



ifsw

international federation of social workers

fédération internationale des assistants sociaux
federación internacional de trabajadores sociales

Europe

European Delegates Meeting

Yerevan – 27- 29 April 2012

Minutes

Countries in attendance:

1. Armenia
2. Austria
3. Belgium
4. Bulgaria
5. Denmark (with a proxy for Croatia)
6. Finland
7. France
8. Germany
9. Georgia
10. Macedonia
11. Malta
12. Norway (with a proxy for the Faroe Islands)
13. Portugal
14. Romania
15. Russia
16. Spain
17. Sweden (with a proxy for Iceland)
18. Switzerland
19. Turkey
20. United Kingdom (with proxy for Ireland)

Observers

None

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Key decisions are noted in bold text

1. Welcome and Formalities

The European President, Nicolai Paulsen welcomed delegates and observers and formally opened the meeting.

Mira Antonyan then welcomed delegates on behalf of the Armenian Association. She wants everyone to enjoy their time in Armenia. She thanked colleagues who took part in the Armenian conference yesterday. She said that the Delegates Meeting being held in Armenia had supported the Armenian Association with many more social workers asking to join the Association.

Nicolai Paulsen explained to the meeting that Hamdi Boja, representing Kosova, had not been able to get to the meeting. Mira Antonyan and Nicolai Paulsen explained what support had been provided for Hamdi to help him obtain a visa. Nicolai Paulsen recommended that the Federation write to the Minister for Social Affairs to complain about this. The UK expressed their agreement with what had been said, they feel that it is a good thing that the Delegates Meeting has come to Armenia, the experience with Hamdi has highlighted that social work is an activity that should be without borders. The meeting agreed that a letter should be sent.

The President gave a particular welcome to Macedonia who have not been present for some time at a Delegates Meeting. He also gave a formal welcome to the Secretary General, Rory Truell who has been appointed since the last meeting.

Meeting Appointments

It was proposed that Herbert Paulschin be appointed as Parliamentarian for the meeting.

Proposed: Bulgaria

Seconded: Austria

Carried unanimously

Election Officer

John Brennan from Ireland is the election officer. He is not able to be present at the meeting. **The Executive proposed that Juan José Gutiérrez Curras from Spain be appointed as election officer.**

Proposed: France

Seconded: Austria

Carried unanimously

Tellers

The Executive suggested that Finland and Bulgaria provide the tellers for the meeting.

Proposed: Norway

Seconded: Germany

Carried unanimously

	<p>Approval of the agenda and timetable</p> <p>Nicolai Paulsen explained the proposed timetable for the management of the agenda.</p> <p>The President asked if the agenda could be approved.</p> <p><i>Proposed: Germany</i> <i>Seconded: Denmark</i> Carried unanimously</p>
<p>2.</p>	<p>Minutes of the Delegates Meeting, Brussels 2011</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting, which were circulated after the meeting in Brussels and again in preparation for this meeting, were raised.</p> <p>Denmark commented that there is too much detail in the minutes. The President said that previously, we have been asked to write detailed minutes and comments have been made that they are helpful to people who are not present. The Executive will however, reconsider how to keep the minutes. They will particularly look at how key decisions can be recorded.</p> <p>The President asked if the minutes could be approved.</p> <p><i>Proposed: Turkey</i> <i>Seconded: Portugal</i> Carried unanimously</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>Matters arising from the minutes</p> <p>Romania asked whether the second stage of the project, specifically the issue on fundraising, which was discussed last year, will be reported on in this year's meeting. The President said that this will be discussed.</p> <p>There were no other matters arising.</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>Presentation of the Executive Committee</p> <p>4.1 Introduction to four overall themes represented in the work programme</p> <p>The President explained that the work programme of IFSW Europe e.V. is structured around four core items – human rights, social policy, professional development and organisational development. The President said that the Executive have worked hard since the last Delegates Meeting. The Executive has involved the first deputy for a year. The capacity of the Executive committee remains a challenge.</p> <p>The President explained that he will not be standing for election again. He feels that he is leaving the position at a good time; the region is strong and has a good team in the Executive. A Secretary General is also now in position. The UK thanked Nicolai for the work he has done during his time as President.</p>

Barbara Molderings gave a presentation of the work of the EU committee. She had previously circulated a report for the delegates. Barbara explained that a number of people within the Executive are present within EU institutions, in addition to members of the EU committee. Barbara feels that the work has led to some positive success – for example, in previous documents from EU institutions and the Social Platform, they had only made reference to social care, now they make specific reference to social work, so our voice is being heard more. She said it is important that this is an area where the Executive needs to continue to focus efforts.

Gabriele Stark-Angermeier gave a presentation on her role as the representative to the Council of Europe. Gabriele said it is a very good success for IFSW Europe e.V. that Antonina has become involved in the key pillars of the Council of Europe. Romania asked if it would be possible for Gabriele to circulate information on conferences which may be useful to member organisations. Gabriele said some conferences are open – however, often there is very limited time available and the funding is very limited. However, Gabriele will reflect on this and see if this is possible. Romania also asked if someone could take responsibility for collating all of the documents published by the Council of Europe that relate to professional practice. Gabriele said this will be too large a task – as there is so much information available.

4.2 Human Rights

Graça André from Portugal, as the IFSW European contact person for the Global Human Rights Commission, gave a report on her work. She talked about the project “Social Workers Realising Human Rights.” A number of member countries have become involved in this project – Austria, Belgium, Georgia, Ireland, Portugal, Spain and Turkey. There will be a workshop at the conference in Stockholm about the project.

Maria Moritz then discussed the situation in Hungary since the Delegates Meeting last year. She feels that the situation is not getting any better. However, social workers have come together in support of social workers in Hungary. A great deal of solidarity was demonstrated when we got the news about Norbert Ferencz. She thanked member organisations who had taken action and protested about the situation in Hungary. Belgium said it would be good to have more precise information about where to write a letter of protest. Maria said she has a meeting with the Hungarian Association soon, she will pose this question to them. Austria said that they had contacted the Hungarian Embassy and this was useful in making their protest heard.

Klaus Kuehne talked about his position as the main representative of IFSW at the UN in Geneva. He will not be standing again for the IFSW Executive as he will focus on his position as UN representative. He feels that it is important that members know about the review of human rights which takes place – each country's Government has to produce a report – but a shadow report is also carried out by NGOs. It is useful for social work organisations to be involved in this shadow report. He will provide information on the schedule of dates so that members know when their country is due for the review. It is also possible for people to follow these review discussions on the internet. He said that this could be a good way to engage social workers with issues of human rights.

Ian Johnston then talked about his work as an Executive member representing IFSW Europe e.V. on the Fundamental Rights Platform (FRP), a network of more than 300 organisations committed to human rights and social justice established by

the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) and the Social Platform Fundamental Rights Working Group (FRAND). He said that a range of useful resources on human rights issues compiled by FRA can be accessed on the internet and on smartphones

said that he feels that both FRA and FRAND are now listening to the social work voice. He is drafting a strategy for IFSW's work on human rights with the following objectives:

To promote awareness amongst practising Social Workers and their managers of the scope, terms and intention of the Human Rights Act and UN Conventions on the Rights of the Child and those challenged by illness or disability and the mechanisms for challenging the abuse of such rights and pursuing redress when they have been violated.

To secure greater recognition of the responsibility Social Workers carry on behalf of the rest of society to identify and challenge the abuse of human rights and acknowledgement of the reciprocal requirement for employers to ensure that robust whistleblowing procedures support and protect them when they do so.

Ian suggested that our priorities for the forthcoming year should be:

To lobby training establishments and employers to ensure that human rights is a core element of qualifying training courses for social workers and their learning and development thereafter and review, update and widely distribute the IFSW publication "Standards in Social Work Practice – Meeting Human Rights.

To continue to play an active role in the Council of Europe and EU Fundamental Rights and Social Platforms with the aim of informing these bodies, politicians, and other opinion formers and decision makers of our role and the challenges faced by Social Workers and those using our services.

To disseminate research findings and other resources produced by these agencies and other recognised bodies to our member organisations and the wider social work community, promoting debate and feedback from a social work perspective.

To continue to voice concern over:

The disproportionately harsh impact austerity measures have had on those citizens who are already most disadvantaged and excluded.

The growing tendency to blame poor and marginalised people for society's ills and a related increase in the incidence of hate crime.

The wellbeing of young people facing unemployment in many parts of Europe.

The impact of health inequality on life expectancy.

The right to open a bank account and unjustifiable and discriminatory interest charges levied on poor people by banks and other lenders.

To lobby countries that deny children the protection in law from assault and other forms of demeaning treatment enjoyed by adults.

In this regard Ian drew delegates attention to IFSW's contribution to a research project carried out by the Global Alliance to End Corporal Punishment for Children focussing on alternative care settings. Hard copies of the final report are available for delegates here in Armenia and there is an electronic version for wider circulation..

Ian is concerned to ensure that what we are saying at Fundamental Rights and Social Platform Meetings reflects the views and feelings of member organisations

and urged delegates to let him know the human rights issues that they consider merit priority either during the meeting or afterwards.

Rory Truell said that he wanted to congratulate the Executive on their response to the Norbert Ferencz case. He said that the response after the issue was placed on the website was very significant. It not only supported Hungary, but also galvanised social workers generally and provided a collective experience. Rory also said that human rights issues are very important and we need to be pro-active – there are more downloads of the human rights manual than any other publication on the website for example, so social workers are very interested in this area.

Denmark said that they felt they could not comment on priorities – but they would like to hear Ian's views on priorities. Ian said that in addition to the fundamental rights of children, vulnerable adults and minority groups we should perhaps focus on the right of older people not to be separated from a partner where appropriate facilities to meet their needs together are not available. He commended the European Charter of Rights and Responsibilities for Older People in Receipt of Care to delegates, pointing out that this places a responsibility on those being cared for to ensure that those caring for them receive adequate respite. .

4.3 Social Policy

Project: Social Impact of the Financial Crisis

Nicolai Paulsen said that the project has developed since the last Delegates Meeting. The Executive facilitated a symposium in Brussels at the ENSACT Conference. The Executive also analysed the questionnaire returns and have released a statement, they have also fed back the findings of the questionnaire to key organisations in the EU.

Referring to the Final Report on the Project which had been circulated to member organisations in advance of the meeting, Ian Johnston summarised the action that has been taken in conjunction with other members of the Social Platform to convey our concern over the impact of the financial crisis on those using social services and those providing them to the European Commission and Parliament.

The DM were also advised that the Executive Committee are considering whether to submit an application for organisational membership of the European Anti Poverty Network (EAPN) to ensure that the voice of social workers is more prominent in campaigns to secure a fairer distribution of wealth and an end to poverty.

Ian drew delegates attention to a statement about the financial crisis that had been drafted for release following the DM if members are happy with the contents.

Anthea Agius gave a presentation on the application for EU funding for the proposed Phase 2 of the project. We were not successful. It was a very long project. Our application achieved a score of 77.75 and projects receiving a score of 82.25 were granted funding. 665 applications were received and 35 were granted funds. Anthea said that although we were not granted funds, we should view the outcome positively, as it will assist us to be more effective in future.

Nicolai Paulsen said that the Executive propose to close the project as a project now – but keep the issue on the agenda as part of an ongoing policy activity. Romania questioned why the project should be closed – he said that projects can

be submitted on many occasions for funding. Barbara Molderings, Honorary Treasurer, agreed that this issue continues and we will seek EU funding again.

Nicolai Paulsen then invited members to go into groups to discuss:

- how the financial crisis has impacted in countries
- what action has been taken in countries and what other action could be taken

Group one: Armenia, France, Malta, Russia, Turkey.

Each country has some specific issues, but economic struggles are common to all countries. In Turkey social services are expanding which was different to the other countries in the groups. In each country there are significant gaps between regions. 45% of people in Armenia live below the poverty line. There is a significant unemployment statistic in all of the countries.

In Malta and Russia there have been conferences and campaigns to attract public attention to the problems. Meetings have also been held with politicians. Russia used WSWD to attract attention to poverty and financial crisis issues.

Group two: Denmark, Norway, Spain, UK

This group recognised that there were different effects in different countries but all were being affected. The group discussed problems of homelessness. In the UK people are being forced to move because of living expenses which is effecting children and families. In the UK there are also problems with benefits being cut.

Group three: Belgium, Bulgaria, Georgia, Macedonia, Portugal

This group discussed some of the links between the financial crisis and human rights. Georgia and Macedonia are not EU countries so if they want to apply for EU funds they need an EU partner and they asked members to support them with partnerships. This group talked about applying for EU funds – they feel that we need to research this area more and have training in this area. This would help members to improve their capacity.

Group four: Austria, Denmark, Germany, Sweden, Switzerland

Germany and Austria on the one hand, are seen as the “winners” in the current financial crisis. However, all countries were experiencing cuts in different social services areas. At the EU level, they feel that there are more rules and regulations. The group felt it was important that member organisations look for solidarity in different countries to show strength. The cuts in services put solidarity at risk. This group also discussed the fact that Austria has very high levels of employment – they looked at why this is, and concluded that increased focus on social services creates employment and solidarity.

Ian Johnston commented that one method- of challenging financial cuts could be to use online software to generate electronic petitions and letters to Politicians at a National and European level.

Nicolai Paulsen explained that the Executive propose that this project will not continue as a project, rather we will be looking at specific social policy issues – many of which relate to the financial crisis. He asked members to communicate with the Executive if they feel that there are issues that need to be addressed on a European level.

The issue of funding remains a significant challenge for the region and for National organisations. This is being addressed within the Social Platform at present.

Denmark said that it is important to prepare for opportunities for involvement. For example, Denmark has a new Government – Denmark has been preparing for some time, to engage with the Government and now they are in meaningful dialogue with the Government. They feel it is important not only to criticise but also to prepare for changes to Government. Organisations should think about how they can be actively involved rather than just stand on the sidelines of reform.

Belgium said that there is a chance within the Social Platform to discuss the financial crisis. The problems that we have existed before the crisis and we did not have good answers for them. We need to discuss issues and consider solutions without always using the financial crisis as the focus of discussion. NGOs who struggle with finding funds and financial support should perhaps try to make partnerships with the commercial sector. Belgium feels that perhaps this is something to explore, even though it may be a struggle. We need to find win / win situations.

Georgia said that the National Association now has a strategy to support the Government in implementing social work. However, it may be more difficult to have influence in social policy decisions than in other countries. They would therefore be grateful for concrete advice and guidance from other countries. It is important to also consider that human rights are very diverse across Europe. Georgia feel that in the region including Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan human rights issues are very different and they would be keen to develop a regional perspective on these differences.

Romania said that the National budget is spending more money on training to address youth unemployment.

France said a working group on the financial crisis that also considers the human rights element.

Germany confirmed their support for the proposed press release but wished some amendments to the text. Ian and Gabriella to amend the statement for approval in conjunction with the work plan.

Ian Johnston said that it was interesting to hear about the regional differences. He would like to talk to people about any specific human rights issues, which can be kept confidential within IFSW Europe e.V. to begin with.

4.4 Professional development

Role and Identity of Social Work

A working group consisting of the UK, Georgia, Bulgaria and Armenia has been working on this area. This project came out of discussions at the last Delegates Meeting. The group developed a questionnaire to develop a baseline understanding of the state of social work in Europe.

18 countries returned the questionnaire. A number of countries present at the Meeting had not returned the questionnaire – Hilton Dawson encouraged all members to return the questionnaire.

The project has considered 4 areas:

Education: Salome Namicheishvili (Georgia) said that the main thing to come out of the questionnaire returns is the need to link education to practice. Most of the countries have a minimum of Bachelor level training for social workers. In countries where social work is emerging, there is a need for social work teachers and social work research. However, it is difficult for people with practice experience to become part of the education system in social work. Classes are very theoretical and do not have the practice element. Practice placements are vital and yet it is challenging to obtain placements. It is very important for Universities and practice environment to work together. There is a need for clear practice competences for all social workers. These will help link practice and academic studies.

Standards of practice: Mira Antonyan (Armenia) reported that of the countries that responded, 11 had standards of practice. Mira feels that it would be useful for different countries to share their standards with each other. Some countries have their standards in their legislation, but others felt it was not important to have standards regulated in legislation. Sometimes though standards are written by managers without a social work background which causes problems for social workers implementing the standards. A number of countries said that they have standards in some specialised areas. All countries said that where they do not have standards they are in the process of developing these. Many countries said that standards are in development.

Law relating to social work: Diana Petrova (Bulgaria) reported that 11 countries have no law on social work, 10 have no protection of title, 13 have no regulation, 10 have no legal definition of social work, 11 don't recognise the international code of ethics, no countries have a Minister for Social Work. Diana said that the most crucial issue for her is that so many countries have the current definition as a legal definition of social work.

Professional Associations: Hilton Dawson (UK) said that the organisations that responded represented at least 150,000 social workers across Europe. Membership includes some very small members with very little income. It also includes some larger organisations and some trade unions, and some member organisations are financially wealthy. Hilton said it is important to recognise and build on our strengths. Organisations will be richer working together much more. Hilton said that he feels that richer organisations need to support IFSW Europe e.V. more fully. There is a great disparity between member organisations. He feels that we should look at supporting development plans of smaller, developing organisations. Hilton also said that wealth and membership does not mean that organisations have a monopoly on the best ideas. Solidarity should also be about sharing ideas.

The working group suggested a number of recommendations: Diana said that she would like every country present at the meeting to complete the questionnaire. Hilton asked members to look at the questionnaire and give feedback on refining the questionnaire. Salome suggested that this questionnaire could be updated regularly so that IFSW Europe e.V. can hold vital updated information on member organisations.

Portugal said that it is important that we also consider the identity of social work with students. Students need to have the idea to think and debate. Teachers are asking for more and more, and students do not get the time to be critical.

Sweden asked the working group if they could send an email summary. Hilton

Dawson agreed to do this.

Klaus Kühne said that this was very good work, but it is difficult to keep it up to date. Klaus recommended that a wiki could be used to ensure that this information is kept up to date by members. Georgia commented that it can be difficult to look at standards for social workers in Georgia. What is being taught in schools is very different to the experiences that students have when they are in the field.

Rory Truell said that this was very interesting data; he would like to ask other regions if they are happy to complete the questionnaires too. He also feels that the data can be translated into concrete information. He feels that the EU will be interested in funding this too.

Norway said that this is some very interesting work, but there needs to be some more depth in some areas. They feel that it would be useful to ask Universities if they are interested in taking on some of the themes as MA or PhD research.

Turkey said that they are experiencing challenges now which other countries have faced, and others will face in the future. A few years ago there were three schools of social work in Turkey, now there are more than 40. It would be useful for IFSW Europe e.V. and the European Schools to work together to look further at European standards of social work education.

Macedonia said that they now have a law on social protection and they feel the role of social work is now clearer in Macedonia.

Germany said that they agree with Klaus Kühne that it would be useful to have something like a database on the website where members can keep the information on their country and their organisations up to date.

Promoting Workforce Mobility

Marjut Kosonen gave a presentation. BASW carried out a survey of international social workers. At the Delegates Meeting in 2008 there was an agreement that there is increased mobility of people who use social services and cross border mobility of social workers too. This leads to issues for professional organisations including:

- Mutual recognition of qualifications
- Ethical international recruitment
- Regulation of social workers and fitness to practice
- Protection of service users and movement of 'unfit' practitioners across borders
- Need for organisational recognition and support
- Orientation to workplace, training and support
- Intercultural competence for all social workers

Qualifications Directive

Anthea Agius gave a presentation about IFSW Europe's feedback on this. The feedback was co-ordinated by Maria Moritz, Ian Johnston and Anthea. The Directive is expected to be agreed by the European Parliament and Council by end of 2012. Concrete effects can be expected for 2014. The comments made by

IFSW Europe were referred to nine times in the report to the EU Parliament, so it is positive to see that our feedback is being used and read.

National and European Campaigning on the identity and role of social work

Ian Johnston gave a presentation on the research completed by Kings College on the diversity of social work qualifications across Europe. He said that the research report would be circulated to members again after the meeting. He would like people to check the data from their countries. Ian asked delegates to consider whether IFSW Europe should consider getting into partnership with Kings College research Unit and other bodies.

Romania congratulated the Executive on their work on this area, it is a very important area for social work.

Nicolai Paulsen emphasised the importance of the overview presented in this research, but also that it is very important that countries look at the details in the research report on their countries – as parts of the findings seem incomplete. Certainly some member organisations are not mentioned in the report.

Georgia said that a number of discussions relate only to EU countries; they wonder if separate discussions should be held for non EU member countries.

Belgium said that when there is a consultation from the EU, it is important to consider the political context of the call before responding.

Germany said that the Kings College research is not accurate on German issues – it only represents the views of one professor and not the German Association.

The UK said that a number of local authorities seek to employ overseas qualified social workers as they are dissatisfied with local universities. However, BASW feel that England is not a positive place for social workers to work. Social work is very poorly supported and is under recognised and under-valued. The reality of practice on the ground is oppressive and can be dangerous.

Nicolai Paulsen commented that the full Kings College research report has been circulated. It is available on line and as already stated we will circulate it again. Nicolai Paulsen said he had picked up this research and recognised that parts were inaccurate; therefore it would be good to challenge the research by commenting specific errors. He reinforced that the research was funded by the UK regulator and it is not an IFSW Europe e.V. report.

Groupwork then took place to discuss the issues raised around professional development:

Group one: Austria, Finland, Germany, Romania, UK

Talked about the movement of social workers across borders – there is a language issue. Many people may want to go to the UK as most speak English. A discussion took place about the fact that people will not have the knowledge they need about legislation etc. In the work programme the Executive committee should think about whether it is possible to get a service that provides information on what is needed to cross borders. Perhaps it would be possible to do a project with the EU on this area. All of this is dependent on IFSW having an overview and all member organisations being able to describe what social work is like in their country.

Group two: Bulgaria, Denmark, Sweden

They would like an “idiots guide” to the qualifications directive. They think it would be good for member organisations to give information to IFSW which can be placed on the website so that people can have information they need to cross borders. Bulgaria also felt it would be useful if member countries provided information on vacant positions in their countries so this could be provided to people looking for positions.

Group three: Belgium, Bulgaria, Georgia, Macedonia, Portugal, Turkey

Discussed difficulties that social workers have to be recognised in different countries. The group felt it would be good to add to the questionnaire to ask about the difficulties of students during their education. It would be useful to have a basic profile and job description of a social worker from different countries. This would be good to illustrate the difference with other types of social professional. We need to consider member organisations role to protect the title in their own countries. The role of National Associations is very important to achieve the goal to be officially recognised by the Government. Some Governments do not recognise the role of professional associations. Certain functions in the social field should be reserved for social workers.

Group four: Armenia, Denmark, Norway, Russia, Spain, UK

The presentations were very interesting. The issues raised by the Kings College report is useful. We should continue as IFSW Europe e.V. should continue to gather information – we should also challenge where other reports are not correct – for example the Kings College report. Russia volunteered to help with this work. The suggestion is that IFSW would facilitate information on the website – with a predefined template. Each National association should fill in the information on their country. The group also said it is important for member organisations to spread this information in their own countries. It is also important for member organisations to develop relationships with academics in colleges.

The UK commented that there was significant consensus in the groups about how important the issue of mobility of social work practitioners is. National Associations are crucially important in providing information but IFSW Europe e.V. should own the work and identify a person on the Executive to act as a leader for the project.

Nicolai Paulsen said that the leadership of this work would now go to the Executive but the Executive are happy to hear that members are keen to continue to be involved in the work. Members were encouraged to tell the Executive during the meeting if they are happy to be involved.

Ian Johnston said that the Executive gathered the information on the Kings College research as we felt that this may be useful and interesting to members. Denmark said that it is important that the Executive continue to work with the Kings College to ensure that the information is correct.

4.5 Organisational development

Cristina Martins, Executive committee member, gave a presentation on communication. She explained that she and Siobhan Maclean, Honorary Secretary, have specific responsibility for communication within the Executive. She said that the Executive are trying to improve communication within the Executive, with members and between members. One example of this is that a standard email was sent to all members before the last Executive meeting to invite them to add to the agenda.

Cristina said even small details can make a difference in improving communication, and she invited feedback from members.

Cristina explained that the DVD and song for social work will be produced in a hard copy and we will seek to sell these at conferences. Each member organisation will get one copy free.

Siobhan Maclean, Honorary Secretary gave a short presentation about the revised website. She asked for feedback from members about what they would like to see on the website.

Maria Moritz gave a short presentation on the development of a press strategy for the region. A press strategy is important to ensure that our messages are spread widely.

Germany thanked Cristina for all the work on communication. They use the DVD regularly in Germany. They have missed the regional website since the change.

Denmark said that the communication strategy is improving. They would like a strategy to be developed for communication on all levels – for example, with the Social Platform, the EU etc. Maria said that this is what the Executive are working towards.

Georgia said that they also use the DVD and they have it on their website. They would like to see links to member organisations websites on the Europe website.

Bulgaria said that they need letters from IFSW Europe sometimes to support applications and they are not sure who to contact for support – they have not had assistance. They would also like some advice on how to send information that can be loaded on the website.

Turkey said it is important to have member organisations news on the website – for example calls on national conferences.

Macedonia said that the website should be a place to share good practice and to get information about member organisation's activities.

Nicolai Paulsen said that he had further discussed the issues of the website with Rory Truell. It has been agreed that the website will be in place before Stockholm and it was agreed that Siobhan will have direct contact with Rory for any issues with the website. It is the longer term plan that the website will make links to member organisations.

Nicolai Paulsen said that we need to look at how we can improve the use of new media. We can improve our use of feedback. He also feels that we need to further look to capacity building and funding.

Last year the Executive included the first deputy in the Executive. Klaus has completed some good work. However, the Executive have evaluated that they would like to increase capacity in different ways – by involving people in specific projects.

Over the last year we have also been considering expanding memberships. We are hoping to have new member applications in Stockholm.

	<p>We have received an application from an umbrella organisation in Hungary which contains the former organisation. We are still experiencing difficulties with the applications from two organisations in Serbia – a co-ordinating body has not been set up. The Executive are continuing communication with the applicants.</p> <p>The UK said that there are some fundamentals about organisational development which mean that IFSW Europe e.V. needs more funding. They believe that member organisations should contribute a more significant amount where they can. Free membership should be offered to developing organisations. The UK feel that the Executive should focus on strategic development rather than being pulled into specific work streams. They should ensure that members do more of the specific work – they hope that the model which has developed from the role and identity project may assist in this.</p> <p>Nicolai Paulsen said that there have been discussions within the Executive about whether we should seek to appoint an Honorary Treasurer. He feels it may be useful to develop a working group to look at some of the issues raised in these discussions and invited anyone interested in joining this working group to approach the executive.</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>Report from the IFSW President and Secretariat (IFSW Global)</p> <p>Rory Truell, Secretary General</p> <p>Rory started by saying that this is the first time he has attended a European meeting. He feels that the region is very active and strong. He feels that his role is to build IFSW Global so that all of the regions are as strong as Europe.</p> <p>Rory explained that he has the following priorities for his role:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing outcomes • Aligning work activities • Making work more relevant for members <p>Turning the Global agenda into outcome standards is important and will be a key challenge for the working group. The agenda is an excellent social work document. It illustrates the way that social workers across the Globe are doing the same thing in different circumstances. However, outcomes which are relevant to each social worker need to be redeveloped.</p> <p>The website has been rebranded. The old website got a lot of traffic but people could not find their way around. There were some problems with the way that the IFSW Europe page was hosted on the main website and this disappeared. This is now being addressed.</p> <p>One of the concerns of IFSW Globally is that Charles Mbugua is having to stand down. This leaves a problem of leadership in Africa. A call has therefore gone out for financial support to develop leadership. This is included on the website.</p> <p>The consultative status that IFSW has in the UN is very important. There are now representative teams in each UN office. This work is now being more aligned – IFSW representatives are happy to hear about priorities from regions which can be addressed within the UN. UN representative can make a statement – which need to</p>

be limited to 500 words. Global made a statement about poverty eradication.

The Regional Presidents are now taking more responsibility for shared decision making as a group, therefore influencing decisions in other regions.

IFSWs links with the World Health Organisation are also important. Rory feels that we should tap into some of the WHO resources, and he would like to see IFSWs representation there growing.

World Social Work Day was a great success. The launch of the Global agenda for social work went very well. Helen Clark, who is Head of the UN Development Programme, said she was keen for the UN to partner with IFSW, ICSW and IASSW as the UN recognise the importance of social work.

Rory's vision and future plans include:

Campaigns – IFSW Global is happy to campaign and support member organisations.

Regional websites – these will be developed soon.

Social Work News Service – at present news items are placed on the website. However, this could be developed much more.

IFSW Connect – this will be a software system similar to Facebook. This will enable international collaboration. It will only be available to IFSW members – under the proposed new management structure.

Fundraising for regional development – Rory sees fundraising as a key issue. The first thing that IFSW need to do is increase basic finances. Because there are no administration systems in place we struggle to make applications for funding etc.

To create new funding opportunities – IFSW Global is proposing increasing membership criteria. Rory said that the current membership model does not meet demand, is exclusive and does not reflect the social work values of inclusion, partnership and strength, produces only minimal funding and does not build the brand of IFSW. The proposal for revising the membership criteria has been distributed. Rory feels that this model will act in a regulatory way, will encourage individuals to become more involved in international issues and will enable increased communication across the social work field.

Nicolai Paulsen invited comments.

Austria said they strongly support the new membership criteria ideas, but they do not support the language / wording. Membership implies voting and status and a right to attend meetings etc.

Germany said that two things are missing from the website – a contents list and links to European members. Also Gabriele Stark-Angermeier and Ulrik Frederiksen were on a Global working group looking at membership fees but the communication about this ceased last year. Germany agrees with Austria's comments about the proposals for new membership structures.

Switzerland said they are impressed with the ideas to improve the work of IFSW Global. Switzerland agrees with the proposals about new membership but asks why

the difference between individual membership and friends.

The UK said it is important to support the Secretary General by ensuring that many more funds must be provided to increase the capacity of the organisation. They agree though that individual membership is not workable – it could undermine the work of national organisations and regions perhaps. It is though a good model to enable individuals to contribute financially to the work of IFSW and to provide some kind of service for this. The UK feel that fee structures must be challenged. All regions will need to look at this to empower the organisations.

Denmark strongly supports the desire to obtain more funding. However, the Global Executive need to consider what we can offer for funding. Individual membership is not appropriate. IFSW is not part of the daily lives of many social workers. We need to look at how people can associate with IFSW in other ways, but the language of membership would be wrong.

Anthea Agius said that joining the Executive of IFSW Global has been a learning curve for her. Anthea agrees that obtaining more funding is appropriate. However, she agrees that this is not about membership of IFSW for individuals. Perhaps she feels that people could pay for membership of the online resource rather than membership of the organisation.

France support the idea of individual membership with no vote. However, the rights that individual members have must be made clear.

Germany commented that German law allows for corporate members and questions whether this has been considered by IFSW.

Sweden believe the new membership criteria is a good idea – it would promote the organisation. There would be many administrative issues though – especially for the difference between a friend and an individual member. It would be very difficult to identify who is a member of their national organisation and who is not.

Austria said that it is important to think of legal body issues. IFSW Global is still not a legal body – this is important to obtain funding.

Rory Truell commented that it was helpful to have the feedback on funding and proposed new membership. He said that the feedback was similar to other organisations. He responded to the questions that were raised as follows:

- The word membership is important to those individuals who have contacted Global. He recognises the concerns about the use of the word membership.
- Rory has looked up the statutes of many NGOs and sees that having two categories of membership is common to many NGOs. He feels that the constitution needs to be re-written anyway and this could be incorporated into the revised constitution.
- He responded that anyone who is already a lifetime friend would not have to pay again under the new structure and could chose to move to individual membership if they were eligible.
- Rory said that corporate members could become an associate member in the new structure. Anthea feels that more reflection is needed in relation to associate membership.

Maria Moritz said that she has another concern – if the aim is to be more inclusive – it is important to think about those social workers who are not members of national organisations as they cannot be members in the proposed structure.

Nicolai Paulsen said that this debate will continue in Stockholm and member organisations need to consider these issues in preparation.

Nicolai Paulsen raised concerns about the Europe webpage and explained to members that he was following this up in a meeting.

Denmark said that the Global website was an improvement on the previous website. Switzerland agreed that the new website was much improved.

Anthea Agius talked about her work at a Global level about the employer responsibilities. This was circulated by Rene Schegg – and Anthea is awaiting feedback from members. Anthea said that on a European basis, we have done a great deal of work on this area – however this is too detailed to be included in the Global paper because of the great diversity. However, it would be useful to do further work on employer standards in Europe. Ian is therefore currently working on a sister poster to the Charter of Rights. Germany said that what has been circulated is a link to the paper, but the link does not work. Members would prefer to receive this as an attachment to an email. Anthea will ensure that this is sent to members. She also encouraged members to let Global know when links do not work.

Nicolai Paulsen then gave a presentation on his work on the revision of the definition of social work. The process is developing and a draft definition will be presented before Stockholm for discussion at the General Meeting. The further process will then be agreed in Stockholm. Romania said that it took eight years to write the original definition, so they understand how long the process can be. Romania also feel that looking at the developments in social work since then, it is not possible to agree a Global definition of social work that will be acceptable to all countries. Maybe there should be a loose Global definition with regional details.

Turkey said that the process started in Dubrovnik with a web based questionnaire – and asked if there are any results to the questionnaire. Turkey wants a single definition of social work.

Bulgaria questioned why the definition needs to be changed. There should be very strong reasons to change this. Organisations in Bulgaria are just beginning to take the definition into consideration. It is important for Bulgaria for it to remain constant.

Austria said that they agree that there should not be a change. Many countries have the definition included in legislation – so if there are changes this will create problems.

Anthea Agius said she feels that we should have a Global definition as it provides unity and consistency. One definition is also important for lobbying.

Denmark said they are very happy that social work is developing in countries outside of Europe and North America. The main push for the change in definition is coming from areas where social work is developing quickly. We need to co-operate with these regions.

Switzerland has a position not to change the definition but to add to it for regions as necessary.

	<p>Denmark said that we need to have a progress schedule. So that there is a clear plan to ensure that all the regions have a clear discussion on the definition review.</p> <p>Belgium said that there are a range of documents available which could be used to review the definition. It is important to have one definition.</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>Consideration and amendments to the articles and bylaws of IFSW Europe</p> <p>6.1 Amendments to the articles</p> <p>No amendments were proposed.</p> <p>6.2 Amendments to the Bylaws</p> <p>The Executive have made and circulated two proposals. These were discussed in turn:</p> <p>1. Election procedures – amendment to Bylaw 4. These have been developed following the experiences last year. The Bylaws currently state that we need to continue to vote until there is a result. There has been no feedback on the proposed amendment from members. Germany said they would like to thank the Executive for trying to address the situation which may not occur again. The proposal allows the meeting to have more control of the situation in their view.</p> <p><i>Proposed: Denmark</i> <i>Seconded: Romania</i> Carried unanimously</p> <p>2. The Permanent Committee on EU Issues – amendment to Bylaw 5. The Executive propose to close down the permanent committee. Instead the Executive propose to link the work more closely with the Executive and have a support team. However, this will not be in the Bylaws.</p> <p>Belgium commented that they had experience of working in the committee and they agree with the current proposal as they feel it allows for more flexibility.</p> <p>Austria said that this structure was set up when there were very few members of the EU. It therefore made sense then to have a separate committee. However, now many members of IFSW Europe are members of the EU. Austria therefore agree with the proposal.</p> <p>Marjut Kosonen who is a current member of the committee said that it is an old fashioned way of working and the work has been individualistic. She feels it would be much better to establish a support team.</p> <p><i>Proposed: Malta</i> <i>Seconded: Austria</i> Carried unanimously.</p> <p>6.3 To consider any proposals for amendments to be voted on in 2013</p> <p>Nicolai Paulsen said that the constitution of IFSW Europe is legally registered in Germany. The Executive need to consider what will happen if we have no Executive</p>

	<p>member in Germany. Nicolai is confident that this can be addressed, but it may mean some changes so there may be some amendments next year.</p> <p>Malta said that this had not been raised when IFSW Europe registered as a legal body and feels that we may need to change this for the future. It is not clear that this is a requirement in the law.</p> <p>Belgium said that there will be a new European law in the future so that it may not be an issue.</p> <p>The UK said that in future when IFSW Europe e.V. change any statutes, delegates need to be clear about the implications.</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>European Conferences</p> <p><u>ENSACT 2013</u> Hakan Acar gave a presentation about the Conference in Istanbul. The website has now been launched. IFSW Europe will ensure that member organisations receive information about the conference.</p> <p>Maria Moritz urged members to encourage practitioners to submit papers.</p> <p>Hakan encouraged members to book early – it will cost more if people book their hotels too close to time.</p> <p><u>ENSACT 2015</u></p> <p>Nicolai Paulsen said that future conferences have been an issue at the Delegates Meeting for some years. He asked members whether they feel that IFSW Europe should have a separate conference or a joint conference with ENSACT. Anthea Agius said that the collaboration is very important and we would risk this if we did not have a joint conference – it may take many years to rebuild these links. Maria Moritz said that we would not lose anything by having a lone conference every other time. Klaus Kühne said he strongly supported Anthea. He feels that there could be a compromise – of having a day within the conference.</p> <p>Belgium said that they feel IFSW Europe should not be part of ENSACT.</p> <p>Romania said that it is important to have a full evaluation of collaboration – it is difficult to make a decision without a full evaluation. They feel that the conference in Belgium was a disaster.</p> <p>Austria said that the Belgium conference was a disaster. They feel it is important not to have social work conferences in five star hotels.</p> <p>Bulgaria said they support the idea to have our own conference every fourth year. They feel that IFSW Europe has a great deal of work to do and a separate conference would give space for this.</p> <p>Turkey said that the experience of speaking with ENSACT partners has been a useful learning experience. It is important not to lose these links.</p> <p>Sweden said it is important to maintain the collaboration in conferences. It is</p>

	<p>important to encourage practitioners to come. Maybe IFSW Europe could complete a guide on how to write and submit abstracts. This would encourage more practitioners.</p> <p>France said joint conferences have a long history.</p> <p>Germany said they are looking forward to the joint conference in 2013. However, they feel that we could combine some workshops in between joint conferences.</p> <p>Denmark said that it is important that member organisations encourage practitioners to attend conferences. It is also important for members to speak out in the early planning stages – to ensure that we are happy with the venue etc.</p> <p>The UK said that they have developed a project, empowering practitioners to contribute to international conferences. This has led to two people presenting at the Stockholm conference from the UK this year.</p> <p>Portugal said that they have experience of being on a conference scientific committee. They feel that practitioners need support as they might be frightened to present alongside academics. It is important for members to be closer to practitioners to encourage them to take part in conferences.</p> <p>Armenia said it is important to have conferences together with a clear place for practitioners.</p> <p>Nicolai Paulsen said he feels that the present system is outdated. He feels that as we have a Global conference one year and an ENSACT the next year we are in competition with ourselves. His view is therefore that we should have an ENSACT Conference every fourth year and a separate conference alternately.</p> <p>Romania made a motion that the Executive should bring an evaluation of the Brussels meeting to Stockholm and put off the decision to this meeting. Malta developed this by suggesting that the Executive should also prepare suggestions on the solutions. This paper should be sent out not less than two weeks before the meeting.</p> <p><i>Proposed: Romania</i> <i>Seconded: Malta</i> Carried with one abstention.</p> <p>Romania asked whether the informal meeting in Stockholm can make any decision on this. Nicolai Paulsen said that the informal meeting can give a clear view to the Executive who make this decision. The Executive will be guided by the recommendation made by the informal meeting.</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>Consideration of any other proposals</p> <p>8.1 Statements A revised version of the statement “Social workers demand radical measures to redistribute wealth and opportunity.” was presented by Ian Johnston. The statement was further amended by a change from European Union to European countries. The President asked if this could be agreed:</p> <p><i>Proposed Germany</i></p>

	<p><i>Seconded : Switzerland</i> Carried unanimously</p> <p>8.2 Delegates Meeting 2013</p> <p>This will be linked to the European Conference. The dates were proposed as 19 – 21 April 2013. The exact details will be agreed when the conference programme is clear.</p> <p><i>Proposed: UK</i> <i>Seconded: Austria</i> Agreed unanimously</p> <p>8.3 Other proposals</p> <p>There were no other proposals.</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>Final Adoption of the work programme 2012-2013</p> <p>The President explained that some amendments have been made to the draft programme, based on feedback within the meeting as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote participation in UPR – as proposed by Klaus Kühne • Proposed to develop a readers digest for social workers to the directive • To develop an EU project on the mobility scheme – as a development of the role and identity project • Develop partnerships based on strategy – especially with EPSU, ESN and EAPN. <p>The UK asked that the discussions about funding and organisational development be added to the work programme. This was added to the programme.</p> <p>The President asked if the work programme could be adopted.</p> <p><i>Proposed: Switzerland</i> <i>Seconded: Sweden</i> Carried unanimously</p>
<p>10.</p>	<p>Approval of the annual accounts and the report of the auditors</p> <p>Austria said that it is important that accounts are discussed earlier in the meeting. Nicolai Paulsen said the Executive would consider this and whether this is allowed within the Bylaws.</p> <p><u>10.1 Report from the Honorary Treasurer, including the accounts for 2011</u></p> <p>Barbara Molderings, Honorary Treasurer, referred to the financial reports which were circulated at the start of the meeting.</p> <p>Barbara reported that the budget and final balance has not differed significantly.</p>

	<p>75% of members paid fees in 2011.</p> <p>Barbara said that the Executive try to keep travel expenses down by booking cheap accommodation.</p> <p>Barbara said that it is important that the organisation does not use all of the savings and it should be a priority for the new Executive to obtain fundings.</p> <p>Austria commented that there has been no income from conferences in recent years. They also commented that it is important not to allow members to pay less than their due fees.</p> <p>The UK said that the current financial situation cannot be continued – the organisation cannot continue to take money from its savings.</p> <p>Germany extended their thanks to the Executive for working within the low budget and for trying to save money.</p> <p>The President asked if the financial report and the accounts for 2011 could be approved:</p> <p><i>Proposed: Norway</i> <i>Seconded: Portugal</i> Carried unanimously</p> <p><u>10.2 Report from the auditor</u></p> <p>The President asked if the auditors report could be accepted.</p> <p><i>Proposed: France</i> <i>Seconded: Georgia</i> Carried unanimously</p>
<p>11.</p>	<p>Ratification of the general and financial policies of IFSW Europe e.V.</p> <p><u>11.1 Decision on the annual membership dues (regional fees)</u></p> <p>Barbara Molderings, Honorary Treasurer, said that the Executive recommend that the fees remain the same as previous years (0,20€ per. member of a member organisation).</p> <p><i>Proposed: Switzerland</i> <i>Seconded: Bulgaria</i> Carried with two abstentions</p> <p>The UK raised a motion as follows:</p> <p>The Executive committee is instructed by the Delegates Meeting to appoint a new Honorary Treasurer as soon as possible to establish a working group on finances as soon as possible and to report back to the Delegates Meeting 2013 with a sustainable budget, not reliant on the use of our financial reserves.</p> <p><i>Proposed: UK</i></p>

	<p><i>Seconded: Malta</i></p> <p>This was discussed as follows:</p> <p>Nicolai Paulsen said it is important for the group to look at how big a reserve the organisation should have. It is not necessarily a problem to take from reserves to some extent.</p> <p>Denmark said that they feel it is important that the fees do not rise in 2013. The proposal reads as though it is automatic for the fees to be raised.</p> <p>Austria said it would be possible to have a sustainable budget without raising membership fees.</p> <p>The UK said it is important that the unsustainability must be addressed and discussed. The working group is set out to be helpful to the Executive as there are bound to be some very difficult longer term decisions to be made.</p> <p>Turkey agree that there should be a group to support the Executive.</p> <p>The motion was voted on as follows:</p> <p><i>For: 5</i> <i>Against: 10</i> <i>Abstaining: 5</i> <i>The motion was not carried.</i></p> <p>The UK asked that the working group have a balance of people voting for and against this motion.</p> <p><u>11.2 Review of activities and accounts of IFSW Europe e.V</u></p> <p>The Honorary Treasurer, Barbara Molderings presented the budget for 2013.</p> <p>The President asked if the planned budget could be approved.</p> <p><i>Proposed: Romania</i> <i>Seconded: Denmark</i> <i>Carried unanimously</i></p> <p><u>11.3 Appointment of independent auditor</u></p> <p>The Executive committee proposed that the same auditor be appointed:</p> <p>ALPHA Concept Wilhelmstr. 147a D – 42489 Wuelfrath</p> <p><i>Proposed: Norway</i> <i>Seconded: Malta</i> <i>Carried unanimously</i></p>
12.	<p>Elections</p> <p>The election officer, Juan José Gutiérrez Curras explained that there are six</p>

	<p>nominations for the Executive committee. The people nominated were given the opportunity to give a brief presentation. As Hamdi Boja was not able to attend the meeting, Nicolai Paulsen had been in contact to see if he could be present by Skype for this part of the meeting. This was not possible, so his application was read out by the Executive.</p> <p>The election then took place. Votes were as follows:</p> <p>Hakan Acar (Turkey) - 7 votes Hamdi Boja (Kosova) - 1 vote Cristina Martins (Portugal) - 11 votes Salome Namicheishvili (Georgia) - 4 votes Annica Skoglund (Sweden) - 12 votes Gabriele Stark-Angermeier (Germany) - 7 votes</p> <p>The elections officer therefore announced that Annica Skoglund and Cristina Martins were elected to the Executive.</p> <p>A second vote took place to elect the first deputy.</p> <p>Hakan Acar - 7 votes Gabreile Stark-Angermeier - 16 votes</p> <p>Therefore Gabriele Stark-Angermeier was elected as first deputy and Hakan Acar as second deputy.</p> <p>The President offered congratulations and thanks to those elected to the Executive.</p>
<p>13.</p>	<p>Appointment of external and internal representatives of IFSW Europe e.V</p> <p>13.1 <u>Representative of IFSW Europe to Council of Europe and a support team for the appointed person</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Austria proposed Gabriele Stark-Angermeier (Germany) as representative. • Antonina Dashkina (Russia) was proposed by Russia for the support team. • Hakan Acar (Turkey) was proposed by Turkey for the support team. <p>Gabriele, Antonina and Hakan were appointed respectively.</p> <p>13.2 <u>Support team on EU issues</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liliane Cocossa (Belgium) indicated that she represents ESAN at Social Platform meetings and can assist IFSW where this would be helpful. • Giorg Dimitz and Diana Petrova (Bulgaria) volunteered their services and were duly appointed. The Executive will invite member organisation to nominate other individuals to join the support team. <p>13.3 <u>An IFSW European contact person to the Global Human Rights Commission and a deputy for this person</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graça André (Portugal) has been nominated. Switzerland nominated Stephane Beuchat (Switzerland) as deputy. They were appointed.

	<p>13.4 <u>An IFSW European contact person to the Global expert group on ethics and a deputy for this person</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Georgia nominated Salome Namicheishvili (Georgia). Salome was appointed. <p>13.5 <u>IFSW Europe Election Officer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John Brennan (Ireland) was re-appointed.
<p>14.</p>	<p>Any other business</p> <p>Ian Johnston advised delegates that Ruth Stark has alerted IFSW Europe e.V. to the case of a former child protection social worker from Northern Cyprus. Turkey agreed to assist in following this up.</p> <p>Romania said they would like to take the chance to congratulate Nicolai as the outgoing President.</p> <p>Nicolai thanked the Executive for their work. He gave special thanks to Barbara and Klaus who will be leaving the Executive. He also thanked Hilton Dawson and Marjut Kosonen for doing the screen notes during the meeting, and Siobhan Maclean for organising things and taken the minutes.</p> <p>Russia said that it was their first time at a Delegates Meeting – they were very pleased to be part of it and join such a professional network.</p> <p>The Delegates Meeting recorded a big thanks to the hosts in Armenia.</p> <p>There being no other business the President formally closed the meeting at 13.35.</p>

Nicolai Paulsen
President
IFSW Europe e.V

Siobhan Maclean
Honorary Secretary
IFSW Europe e.V
(Minute Taker)