**Strategy Update and Annual Activity Report for Delegates Meeting 2025**

1. **BUILDING STRONGER MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS**

**Strategic aim:** **To support member associations to grow, support each other and achieve their objectives, in line with our common ethics and values.**

Activities 2025-2027

1.1 Enable member associations and social workers across Europe to come together, share, communicate and build social worker solidarity.

1.2 Develop and share resources to support all our associations in their growth and development ambitions.

1.3 Provide a clear process by which member associations can ask for support and assistance from other associations and from the President/Executive, including under duress or in crisis.

1.4 Promote more equitable access and involvement in our work and activities for all members and potential members of IFSW Europe.

1.5 Encourage and support fewer active associations to get more involved and have their voice.

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| **Activities 2024/5****Strengthening social work and IFSW across Europe** * Successful bid to IFSW global *‘Strengthening social work and IFSW across Europe - engaging and supporting better our diverse, marginalised and under pressure members*’(agreed July 2025)
* Set out project plan and draft objectives to end 2026.
* Completed initial work to shape the project for consultation in Oslo Delegates Meeting (DM) 2025
* Built initial ‘microsite’ (website) to present to DM 2025
* Workshop in DM Oslo 2025 to co-create next phases of project with members

Next steps* Trial new approaches to support and inclusion within 25/26.
* Engage members through webinars, social media and other online platforms (e.g. padlets)
* Write up final report on approaches and implementation for adoption in DM 2026
* Develop and deliver webinars and other online meetings later in 2026 to disseminate, publicise and promote approaches and position of IFSWE in providing support and solidarity.
* Commence evaluation of the project end 2026
* Provide quarterly reports to IFSW Global (funders)

**Supporting colleagues under duress*** Enric Torras from the IFSW E Executive led dialogue with colleagues in Hungary and hosted a meeting and webinar to share understanding of the repressive political and professional challenges in the country. Explored impact of ‘blacklisting’ civil society organisations such as the social work association. Explored concerns about new social care law diminishing the role of professional social work and options for continuance of association activities in context of political hostility (*See uploaded background paper).*
* Work to support social workers and civil society in Ukraine continued (now led by Asproas, Romania thorugh Herbert Pauschlin and Ana Radulescu). Reports on completed and ongoing work can be found here [https://socialwork-ukraine.eu](https://socialwork-ukraine.eu/)

Next steps* Develop more consistent process and best practices for responding to calls for support, learning, intervention (etc) from members and engaging wider membership in mutual support and solidarity within the ‘Strengthening social work…’ project.
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**2. INFLUENCING EUROPEAN AND NATIONAL SOCIAL WORK POLICIES**

**Strategic aim: To influence and shape social work and social policies across Europe through promotion of our common ethics, values and knowledge through producing research, policy papers, webinars and other resources.**

Activities 2025-2027

2.1. Develop public policy statements that promote and reflect the values and priorities of IFSW Europe and European social work.

2.3. To promote the IFSW global definition and our European vision for effective social work and Social Services through dialogue across the membership.

2.4. Support the representatives, regional commissioners, the Networks (Human Rights, other) and project leads in developing and disseminating policy and other statements.

2.5 Work in collaboration with priority partners and stakeholders to influence and bring about change in European policies, practice and research.

2.6 Promote our policy positions in webinars, conferences and other events.

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| **Activities 2024/25****Responsive – EU funded research and practice change project**: * IFSW Europe delivered its responsibilities within the funded Responsive project including:
* Building, promoting and supporting analysis of social worker survey
* Designing, coordinating and hosting initial dissemination webinars for each work package
* Commencing work on Work Package (WP)6 – dissemination and implementation
* Update on project to be presented at the Oslo Delegates’ Meeting
* Workshop to be delivered in the conference.
* Further development of WP6 on dissemination up to Feb 2026

Next steps* Attending and planning future strategic direction for project outputs in management meeting of consortium leads – end Oct 2025 Lisbon to include:
	+ Agreeing development and production of implementation tools and methods
	+ Explore options for funding for implementation (through grant and/or commissioned implementation activities within services etc)
	+ Develop networks of supporters/allies for Responsive approaches
* Promote ongoing recognition of the role of IFSWE and the member associations in both knowledge creation and implementation and learning for future projects
* Run bidding and project delivery workshops for members interested and able to support development of IFSW E funded work and collaborations.

**Cocoso – EU funded PhD programme – Co-construction in the field of social welfare doctoral network** [**http://cocoso.parisnanterre.fr**](http://cocoso.parisnanterre.fr)* Ruth Allen, Ana Radulescu and Herbert Paulischin participated in inaugural planning and selection of PhD candidates including appointee working with a focus on social work history.
* The project is at an early stage and further updates will be reported to IFSW E through the regular bulletins.

**Increasing advocacy of social work policy perspectives within European institutions*** Ongoing development and expansion of the activities of the IFSW E Representatives and Regional Commissioners (*see also the next section below)*

Next steps * Propose a webinar/learning activity in 2025/26 on good practices in influencing social work policy makers at national and transnational levels.

**Specific activity highlights in influencing and supporting positive and ethical social work policy and practice development.*** The President successfully provided written support for Maltese mental health social workers seeking to preserve their identity and status within organisational and policy change proposals.
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**3. PROMOTING SOCIAL WORK PRACTICES AND IDENTITY**

**Strategic aim: To celebrate, develop and defend social work practices and strengthening identity across Europe in alignment with our European and Global ethics, values and perspectives.**

Activities 2025-2027

3.1 To celebrate and promote World Social Work Day and the Global Agenda themes across Europe.

3.2 To identify priority areas for social work development and establish projects (commissioned or self-funded) to deliver practice guidance, training and other resources at European level; current areas of activity (2024/25) include;

 - Social work and eco-social practices

 - Anti-poverty social work

 - Human and social rights based social work

 - Social Work in disasters, conflict zones and political hostility.

 - Social work and older people

 - Social work with Romani and Traveller people.

Other topics will be considered by the Executive and by the delegates’ meeting according to social work sector priorities. The yearly work plan will further prioritize, set objectives and review, expand or finish projects as appropriate.

3.3 To promote and offer social work training and development opportunities through IFSW Europe and our partners.

3.4 To support our members and social workers under threat from (e.g.) political interference, oppressive regimes, conflict and other challenges to professional practices and identity.

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| * IFSW E President made contributions to World Social Work Day & other social work events through recorded or in-person messages tailored for the in-country audience in Malta, Portugal, Latvia, Norway (various dates)
* Hosted a webinar on WSWD on the global theme of intergenerational
* Promoted the global agenda theme (e.g. in social media) and member association activities
* IFSW E President spoke at major conference in West Attica University, Athens, Greece focusing on social work identity, improving working conditions, international solidarity and recognition for social workers across countries – Nov 2024.
* Completed final report on Eco social wisdom project (*see report from Josien Hofs on DM webpage)*  which will be presented at the Oslo conference.
* Supported the Norwegian Union (FO) in successful planning of the Oslo conference Oct 2025 around the eco-social theme
* IFSW E Vice President Andreas Kikvik and (new) Education Regional Commissioner Marcin Boryczko spoke in person at Salzberg social work education conference about the eco-social project and the implications for social work practice – June 2025

Next steps* Develop more focused practice and social work development opportunities/offers including with the input of the Representatives and Regional Commissioners, the outputs from Responsive and focused on our priority strategic aims.
* Ensure appointment of UN Regional Commissioner as soon as possible, in partnership with the Global UN Commissioner and IFSW Global
* Reconvene the IFSW Europe Human Rights Network and set some tangible actions/goals.
* *See strategic theme one regarding next steps support for social workers under duress, disasters, conflict zones and political hostility under the Strengthening Social Work.. project funded by IFSW Global.*
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**4. SUPPORTING SOCIAL WORKERS’ WORKING CONDITIONS**

**Strategic aim: To promote better working conditions, protection of rights at work and organisational practices that sustain the workforce.**

Activities 2025-2027

4.1 To commence a project focused on tackling the recruitment and retention crisis in social work in many European countries.

4.2 To facilitate mutual support and sharing of ideas for improvement in working conditions amongst associations.

4.3 To link with the IFSW Global survey of social worker working conditions.

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| This strategic theme has not been taken forward but an initiating discussion is scheduled for the DM in Oslo 2025 out of which will come further plans. |

**5. ADVOCATING FOR EUROPEAN SOCIAL WORK WITHIN EUROPEAN AND GLOBAL BODIES**

**Strategic aim: To ensure social work perspectives and values have visibility and impact in key European institutions and systems, and ensure the voice of Europe is strong within IFSW Global.**

Activities 2025-2027

5.1. To ensure consistent and effective representation of IFSWE within key European institutions and in IFSW Global commissions.

5.2 To provide a platform for all representatives and regional commissioners to meet and share their experiences/knowledge regularly, integrating European and global perspectives.

5.3 To develop communication channels between representatives and our wider membership between Delegate’s Meetings.

5.4 To provide training and support for representatives and regional commissioners to promote effective advocacy within institutions and policy systems.

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| **Representatives and Regional Commissioners*** Convened four well-attended representatives meetings, chaired by ex-Vice President, John Brennan. Expanded the group to include new representative on Romani and Traveller Rights, Allison Hulmes; new Education Regional Commissioner Marcin Boryczko, and will be including the five new UN Geneva Regional Support team members in ongoing meetings.
* Continued support for the New Social Workers project (now ‘Network’). *See their reports and plans on the DM website.*

Next Steps* Provide one or two online skills and knowledge sessions in 2025/26 focused on *‘how to advocate successfully for social work and social workers and contribute effectively within European and Global institutions*’
* Review how the Representatives Meeting time is structured and how the work of representatives feeds back to member associations and social workers across Europe.
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**6. LOBBYING AND CAMPAIGNING**

**Strategic aim: To speak out and be widely recognized as the ethical voice of European social work and social workers on matters of professional, social and political importance.**

Activities 2025-2027

6.1 Make timely and responsive public statements on issues affecting European social work, on our website, social media and other outlets, promoting our ethics and values.

6.2 Engage members in developing priority campaigns and lobbying.

6.3 Through the Human Rights Network and other activities linked to the communications strategy, promote social work’s human rights, social justice and intersectional equalities approach as a cross-cutting theme across all our work.

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| While there has not been a specific programme of lobbying and campaigning, the themes of upholding social work ethics and values, focus on human rights and social justice are very evident as cross cutting themes in many other activities such as: * The work of the representatives within bodies such as Council of Europe, European Anti Poverty Network, Social Platform and the UN
* Promotion and activities around WSWD and the global agenda.
* Support to members under political duress
* Support to the New Social Workers network
* The ‘Strengthening Social Work …’ global bid

Next Steps* Develop and elucidate this strategic theme as cross cutting
* Identify specific priority campaign and lobbying activities for 2025/26
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**7. IMPROVING INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS**

**Strategic aim: To improve the regularity, impact and coherence of our communication and engagements activities amongst members and with our wider audiences.**

Activities 2025-2027

7.1 Increase online accessibility and visibility through targeted communications channels including social and mainstream media, website publishing, emails, online events and meetings. direct member communications:

7.2 Periodically review the effectiveness of our communications and make changes based on feedback.

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| This is an area for considerable development in the coming year and is high on the Executive’s priority list as timely, accessible communications are crucial for all our other projects. In 2024/25 we made some progress through: **Communications*** Commenced regular briefings for members (be email)
* Consolidated use of one Facebook Account
* Opened IFSW Europe LinkedIn account

Next steps* Increase social media usage and content, monitoring reach and impact
* Use of online interactive tools to enable member engagement e.g. Padlet
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**8. SECURING OUR FINANCES AND GROWTH**

**Strategic aim: To manage and increase our financial resources and diversify our income to sustain our ability to support and develop social work and social workers in Europe.**

Activities: 2025-2027

8.1. Prepare successful applications for external funds and access external resources for specific activities and projects that also generate resources for our financial resilience.

8.2. Develop ‘virtual project team’ capacity and capability to develop and deliver funded projects in collaboration with universities and other bodies.

8.3. Ensure efficient and prudent management of IFSW Europe finances through effective management accounting and annual audit.

8.4 Review the IFSW Europe subscription fee level on an annual basis.

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| Continued to benefit from income derived from funded projects and underspend during Covid. Membership fees staying around 30000 euros per yearNext steps must include developing project capacity to extend IFSW E’s ability to generate income and fund its activities beyond membership fees.Also extend reach of IFSW E through the engagement potential of the Strengthening Social Work Global bid project |

**9. DELIVERING THE IFSW EUROPE CONFERENCE**

**Strategic aim: To showcase and explore the work of IFSW and of European social work through high profile, bi-annual IFSW Europe conferences, engaging diverse social workers, experts by experience and other allies.**

Activities 2025-2027

9.1. Provide the necessary support and guidance to members organizing IFSW conferences;

9.2. Ensure the visibility and effective marketing of the IFSW European conferences.

9.3 Take positive action to promote conferences and other learning activities across diverse member states including lower income and more marginalized members.

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| - Supported FO to develop, promote and deliver the 2025 Conference in Oslo- Liaising with an association to deliver the 2027 conference ( to be discussed and voted on in Oslo DM) |

**10. PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE AND SUPPORTING ALL GENERATIONS OF SOCIAL WORKERS**

Strategic aim: To support and enable the involvement of next generation social workers and innovations within IFSW E and across the profession.

10.1 Support the development of the New Social Workers group and strategy within IFSW E.

10.2 Reach out to and provide support to students and new social workers across our member organisations.

10.3 Ensure all our strategic themes are looking to the future health of the profession and of social workers.

10.4 Ensure IFSW supports, celebrates and represents social workers throughout all career stages.

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| See the proposals and reports provided by the New Social Workers Network for presentation to the Oslo Delegates Meeting |