of the Government Board. Nowadays there are 36 regional official organizations in Spain.

This organization has as a clear priority

the development of the profession of Social Work. It promotes educative projects and events in order to improve the quality of the Social Services. Also to extend the action fields of the social workers taking advantage of their major experience assisting vulnerable groups of people and their wide knowledge of social policy, both at planning and execution levels.

The organization publishes a professional magazine "Social Services and Social Policy". It has become in a major way of disseminating the knowledge, experiences and contributions of social workers.

(continued on page 7)

Economic thinking in programmes for children and young people at risk

By Mette Grostol, Social Policy Officer in the National Federation of Social Educators in Denmark (SL)

The priority of programmes for children and young people at risk up till now

In Denmark the number of placements of children and young people has been steadily increasing during the past 10 years. This is primarily due to the increase in birth rate, but also the frequency of placements away-from-home of children and young people has also increased a little during this period. The number of alternative programmes to placements offered to children and young people and their families has increased a lot during the period. These measures have actually doubled from 1993 to 2002.

The local authorities and the Danish Parliament have given political priority to the children and young people who need special support – both in regard to placements and in regard to alternative and preventive measures.

All together, the increase in expenses for children and young people at risk has been relatively high compared to other public areas of operation. Further, due to the increase in birth rate one would expect that the expenses would continue to increase in the years to come. During the past couple of years the increase of expenses in the area, and not least the expected future increase, have made both the government and the local authorities make strong attempts to introduce economic thinking in the child and youth area.

The idea is to introduce economic thinking in the measures through an economic discourse and through tools for economic management of the area.

The economic discourse is seen by the fact that economy and the need for economic thinking in the area are promoted on all occasions. Analyses of the economic development are initiated; agreements are made between the government and the local authority organizations on stopping growth; the press and platforms are used, etc. A very unrealistic projection of the economic development stating that the expenses to children and young people at risk will exceed the expenses for day care in general in Denmark within the next ten years is both a conclusion of the development and a means to introduce the economic discourse. Recently, in December 2003 the Ministry of Social Affairs sent a letter of intent to all local authorities proposing

tools for economic management of the area.

The economic tool

An important tool in the introduction of economic thinking is modified financing of the expenses in the area. An important element in the priority of the measure up till now has been the fact that the expenses in the area used to be shared between local authorities and counties. The expenses for the local authority or the county have not charged the budget with the full expenses. From 2002 this financing has been modified so that local authorities and counties are each responsible for fully financing their services. However, this should be understood in the way that the local authorities pay a fixed basic rate, when they use services provided by the county.

Is the economic thinking successful?

These years there is great pressure on the measures for children and youth at risk in Denmark. The question is whether the government and the local authorities will succeed in introducing economic thinking in the area. The modified financing of expenses in the area is still in a transition phase, but the question is still relevant. There are two aspects to the question: First, it is a question whether the development will change. Will there be fewer expenses in the area? Second, it is a question whether economic resources will be accepted as a factor in the decisions about the children and young people at risk - which they have not been up till now.

Fewer resources?

We do not know yet, whether fewer resources are spent on children and young people at risk now. The National Federation of Social Educators (SL) made a survey in October 2003. At that time it seemed that the development had turned. It seemed that several years of priority to the measures for children and young people at risk had been replaced by a changed attitude and fewer and less expensive placements. But we do not know yet. The official figures for the most recent development in Denmark are from 2002, and we are still waiting for new figures.

It is still the professional assessment that counts (continues on page 7)

Social Work and problems of social organizations in Russia

Russia is a developing social work organization facing numerous issues.

According to the experience of foreign associations, the activity of such social institutions is supported on the material basis, provided by its members, social formations, and structural units of these associations. In this case Association or Alliance can completely realize social projects, support activity, protection of its members.

Looking at western experience foreign social workers associations are more developed both in social and economical relations.

In condition of our situation stimulating initiatives of social work come to a great degree from public organizations, collaborators of which are prompted first of all by inner sense to help vulnerable people in the

society and by voluntary desire.

In this sense social work is a unique profession, if we talk about as specialized activity. In this profession as at no one else, the estrangement from the work will reflect very much, if a person himself isn't interested in his activity.

As social workers we understand all advantages and restrictions at this area. So the main motivated facts of social workers' activity are the demand in collaborative work, to help to each other and develop social work idea of the society.

However, the activity of the Union can be realized only if its members have self-awareness.

The existence of both the Union and its

structural branches depends on following the Charter of the organization and its instructions of membership fees. Otherwise the Union has to consider the cancellation of its branches.

The Union faces other problems as well:

- lack of state support;
- low interest of social institutions in social field;
- lack of stable funding;
- lack of coordination Board of social services;
- lack of interested members in social work;
- lack of legal security of social workers;
- lack of united system of subordination in social field.

Justice for Europe's Children THE SIXTH KILBRANDON CHILD CARE LECTURE

By Maud de Boer-Buquicchio

Deputy Secretary, General Council of Europe, Glasgow, on 1 December 2003

The speech is in English and includes a summary of the main human rights and children's rights instruments which apply to children and young people in Europe.

Concluding remarks

The speech concludes:

"Children's rights are often violated because governments are not doing enough and sometimes because they are doing too much. This must change. The bottom line is that children are not mini-adults with mini-rights. They are human beings with all human rights and some special needs. The Council of Europe is doing its share to protect children's fundamental rights and put them above

political considerations. Our focus today must be to develop a comprehensive and coherent approach which will bring together all measures and instruments aimed at protecting the well being of children. They must be put at the centre of our efforts. The Council of Europe will continue to develop ever higher standards and insist that member States apply them to the letter. The protection of children is not just an area of governmental responsibility. It is the ultimate test of its worth.

"Children's rights are often violated because governments are not doing enough and sometimes because they are doing too much.

See <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/education/jfec.pdf> for the text.

France – Dealing with an Ethical Crisis

...there are draft proposals in government which would force social workers to reveal names of families...

In essence, there are draft proposals in government which would force social workers to reveal names of families to the local mairie in circumstances where there is concern about crime and anti-social behavior. The French social workers see this as a breach of confidentiality and a fundamental attack on professional ethics.

They had a strike on 17 March and there will be further regional demonstrations on 21 April.

L'ANAS appelle les assistant(e)s de service social à se mobiliser le 21 avril prochain. Il s'agit de continuer d'agir au sein des collectifs locaux qui s'opposent à l'avant projet de loi sur la prévention de la délinquance. Une nouvelle version ne modifierait rien sur le fond et l'esprit du projet initial notamment sur le secret professionnel. Rappelons que l'ANAS participe au collectif unitaire en tant que membre de la Conférence Permanente des Organisations Professionnelle du Social (CPO) qui regroupe les associations de travailleurs sociaux. C'est à ce titre que nous soutenons et participons aux actions menées pour la défense du secret professionnel et pour le respect de la vie privée des personnes auprès de qui nous agissons.

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respect de la vie privée des personnes auprès de qui nous agissons.

Malgré la mobilisation des professionnels des secteurs sociaux, sanitaires et éducatifs et notamment la journée de grève du 17 mars 2004 qui a vu plusieurs milliers d'entre eux descendre dans la rue pour dire " non à la délation, oui à la prévention" le nouveau gouvernement continue sa politique et ne devrait pas modifier les méthodes du précédent : opacité manœuvre et dissimulation.

Le collectif national unitaire

- réaffirme sa revendication d'abandon de l'ensemble de l'avant projet de loi dit de prévention de la délinquance.
- -Appelle l'ensemble des professionnels des secteurs concernés à rester vigilants, à s'organiser dans les collectifs locaux unitaires qui se développent et à prendre toute initiative qu'ils jugeront utiles.
- -Appelle notamment à multiplier les interpellations des élus locaux (maires, députés, conseillers généraux) autour de la charte contre la délation.
- -Appelle à participer massivement à la journée du 21 avril 2004, dans toutes les régions ou départements. Pour la région Ile de France rassemblement de 15h à 20 heures à la Fontaine des Innocents aux Halles (métro Châtelet les Halles).

News from Ireland - January 2004

Ombudsman for Children

Ireland's first Ombudsman for Children was appointed last December and begins work in early 2004. This is a welcome development following many years of lobbying for such a post. The new Ombudsman, Emily Logan, is a nurse by profession. She is a former Director of Nursing in a Children's Hospital and Director of Nursing in a general hospital in Dublin.

The role of the Ombudsman will be to **A)** protect children's

rights by conducting investigations into complaints regarding specific violations of their rights and **B)** promote the rights of children in all aspects of public policy and practice.

Counseling and Social Work

The issue of social workers and counseling raises its head quite often in Ireland. Recently, a situation arose where social workers were unable to apply for some counseling posts because our social work

Activities of the Bulgarian Association of Social Workers

Velina Kostova, coordinator international relations, velina_k@usa.com, velinakostova@usa.com

◆BASW was engaged by UNDP to provide services in connection with UNDP's nationally-executed Project BUL/02/001 – "Social Services against New Employment" /SANE/: Preparation and conducting training of social assistants for the provision of social services community. SANE has been initiated by the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy

The main objective of the project is to pilot a new employment promotion scheme for people at pre-retirement age in exchange of the delivery in-house social services to vulnerable people. The project's objective is to expand the menu and enhance the quality of social services as well as to improve the social infrastructure in several pilot municipalities /Blagoevgrad, Botevgrad, Etropole, Pravec/ At present, the project is in the last phase. BASW has already finished training modules and has prepared social assistants manual.

◆BASW was represented by Herbert Paulischin at the European Seminar in Copenhagen

◆Meeting with social workers from Austria, who visited several institutions and NGO in Bulgaria, which work with children.

◆BASW took part at the Summer school – Train the trainers Program, organized by Twining Project – "Child Welfare Reform"

◆BASW tried to organize Balkan conference on Social Work in cooperation with Banat Association of Social Workers. The project did not support by Open Society – East Program and it was postponed for March 2004.

◆BASW General meeting. There were some changes in our mission, strategy and structure:

Mission; BASW works for the establishment of a sustainable and developing community of social workers

for improving the social policies and practices in the Republic of Bulgaria.

BASW's strategic aims:

To support the professional development of the people carrying out social work:

To support the development of autonomous and independent communities of social workers in the country

To modify the social policy in Bulgaria through reviewing the experience and social practices.

◆On the 11th of November 2003, members of BASW and two non – governmental organizations from Bourgas, working with people with disabilities – Association of Family Support and Social Work and Center for Emotional and Psycho- social Researches and Therapy, organized press conference for the International social work action day. In the event participated representatives from Bourgas Free University, students in social work, local mass medias and two people with disabilities. The event started with history of SWAD, presentation of International Federation of Social Workers and short description of events celebrating SWAD from EU countries. Professional social workers from both NGOs presented their work with disabled people, with accent to social work practice with people with disabilities, the necessity for coordination between institutions and professionals for adequate service of their needs.

◆Meeting with David Jones, IFSW Europe Vice President, Ana Radulescu, IFSW Europe Honorary Secretary, Herbert Paulischin AFSW Chairman according to our future cooperation

Ukrainian Association of Social Pedagogues and Specialist in Social Work – developing a curriculum for social work education on HIV/AIDS Prevention and Care

In December 2003 CCF Ukraine in cooperation with Ukrainian Association of Social Pedagogues and Specialists in Social Work have started implementation of project "Partnership for the Improvement of HIV Prevention and Care in the context of Social Work Education in the Ukraine", which is funded by European Union, Tacis Program.

Today Ukraine is in front of impetuous expansion of HIV/AIDS epidemic. UNAIDS experts estimate that almost 1% of the adult Ukrainian population is affected. Fast spreading of HIV in Ukraine affects dramatically different spheres of society: medical, social, ethical and economical. The analysis of situation has shown the lack of special knowledge and additional training course for social

workers, who work in sphere in HIV/AIDS prevention and care.

For the first time in Ukraine in the framework of project "Partnership for the Improvement of HIV Prevention and Care in the context of Social Work Education in the Ukraine" curricular for preparation and certification of specialist in issues of HIV/AIDS prevention and care will be developed, which will improve quality of social services and HIV/AIDS prevention and care for people with HIV. This kind of curricular will be developing in Ukraine in the first time.

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CONSEJO GENERAL DE COLEGIOS (continued from P. 2)

Next October we will celebrate the X National Conference of Social Work. Some of the main goals of this National Conference are:

To discuss about the response to the new human needs and realities within an independent and globalizing world.

To focus on the intercultural reality and the role of the Social Work in the different Social Policies responding to immigration and social inclusion

To discuss about the ethics of Social Work in the new personal professional and social conditions

Economic thinking in ... (continued from page 3)

If the economic resources as well as the professional knowledge were to be used as a basis for a decision on a measure it would be a substantial change of attitude in the area. In 2002, in consultation with the parliament the Danish minister of social affairs stated the following, "According to the Act on Social Services it is the need for special support in the form a placement away-from-home which decides whether the service should be offered. It is indeed very far from the Act and the intentions of the current child regulations to let economic considerations dictate that a child cannot receive such support, if a certain economic limit has been reached in the local authority". And she goes on, "In my opinion it is against the law to take children and young people out of their placement merely for the sake of saving and without agreement with the plans that have been decided in the individual placement case" (from consultation in the Social Committee of

the Parliament, 4 September 2002).

In February 2004 the minister of Social Affairs repeated that it is the professional assessment of the child's current needs and how the measure can meet the child's needs that count. The decision must be based on the professional assessment. The minister of social affairs promised to send an addition to her letter of intent (mentioned above) that specifies this conclusion to all local authorities. The ministry has actually sent out this message recently.

The answer to the question about the importance of the economic resources for decisions in the area is thus that this is not acceptable. The professional assessment should decide the measure

Irish...

(Continued from page 5)

qualification was not accepted. The Irish Association of Social Workers (IASW) believes that counseling is integral to professional social work and is taking steps to address this issue. We would like, therefore, to hear the views of colleagues and how it is dealt with in your country.

The IASW

The IASW is at a crossroads in its history. The membership is falling even though the number of employed social workers in the country is rising. For the last few months there have been many discussions as to where the Association is going

in the future. One respected commentator, a former social worker, has suggested that the problem lies in the fact that the social work profession in Ireland is too fragmented amongst various organizations and groups each representing varying aspects of social work.

While this fragmentation is a threat to our development, it also offers an opportunity to review our position. In this positive light, our challenge can be to put the IASW at the centre of this network of interest groups and organizations so that it becomes the instrument that links them all together on behalf of the profession in Ireland.