



# International Federation of Social Workers *Fédération Internationale des Travailleurs Sociaux Federación Internacional de Trabajadores sociales*

## Global Education Commission Report May 2022

### MEMBERS

- Global: Vasilios Ioakimidis
- Africa: Antoinette Lombard
- Asia-Pacific: Mariko Kimura
- Europe: Nicolai Paulsen
- Latin America and the Caribbean: Marinilda Rivera Díaz
- North America: Gary Bailey

### Main Activities and Public Interventions for the period 2020- 2022

#### 1. The Global Standards for Social Work Education and Training.

The updated Global Standards for Social Work Education and Training were approved by the membership of IFSW and IASSW through the General Meetings of the two respective organisations in the period July- August 2020.

The updated Global Standards have been a result of an extensive global consultation that lasted for more than 18 months and included a wide range of social work academics, practitioners and experts by experience across 125 countries, represented by 5 Regional Associations and approximately 400 Universities and Further Education Organisations. In addition, members of the joint task force facilitated two international seminars involving service user representatives.

The main objectives of the Global Standards are to:

- Ensure consistency in the provision of social work education while appreciating and valuing diversity, equity and inclusion.
- Ensure that Social Work education adheres to the values and policies of the profession as articulated by the IFSW and IASSW.
- Support and safeguard staff, students and service users involved in the education process.



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- Ensure that the next generation of social workers have access to excellent quality learning, opportunities that also incorporate social work knowledge deriving from research, experience, policy and practice.
- Nurture a spirit of collaboration and knowledge transfer between different social work schools and between social work education, practice and research.
- Support social work schools to become thriving, well-resourced, inclusive and participatory teaching and learning environments.

The Global Standards can be found on the IFSW website:

<https://www.ifsw.org/global-standards-for-social-work-education-and-training/>



## **2. Implementation Strategy for the updated Global Standards for Social Work Education and Training**

In 2021, the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) announced and commenced the roll-out of the Global Standards for Social Work Education and Training.

The social work education and practice landscape, has changed significantly since 2004. The adoption of a new Global Definition of Social work in July 2014 and the publication of the updated Global Social Work Statement of Ethical Principles and the new Global Agenda require that the Global Standards for Social Work Education and Training document also reflects broader changes and recent developments in global social work. These developments also include social work's role in supporting bottom up development to meet the aspirations of the SDGs, ensuring countries



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that are new to social work have global peers to support the advancement of social work education free from colonial influences and creating platforms for Indigenous social workers to shape curricula and relevant courses.

IFSW has invited its membership, national associations of social work and social work education providers to work closely towards implementing the new standards. The proposed Implementation and Mobilisation Strategy includes the following stages:

- **Roll-out** of the new documentation through a targeted dissemination strategy co-ordinated by IFSW and IASSW regional organisations. All members of both organisations have received the document in early 2021. Relevant and dedicated sections in the websites of IFSW was also developed as per agreed mobilisation strategy. <https://www.ifsw.org/global-standards-for-social-work-education-and-training/>
- **Translation** of the document into a wide range of languages covering the membership of the two organisations. IFSW already took steps to translate the document into the official languages. In addition, National and Regional Associations were invited to co-ordinate the translation process in their respective constituencies. This can be achieved through the mobilisation and recruitment of volunteers and/or professional translators. The final and official translations are approved by the National Associations and are sent to the Global Education Commission for archiving and monitoring. So far, the Global Standards have been officially translated in the following languages: Spanish, Japanese, Greek, Lithuanian and French. Unofficial translations in several languages are also available. These translations, despite their importance and usefulness, have not been checked and approved by National Associations yet. We are currently in the process of ensuring that all translations meet the required standards.

### 3. Global Standards Rollout (Peer Review) Pilots

#### a. Europe

In February 2017, the [Bachelor of International Social Work offered by HAN University in the Netherlands](#) was endorsed by IFSW in the first-ever pilot peer review.

The peer assessment conducted by the IFSW Education Commission, included the Dutch National Association of Social Workers (BPSW), IFSW-Europe Education Commissioner Nicolai Paulsen as well as HAN social work staff, students and representatives of their international practice networks. Professor Vasilios Ioakimidis, IFSW Global Education Commission was the Chair of the peer review process.



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Arjen Nieuwenhuis, head of the HAN Social Work Department thanked the IFSW Education Commission for participating in the peer-review.

He commented,

*“HAN has worked hard over many years to ensure that our courses are built collaboratively with staff, students and people that use services. Our aim is to provide stimulating and creative approaches to education that prepare students to confidently and successfully engage with people and communities seeking positive change. It was through this process that the BISW emerged. We are delighted that this programme is recognised by the international profession and the growing enrolment numbers, as students from throughout the world seek an international classroom setting and exposure to a wide of range practice approaches.”*

The peer assessment utilised the recently agreed [Global Social Work Educational Standards](#) developed by the IFSW and The International Association of Schools of Social Work. These standards were created through mass consultation in response to calls from social work departments that wanted to demonstrate that they meet international guidelines or to provide evidence to their management structures that improvements need to made.

The HAN Bachelor of International Social Work was the first programme globally to be endorsed by IFSW. Other programmes in South Africa are currently going through a peer assessment process. Social work schools in any part of the world wishing to work towards or demonstrate IFSW endorsement of their programme can contact the [IFSW Education Commission](#).





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## B. Africa

### Introduction

The African Region IFSW task group drafted an action plan with short and long-term goals for the rolling out of the Global Standards for Social Work Education and Training in the Africa region. For 2021, we focused on exploring the alignment of schools of social work with the Global Standards for Social Work Education and Training. It was deliberately not called an evaluation or audit so that participation was a non-threatening, self-reflection exercise.

### Curriculum alignment with Global Standards for Social Work Education and Training

The Task Force developed a five-point scale (1 Strongly Disagree, 2 Disagree, 3 Neutral, 4 Agree, 5 Strongly Agree) to explore the curriculum alignment with the global standards. Four universities volunteered to do the alignment (Zimbabwe, Uganda and two universities from South Africa; one urban- and one rural-based). Universities had to score each standard and provide comments to explain the scores. Submissions were due in August 2021.

The findings were presented at an international online conference (1-3 September 2021), hosted by the Association for South African Social Work Education Institutions (ASASWEI) in collaboration with various stakeholders, including the national Department of Social Development.

IFSW and IASSW shared a two-hour workshop on the Global Standards which was scheduled for Wednesday, 1 September 2021. The programme entailed a brief overview of the Global Standards; an introduction of the work of the IFSW Africa Region on the Global Standards, and an introduction of the curriculum alignment instrument.

Representatives of the respective universities shared their experiences on the analysis in a panel discussion.

- University of Venda (South Africa): [Lobelo Mogorosi](#)
- University of Pretoria (South Africa): [Ntembie Bila](#)
- Makerere University (Uganda): [Hadijah Mwenyango](#)
- Midland States University (Zimbabwe): [Itai Mafa](#)

In brief, they were all in agreement that it was a valuable exercise to learn how their curriculums are aligned with the Global Standards and to clearly see where the gaps were. It also gave them the opportunity to explore their universities' collaboration with practitioners which emphasised the co-responsibility of social work educators and practitioners for implementing the Global Standards.



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Three respondents commented on the panel's discussions which further enriched the debate. The workshop ended with a reflection on how social work practitioners and educators should collaborate in rolling out the Global Standards.

We have consolidated the four universities' analysis into one document; indicating both the scoring and comments of the respective universities on each global standard.

- In 2022 the Task Force will do an in-depth analysis of the consolidated alignment document as well as from the contributions and comments from the workshop to identify the progress and challenges on the Global Standards which will inform the further steps of the action plan for the Africa region.

The IFSW African Region Task Group consists of

Antoinette Lombard, IFSW Africa Representative on Education Commission  
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Noel Muridz, IFSW Africa Regional President [nmuridzo@gmail.com](mailto:nmuridzo@gmail.com)

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Varosh Nadesan (University of Johannesburg), Past President of ASASWEI  
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Kgomotso Jongman (University of Botswana), President of ASSWA  
[Jomo2016@gmail.com](mailto:Jomo2016@gmail.com) / [jongmank@ub.ac.za](mailto:jongmank@ub.ac.za)

#### **4. Other Activities and Public Interventions**

In addition to the updating the Global Standards, our Commission also engaged, facilitate or supported a number of other activities related to educational matters. This included:



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**2020**

- Facilitation of the IFSW- SWAN international Covid19 webinar series

In March, April and May 2020 our Commission supported and facilitate a series of (very successful) webinars organised by the Social Work Action Network (International) and the International Federation of Social Workers. The webinars were in response to the Covid19 pandemic and asked the question: What can, and should, social work and social workers do in the face of the Covid19 crisis. The webinars drew speakers from across the globe. Each event was viewed by thousands of interested social work academics, practitioners and students. [At the time of writing the four international webinars had been viewed 38,000 times on Facebook, with several thousand further views on the IFSW and SWAN websites and SWAN YouTube page]. The webinars indicated a clear demand for a social work response to the crisis and supported the now widely used twitter hashtag #swresponds.



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**Social work and the Covid 19 Crisis: international perspectives**



Hosted by Social Work Action Network, Critical and Radical Social Work Journal and International Federation of Social Workers, Interim Education Commission

**What is the role of social work in the present crisis?**  
**What barriers are workers facing?**  
**What Mutual Aid projects are developing?**  
**Are there innovative social work practices developing across the globe?**  
**What demands should social workers and social care workers make on governments?**

Speakers from across globe will briefly outline what is happening in their countries before a question and answer session, led by viewers, will shape the rest of the meeting.

**Speakers include:**

**Glanima Muñoz (Chile)**  
**Dawn Belkin Martinez (US)**  
**Dora Tzoni (Greece)**  
**Filipe Duarte (Portugal)**  
**Andy Brammer (UK)**  
**Jessie Yasmin Turton (South Africa)**  
**Raed Amira (Palestine)**

**Hosts: Michael Lavalette (Social Work Action Network)**  
**Vasilios Ioakimidis (International Federation of Social Workers, Interim Education Commission)**

**Live stream via**  
**f Social Work Action Network - SWAN**  
<https://www.facebook.com/socialworkfuture/>  
**Thursday 2 April 5pm (UK time)**



-Virtual Conference in Latin America: COVID-19: Acciones desde el Trabajo Social” (COVID-19: Actions from the Social Work”

Date: April 23, 2020

Panelists:

Dr. Silvana Martínez, IFSW President  
 Dr. Marinilda Rivera Díaz, IFSW Interim commissioner for LAC  
 Prof. Violeta Flores, University of Valparaiso, Chile

**FITS ALC Presenta:**

**COVID 19 Acciones Desde el Trabajo Social**

**1 PM** Hora El Salvador  
**3 PM** Hora Puerto Rico y Chile  
**4 PM** Hora Argentina  
**Jueves 23 Abril**

**En vivo x Facebook FITS ALC**

**Participantes:**

- Dra. Silvana Martínez**  
Argentina  
Presidenta Mundial FITS
- Dra. Marinilda Rivera**  
Puerto Rico  
Comisionada Regional FITS-ALC Educación
- Maestra Violeta Flores**  
Chile  
Académica de Trabajo Social Universidad de Valparaiso

**Modera:**  
**Larry Emil Alicea-Rodz.**  
Puerto Rico  
Presidente FITS ALC

**Conversaremos:**

Sobre las experiencias del trabajo social a nivel mundial y regional relacionadas al COVID 19. La Presidenta Mundial nos dará la perspectiva mundial. La Dra. Rivera hablará en el marco de la salud como tema de énfasis. La colega chilena Maestra Flores conversará sobre la respuesta desde su área de énfasis en acciones profesionales en contextos de desastre

**Transmisión en vivo** [facebook.com/FITSALC](https://facebook.com/FITSALC)





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**2021**

-Nicolai Paulsen and Vasilios Ioakimidis facilitated a symposium on the Global Standards as part of the IFSW-Europe conference (11/10/2021).

-Marinilda Rivera Díaz facilitated and Vasilios Ioakimidis presented as part of the Conference of the Colegio de Profesionales del Trabajo Social De Puerto Rico (12/11/21)

-Marinilda Rivera Díaz also participated as panelist on the seminar "Global Standards for Education in Social Work: Implications for the Curriculum" sponsored by the Puerto Rico National Association of Schools of Social Work (30/4/ 2021)

-Vasilios Ioakimidis co-presented, alongside Panagiotis Pentaris, about the roll-out of Global Standards in a Seminar organised by the University of Greenwich (UK).

-For the purpose of disseminating information about the Global Standard of SW Education, the Asia-Pacific region of IFSW co-organized a symposium alongside the Japanese Academic Society on SW. Mariko Kimura was one of the presenters representing as the IFSW Education Commission Asia Pacific Rep coordinated by Viktor Virag, representing APASWE and JASWE (11/7/2021)

-IFSW in cooperation with APASWE, are also organizing a workshop on social work education. The event is scheduled for February 19, 2022 and having Vasilios Ioakimidis will deliver a presentation on current updates and future directions.

-Vasilios Ioakimidis presented the Implementation Plan in an event organized by the Iranian Association of Social Workers (December 2021)

- Antoinette Lombard and Mariko Kimura took part in a workshop inviting social work academics, students and practitioners across Europe to explore the significance of International Social Work and how it can be integrated in the social work education, training and practice. The Workshop was facilitated by the [European Association of Schools of Social Work \(EASSW\)](#) (24th May, 2022)

- GLOBAL PUBLIC HEALTH WEEK 2022 (4th to 8th April 2022)

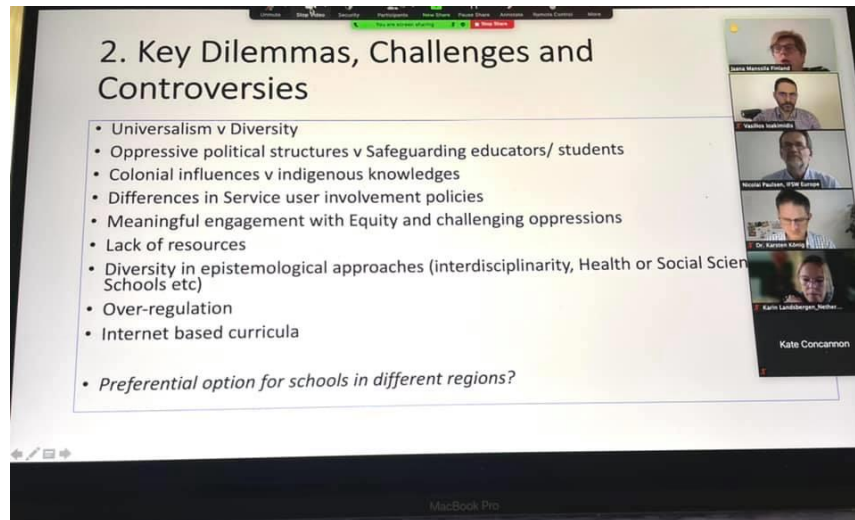
The *International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW)* in the spirit of co-building a new eco-social world, joined the *World Federation of Public Health Associations (WFPHA)* and global community in celebrating the Global public health. The two partners co-organised an event "Health and Social Wellbeing in a Conflict Environment" some of the presenters of the event included:

Bettina Borisch. Executive Director WFPHA; Ricciardi Walter. Committee member, European Advisory Committee on Health Research (EACHR); Ana Radulescu. IFSW European Regional President; **Marinilda Rivera Díaz. IFSW Regional Representative for the Latin America and the Caribbean Region of the IFSW**



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**Education Commission** and Malabika Sarker. Professor and Acting Dean at the James P. Grant School of Public Health at BRAC University, Bangladesh among others.



- The Global Education Commission with the support of academics from 8 Universities facilitated the first ever Continuous Professional Development course on the timely topic of “Educating for Peace- Social Work in the Context of Conflict”. The course consisted of 6 weekly lessons attended by well over 300 participants each week.

Universities that supported the design and delivery of the course included:



The full programme of the CPD course can be found below.



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Continuous Professional Development.

International Short Course

**Educating for Peace - Social Work in the Context of War and Conflict**

This 6-week CPD Short Course critically explores different dimensions of social work in the context of conflict. Transitions from conflict to war and vice versa are socially and politically multifaceted. Social Services and social work practitioners are among the first to be involved in the provision of humanitarian support to affected communities. However, the role of social work in this context is diverse and yet to be determined.

The Course will be delivered by a group of international academics with extensive research and practice experience in the context of conflict.

- ⇒ The Course consists of six weekly sessions (see programme available on the website)
- ⇒ The Course is accessible for free. No registration required for people who want to attend.
- ⇒ Registration is *only* required when participants expect to receive a Certificate of Attendance.
- ⇒ Certificates of Attendance are issued to participants who a) have registered and b) attended at least four sessions.



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## **Educating for Peace - Social Work in the Context of War and Conflict**

This series will present the latest research on social work in the context of conflict, bringing together international researchers, practitioners, and people with lived experience.

Please register via Eventbrite (registration links included above) to participate and aim to attend all seminar sessions. All sessions will be held via Zoom, with relevant links circulated to the registered participants. Beyond presentations, these online sessions will include opportunities for joint reflection and discussion. Instead of payment, we encourage you to donate to the charities linked to each session, which aim to support people affected by violence across the globe.

It is organised by social work academics who have themselves experienced political conflict, as well as practised and conducted research in the context of political conflict. The CPD seminar series is supported by IFSW Education Commission and organised as a collaboration between the Centre for Social Work Innovation and Research, University of Sussex (United Kingdom), Centre for Study of Social and Humanitarian Crises, University of West Attica (Greece), University of Essex (United Kingdom), Queen's University Belfast (United Kingdom), UCD Dublin (Ireland), Faculty of Political Sciences at the University of Sarajevo (Bosnia and Herzegovina), and University of Nicosia (Cyprus).

### **Programme**

*Module co- Convenors: Reima Ana Maglajlic and Professor Vasilios Ioakimidis*

#### **Session 1: 30<sup>th</sup> of March 2022, 17:30– 18:45 UK time**

##### **Social work during political conflict**

Dr. Rory Truell

Dr. Ricardo Chaparro-Pacheco, Social Work Practice during the prolonged conflict in Colombia.

Dr May Nasrawy – Impact of prolonged conflict on the wellbeing young Palestinian and Arab Jerusalemites

#### **Session 2: 5<sup>th</sup> of April 2022 17:30 – 18:45 UK Time**

##### **Working with refugees and displaced populations**

Dr Muireann Ní Raghallaigh, The social care needs of refugee families in Europe: the Irish experience

Hummingbird Young Leaders (young refugees involved in activism for refugee rights)



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Professor Nicos Trimikliniotis, Working with refugees; building solidarity through action based social work

**Session 3: 12<sup>th</sup> of April 2022 17:30 – 18:45 UK Time**

**Post-war reconstruction and transitions to peace**

Dr Reima Maglajlic, – ‘Madness after the war’ – (co-produced study on distress caused by political conflict in BiH)\_

Professor Jim Campbell and Dr Joe Duffy, Overcoming barriers and challenges to reconciliation in Northern Ireland; a social work approach.

**Session 4: 19<sup>th</sup> of April 2022 – 17:30 – 18:45 UK Time**

**Peace-building, reconciliation and social work**

Professor Vasilios Ioakimidis and United Cyprus Social Work Platform, Educating for Peace; overcoming the physical, ethnic and political barriers in Cyprus.

Dr Sanela Basic, Justice, Reconciliation and Peace Building in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

**Session 5: 26<sup>th</sup> of April- 17:30- 18:45 UK Time**

**Listening to the ‘voices less heard’ in the context of conflict.**

Working with Child Soldiers in Africa

Exploring the gender related impact of war and political conflict

The question of missing persons.

**Session 6: 3<sup>rd</sup> of May- 17:30- 18:45 UK Time**

**International organisations, global partnerships and the social work contribution to sustainable peace.**

Ana Radulescu, IFSW Europe, The importance of international collaborations in supporting vulnerable people fleeing war.

Representative from UNICEF (TBC)



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## Future Plans

The Global Education Commission will continue to prioritise the following objectives and future plans

- Transfer of knowledge and good practice about social work education (global level). This could happen through the facilitation of CPD courses, seminars and conferences
- Monitor and support the Implementation Strategy for the updated Global Standards, including to continue to develop and evaluate different scopes for dissemination and roll-out of the Global Standards.
- Help create a repository of freely accessible educational material.
- Sustain the dialogue and enhance the consultation on educational matters with IASSW and other global/regional organisations
- Represent IFSW in fora discussing issues about social work and Higher Education.
- Monitor the expansion of social work education globally and identify qualitative and quantitative trends
- Intervene in support of social work education when there are political or technocratic pressures to make “concessions” to the quality of education.

Explore, document and celebrate the history of IFSW’s involvement in education.

- Lead on the facilitation of events, publications and research projects that advance the inclusive, practice-based, holistic and participatory nature of social work education (including the International Social Work Journal and the Federation’s publications).
- Promote genuine participation of people who use services in social work education.
- Support the process of de-colonisation of social work curricula.

Professor Vasilios Ioakimidis

On behalf of the

Global Education Commission