



## **Item 17**

### **IFSW Europe Delegates Meeting - 25-27 October 2024, Lisbon**

#### **Motion to the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) - European Division Europe Delegates Meeting 2024, Lisbon – Portugal**

*Proposed by:* Armenia

*Seconded by:* Romania (ASproAS)

#### **Motion**

**This motion proposes that there is an addition made to the work programme under “New priorities to take further” of “Investing in new social workers and building a network to sustain new talent in IFSW Europe”.**

Under this addition to the work programme, the Executive Committee of IFSW Europe shall:

##### **1) Promote New Social Workers on Regional and Global levels:**

- Define new social workers as students or those within 5 years of employment.
- Encourage involvement at local, regional, and global levels.
- Ensure new social workers are represented at Delegates Meetings and governance groups.
- Present a motion on their future at the 2026 General Meeting.

##### **2) Establish a New Social Workers Network:**

- Create a network for new social workers to share ideas, build leadership, and engage in projects.
- Election of a new social worker as Chair of the network through the network itself, who then is supported by an Executive Committee member.
- Include members nominated by associations and observers not yet affiliated with member organisations.
- Support project initiatives and funding applications.

##### **3) Support in developing a Policy Paper**

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- Draft a strategy for promoting new social workers, with input from the European Executive Committee.
  - Discuss the paper at the 2025 Oslo conference, addressing issues like talent promotion, financing, and fostering an intergenerational ethos.
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## **In-depth description of the proposed aspects**

Under this addition to the work programme, the Executive Committee of IFSW Europe shall:

- 1) Promote new social workers on IFSW Regional and Global levels.**
  - a. Agree that the definition of new social workers IFSW Europe will use to be any person that is a student of social work or within their first 5 years of employment as a social worker
  - b. Encourage member associations to involve new social workers locally and regionally
  - c. Promote that at least one observer from delegates and member associations to be a new social worker at Delegates Meetings, as well as part of official delegations to the Delegates Meetings
  - d. Support new social workers to be represented on the task and finish group around good governance at the IFSW Global level
  - e. Work towards presenting a full motion on the future for new social workers throughout IFSW Global at the 2026 General Meeting
  
- 2) Establish a Network for new social workers.**
  - a. Using bylaw number 6, to create a network for new social workers to network, host events, share ideas and experiences, initiate projects, take part in representative roles, and ultimately build a community of new social workers, through building leadership, as well as contributing towards an intergenerational ethos and sustainable movement for IFSW Europe
  - b. Promote young leadership through the Chair of this network being a new social worker nominated and elected by the network
  - c. Invest in intergenerational collaboration of new social workers and experienced social workers through the Chair of the network to be well supported by the Executive through an Executive member who will support the Chair of the network to co-ordinate the involvement of new social workers throughout all IFSW Europe structures
  - d. The members of the network will be new social workers nominated by member organisations
  - e. In order to support the participation and inclusion of new social workers in member organisations the network will also include observers that are new social workers who are not currently a member of the member organisations but who will be strongly encouraged to be connected with their member organisations in order to become a member of the network.
  - f. Support the network of new social workers to initiate projects, e.g. through the Erasmus scheme, that are focused on issues that the network want to lead on, utilising IFSW Europe as the legal body
  - g. Support the work of the network to apply for further funding from IFSW Global to continue promoting new talent in IFSW



### **3) Support the network to develop a policy paper.**

- a. This policy paper will develop a strategy for the promotion of new social workers within IFSW Europe. Members of the European Executive Committee and other interested members will participate in this working group. This paper will be discussed further at the conference in Oslo 2025. There are many different questions to be addressed, e.g. how can the promotion of new talent be financed at IFSW Europe level and who takes central responsibility for the promotion of new talent. What exactly does sustainable promotion of new talent mean within IFSW Europe? How do we truly create an intergenerational ethos to ensure the sustainability of IFSW Europe? In the best case scenario, there will also be a face to face meeting in presence to develop this policy paper

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#### **Rational:**

IFSW is a diverse, growing, complex, global membership organisation promoting social justice and acting as a facilitator of inclusive and democratic policies and processes.

This motion proposes that, as IFSW grows with adherence to the overarching values and principles of the organisation we need to invest and build the leadership capacities of the next generation of new social workers as an important member group of IFSW and successors.

Throughout this motion, we use the definition of new social worker to be any person that is a student of social work or within their first 5 years of employment as a social worker, making use of the IFSW Global Definition of Social Work.

There is no standard international expectation of involving and investing in new talent for NGOs, but inspiration may be drawn from European organisations that IFSW Europe are connected with, such as the Council of Europe, European Social Network, and European Parliament, as well as member organisations that are currently investing in new talent.

Learning from the above experiences, we are recommending the following framework.

IFSW Europe commits to the encouragement of member organisations to ensure that there are structures, processes, procedures, leadership practices and cultural norms in place that promote new social workers to:



- Have equitable involvement in decisions and decision-making processes in IFSW Europe
- Be able to share knowledge across IFSW Europe through an established network with the required structure and governance
- Raise voices for new social workers in IFSW Europe through research and project proposals in regional activities
- To represent IFSW as new social workers in activities across Global and Regional events and organisations

As member associations, we should expect IFSW to be a model of engaging with new social workers, further underpinned by our ethical code and values.

IFSW Europe has already shown a commitment to invest in new talent, which can be seen in the IFSW Europe project titled 'A social Europe is possible, the next generation of social workers are the spearhead of change' which consisted of a large number of new social workers being supported with the platform, resources, and funding to lead on a project to support the new social workers in the transition from education to employment.

Building on the strength of this project and the benefits of the involvement of new talent, we have also discussed the need for innovative ideas to be focused on, such as recruitment and retention, global issues for new social workers, issues of green social work, gender equality, LGBTQ+ issues, diversity and social justice.

We have recognised over the last 4 years of involvement in IFSW Europe that we need a structure and platform for new social workers to network, host events, share ideas and experiences, initiate projects, take part in representative roles, and ultimately build a community of new social workers, through building leadership, for us to be embedded throughout IFSW Europe structures, as well as contributing towards an intergenerational ethos and sustainable movement for IFSW Europe.